

Safeguarding Policy

Castlereagh Fellowship

March 2023

Safeguarding Policy

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Safeguarding Policy Statement for Castlereagh Fellowship

Castlereagh Fellowship recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk. As a church we commit ourselves to the protection and safekeeping of all associated with the church. This Policy outlines the arrangements in place to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. The term safeguarding relates to:

1. Promoting the welfare for the children, young people and adults at risk,
2. Preventing harm occurring through early identification of risk and appropriate, timely intervention, and
3. Protecting children, young people and adults at risk from harm when this is required.

Terminology used in this policy

Terminology used	Definition
Child or children	Relates to anyone under the age of 18 years, as defined in The Children (NI) Order 1995.
Adult at risk	<p>According to 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership' by DHSSPS July 2015, an Adult at risk of harm is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Personal characteristics <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Life circumstances <p>Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.</p> <p>Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.</p>
Adult in need of protection	<p>An Adult in need of protection is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Personal characteristics <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Life circumstances <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed

Section One **Roles and Responsibilities**

Roles and Responsibilities of the Child Protection Designated Person.

There are 5 main roles of the Designated Person:

1. to take responsibility for dealing with a safeguarding matter or concern,
2. to oversee the vetting process including meeting with potential leaders, completion of character references, Access NI forms and checking identity of potential leaders. The latter will be achieved in adherence to Access NI guidance,
3. to liaise with Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) to arrange for Access NI checks,
4. to ensure that all leaders have received a copy of this Safeguarding Policy and completed a Leader's Declaration Form, and
5. to review this Safeguarding Policy in light of any future changes to legislation, good practice guidance or activities within Castlereagh Fellowship.

Where the Designated Person considers it to be necessary, she may refer any matter to Church Leadership.

The Designated Person is Ruth Courtney.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Adult Safeguarding Champion

To promote a zero tolerance of adult harm, the Adult Safeguarding Champion may:

1. provide information and support on safeguarding within Castlereagh Fellowship,
2. advise within the organisation regarding adult safeguarding, and
3. provide advice to anyone who may have concerns about the signs of harm with regard to an adult at risk or an adult in need of protection and if deemed necessary, report to HSC Trust where there is a safeguarding concern.

The Adult Safeguarding Champion is Debbie Gowing

Role and responsibilities of the Person-in-charge

To assist leaders in each organised activity to respond in a correct and prompt manner to concerns and incidents, the Person-in-charge will need to check that:

1. they have read and understood Castlereagh Fellowship's Health and Safety Policy and Fire Safety Policy and ensure that all safeguards and risk controls are maintained thereafter,
2. the Incident Book and Report of Concern forms are on the premises,
3. Castlereagh Fellowship's Data Privacy Policy is adhered to,

4. leaders follow guidance contained in this Safeguarding Policy, and
5. those responsible for children's groups have Consent Forms completed, where necessary, in respect of each child attending; a register of children and leaders attending any particular event is maintained; and leaders are aware of any relevant medical history and /or family circumstances where additional safeguards are required.

The Person-in-charge of each organised activity is:

Little Mites – Debbie Gowing
Creche – Debbie Gowing
Junior Bible Class – Ruth Courtney
Senior Bible Class – Jan Kells
Adventurers – Michele McIlrath
Castlereagh Youth – Judith Walls
Explorers – Michele McIlrath
Ladies Group – Debbie Gowing
Men's Group – Nigel McIlrath

Section Two
Recognising, Responding to, Recording and Reporting

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a family, or in an institution or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or a child or children. There are many different ways in which people suffer abuse. The list below is not exhaustive.

The following definitions of abuse contained in this policy are taken from ‘Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland’ (August 2017), Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland (SBNI) and Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership (DHSSPS) July 2015.

Types of abuse	Child	Adults at risk
Physical	Deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.	The use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse of illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty.

Sexual	<p>Others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 states that it is illegal for a person of any age, including a person under the age of 16, to engage a young person under the age of 16 years in any form of sexual activity.</p>	<p>Any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature, which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping).</p>
Emotional	<p>The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child sometimes referred to as psychological abuse. It can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.</p> <p>Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying, including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones, by a child's peers.</p>	<p>Behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.</p>
Neglect	<p>Failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it is adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional, social and educational needs.</p> <p>Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.</p>	<p>When a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time.</p>
Exploitation	<p>The intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, sexual exploitation, slavery, servitude, and engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child</p>	<p>The deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person; to take advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain from using them as a commodity. It may manifest itself in many forms including sexual slavery, servitude, forced or</p>

	trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.	compulsory labour, domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse or human trafficking.
Specific Forms of Abuse		
Female Genital Mutilation (FMG)	FMG involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. FGM is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland. Where any individual or organisation has a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM they should report this to PSNI immediately.	
Forced Marriage	A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland.	
Honour Based Violence	The term 'Honour based violence' is used to refer to a range of violent practices used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to sustain or promote perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour.	
Fabricated or Induced Illness	Harm may be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or adult.	
Substance Misuse	The misuse of a range of mind altering substances. It can have a severe impact on the ability to function as well as on physical health. Alcohol use is the most common form of substance misuse for children under the age of 18 years, but any drug, including heroin, cocaine, crack and cannabis comes into this category, as does the misuse of glue and aerosols.	
Domestic Abuse	Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 sets out what is abusive. This relates to physical abuse, behaviour that is controlling or coercive or that amounts to psychological, emotional or financial abuse of another person. Abusive behaviour may also include sexual abuse and technological or digital abuse. It will capture patterns of two or more occasions of physical and/or psychological abuse by a partner, ex-partner or close family member and will include behaviour that is physically violent, threatening or intimidating.	
Bullying	The deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time. It can take the form of name calling, teasing, pushing, punching, kicking and hitting. Victims can be forced to do things they do not want to do or are left out of games and ignored by others. Cyber bullying includes e.g. texting and using other forms of social media to threaten or belittle someone and is a common form of bullying.	
Self-Harm	A term used when someone injures or harms him or herself on purpose. It involves inflicting physical pain to mask an emotional imbalance. Common examples of deliberate self-harm include overdosing, hitting, cutting, burning, pulling hair, picking skin or self-strangulation.	
Suicidal thoughts	Also known as suicidal ideation, are thoughts about how to end one's life. This can range from a detailed plan to a fleeting consideration and does not necessarily lead to the final act of ending one's life. Suicidal thoughts can be disclosed or suspected and, whilst signs of suicide are not definitive, they are possible indicators that someone is feeling suicidal. Others may show no signs of their suicidal thoughts.	
Human Trafficking	This involves the acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploiting them. It can take many forms, such as domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting.	
Hate Crime	Hate crime is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hate towards a person's	

	actual or perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion or gender identity.
Financial Abuse	Actual or attempted theft, fraud or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion or deception. This may include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property or inheritance.
Institutional Abuse	Mistreatment or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in settings which adults who may be at risk reside in or use. This can occur in any organisation and may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm.

Pre-Mobile Babies

A Regional Protocol regarding Bruising/Marks (which could be due to Injury) on Pre-Mobile Babies is included in SBNI Procedures Manual. The basis of this policy is that bruising on a baby who is not yet crawling, and is therefore not independently mobile, is very unusual. Within Castlereagh Fellowship, if bruising is observed on a baby, this should be discussed with The Designated Child Protection Designated Person without delay.

Responding To Concerns

Children/young people have a right to be safeguarded and protected. This is enshrined within the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (the Children Order) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Adults have the right to be safeguarded and protected.

If a concern is raised in relation to a child, young person or an adult at risk the following advice is provided.

What to do	What not to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> listen to and acknowledge what is being said <input type="checkbox"/> try to be reassuring and remain calm <input type="checkbox"/> explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next <input type="checkbox"/> try to give them a timescale for when and how you or the Designated Person will contact them again <input type="checkbox"/> take action – don't ignore the situation <input type="checkbox"/> be supportive <input type="checkbox"/> tell them that: they were right to tell you, you are taking what they have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> do not promise confidentiality <input type="checkbox"/> do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval <input type="checkbox"/> do not minimise what is being said <input type="checkbox"/> do not ask probing questions or leading questions or push for more information <input type="checkbox"/> do not offer false reassurance <input type="checkbox"/> do not delay in contacting Designated Person <input type="checkbox"/> do not contact the alleged abuser <input type="checkbox"/> do not investigate the incident any further <input type="checkbox"/> never leave the child or adult at risk waiting to hear from someone

<p>said seriously, it was not their fault, that you will pass this information on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> be open and honest 	<p>without any idea of when or where that may be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> do not pass on information to those who don't need to know; not even for prayer support
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Recording

A handwritten record must be made of the concern using the Report of Concern Form (Annex A) and passed to the Designated Person or Adult Safeguarding Champion as soon as possible after the event. The report should be factual and record a description of any physical injuries observed and the exact wording used by the child or adult where possible.

Reporting

In the event of a concern that involves alleged or suspected abuse of a child or adult at risk, the leader should pass this concern to the leader-in-charge of the particular organisation immediately. The leader-in-charge should pass the information to the Designated Person or Adult Safeguarding Champion as soon as possible.

The Designated Person or Adult Safeguarding Champion will consider the information shared in light of guidance provided in Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (August 2017) and SBNI Procedures and Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership (DHSSPS) July 2015.

A decision will be taken as to what should happen next. This may include:

- ❖ discuss further with parent/carer,
- ❖ do not make a referral and leaders continue to observe,
- ❖ consult with Single Point of Entry or Adult Protection Gateway Services, or Regional Emergency Social Work Service for out of office hours, or
- ❖ make a referral to Gateway Team Adult Protection Gateway Services, or Regional Emergency Social Work Service for out of office hours.

The task of deciding whether or not abuse has taken place rests with the professional agencies. If there is disagreement on whether or not to refer a concern to a statutory agency, the agency can still be contacted for advice on whether or not to make a referral.

If there is ever a concern that a child is in immediate danger or a criminal offence has taken place, then the leader-in-charge or the Designated Person or Adult Safeguarding Champion should not hesitate to contact the PSNI.

Informing a parent or legal guardian depends on the nature of the incident or concern about a child. Parents may need to be informed if, for example, the concern relates to substance

misuse or bullying. In other situations where there is uncertainty, clarification may be sought from a professional agency.

Contact details:

PSNI: central telephone number for non-emergency calls is 101 or in the event of an emergency phone 999.

Single Point of Entry, Social Services: during office hours contact 028 9050 7000 and ask to speak to a Duty Social Worker or visit office, 110 Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 6HD.

Adult Protection Gateway Services: contact 028 9504 1744.

Regional Emergency Social Work Service for Out of Office hours: contact 028 95049999.

For concerns related to suspected online abuse visit ceop.police.uk and click on 'make a report'.

Leaders of all organisations within Castlereagh Fellowship should have the Designated Person's or Adult Safeguarding Champion contact details stored on their mobile phone.

Section Three **Best Practice For Working With Children and Young People**

Working with parents/carers

For the purpose of this policy the term 'parent/carer' refers to the mother, the father, provided he is authorised to give consent, or to a legal guardian, provided they have acquired parental responsibility through a Court Order, Residence Order or Guardianship Order. If a child is cared for by a foster carer, the issue of consent should be discussed with the child's Social Worker.

A parent/carer must provide consent for their child to attend and take part using the Consent Form (Annex A). The Consent Form will be completed for children who attend Adventurers and Castlereagh Youth. Where a child attends an organised children's event as part of the church service e.g. crèche or bible classes and a parent/carer has permitted a relative e.g. a grandparent to bring the child, a Consent Form is not required. If the child attends without a parent or carer, a Consent Form is required. Consent Forms should be completed on or before the child's attendance at any of the above children's activities. Consent forms will be completed annually.

For the purpose of having emergency contact details, anyone who attends Little Mites should complete a registration form.

Other information to be shared with a parent or carer includes:

- ❖ an Accident/Incident Book completed in respect of their child; the parent or carer must have sight of the form and be asked to sign that they have read it, and

- ❖ in some instances a parent or carer should have sight of the Report of Concern form (Annex B); this will depend on the contents of the form and advice should be sought from the Designated Person.

Working with Children and Young People

Leaders should be committed to a practice which promotes the welfare of children and young people and protects them from harm. We wish to ensure that all children and young people can participate in an enjoyable and safe environment in which they can have fun and feel valued.

Working with children who have additional needs

Where a child has additional needs, a leader should talk with their parents or carers to allow them to share information regarding the child's needs and what should be in place to meet the child's additional needs. A child may need, for example, one-to-one help, a visual schedule or help with mobility.

If a child needs help with toileting or intimate care, this will be achieved in accordance with arrangements set out in 'Physical Contact'. If this is anticipated to be a regular occurrence, an Intimate Care Agreement can be set up.

Any organised programme will be sensitive to children's needs to ensure there is a choice and variety of activities and teaching methods which will afford participation by all children.

Discipline Guidance

Children function best where there are clear guidelines and structures in place. Within Castlereagh Fellowship, all children's organisations will attempt to create a safe and secure environment where children understand what is acceptable and unacceptable.

Discipline guidelines and a code of conduct will be agreed verbally with children who attend any children's activity at the beginning of each year or when necessary.

When creating a safe environment and disciplining children of all ages, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

Never:

- ❖ use force (smack, hit, push),
- ❖ discipline out of anger,
- ❖ use a 'put-down' with children,
- ❖ humiliate a child,
- ❖ reject the child, just the behaviour,
- ❖ allow some children to take all the leaders' time and energy, or
- ❖ compare children with each other.

Always:

- ❖ treat children with dignity and respect,

- ❖ ensure children understand what is acceptable and unacceptable in terms of their behaviour,
- ❖ ensure the programme is interesting, varied and age-appropriate,
- ❖ be aware of each individual child's positive characteristics,
- ❖ be a good role model and set a good example,
- ❖ take care to give quieter children and well-behaved children attention,
- ❖ be consistent and work together as a team, and
- ❖ ensure other leaders know what you have said thus ensuring transparency.

If a child displays disruptive behaviour, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

- ❖ alert the child to their behaviour and encourage the child to stop,
- ❖ if the behaviour continues, discreetly request that the behaviour ceases,
- ❖ speak to the child to ascertain if there is an underlying cause,
- ❖ give the child responsibility for modifying behaviour, making use of a reward system if appropriate,
- ❖ have an appropriate sanction ready should a child continue to misbehave,
- ❖ warn the child before administering the sanction,
- ❖ if the child is harming himself or herself or another person or property, other children should be escorted out of the area where the disruption is occurring, and
- ❖ if the disruptive behaviour continues it may be discussed with the child's parent or carer.

Physical Contact

Physical contact with children should be child-initiated and appropriate to the age of the child. If a child is in distress, it may be perfectly acceptable to offer comfort and reassurance by placing a hand on their shoulder or taking their hand. Leaders must avoid physical contact which may be misconstrued by a child or other observer.

Leaders must never:

- ❖ spend time alone with children away from others,
- ❖ use physical punishment,
- ❖ take children to your home without the child's parents and the leader- in-charge of the organisation knowing,
- ❖ allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form,
- ❖ allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged,
- ❖ make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child, even in fun,
- ❖ let allegations made by a child go unchallenged or unrecorded,
- ❖ do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves,
- ❖ engage in rough or inappropriate behaviour, or
- ❖ rely solely on their reputation to protect themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary for leaders to carry out tasks of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or have additional needs. In such situations leaders need to be sensitive to the child and undertake personal care with the utmost discretion and with parental knowledge. Leaders will not use mobile phones in the toilet areas.

Restraint

Restrictive Interventions are defined as: “deliberate acts that restrict an individual’s movement, liberty and/or freedom to act independently to prevent harm to self or others” (Positive and Proactive Care, reducing the need for restrictive intervention (DoH April 2014).

Restrictive Practice is defined as: “making someone do something they don’t want to do or stopping them doing something they want to do” (A Positive and Proactive Workforce, Skills for care April 2014).

Sometimes, in a situation where risk is not anticipated, the use of restraint may need to be used in order to protect a child or in some situations an adult at risk from coming to harm. Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury should be applied. Restraint should be an act of protection, not an act of punishment. Following an incident, when restraint has been used, an Accident/Incident form should be completed and the leader- in-charge, Designated Person and parents notified. The parent should be shown the copy of Accident/Incident form.

Recommended Ratios

All activities within Castlereagh Fellowship will abide by the recommended ratios of children to leaders. There must be a minimum of at least 2 leaders present at all times or, in the case of Senior Bible Class, where it is only feasible to have 1 leader present, they must remain in a room with a glass viewing panel.

Young leaders/helpers (aged between 16 to 18 years) should not be left alone in a supervisory capacity with children. They may, however, be counted in the ratios as long as other adult leaders are present and in charge.

Ratios for indoor/outdoor activities:

under 2 years = 1 leader for up to 3 children

2 to 3 years = 1 leader for up to 4 children

4 to 7 years = 1 leader for up to 8 children (or 1 leader to 6 children for outdoor activities)

8 years and over = 1 leader for up to 10 children.

Transport

When planning an outing, the leader-in-charge must exercise discretion as to who the drivers of the vehicles will be. A driver must be aged over 21 and have held their driving licence for at least 2 years. The driver must hold valid insurance cover and the vehicle must be roadworthy i.e. for vehicle’s over 4 years of age a valid MOT certificate must exist.

Where a private car is being used to transport children, leaders should avoid transporting 1 child on their own. However, if a situation does occur when a leader has to transport a child alone, they should ensure that other leaders know this is happening and that the child is in the back seat. If possible, parents should be made aware that their child will be in the car on their own with a leader, affording them the opportunity to make alternative arrangements.

All drivers should check the website below to ensure they adhere to current legislation on the use of child restraints and seatbelts. <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk › articles › child-car-seats-restraints-and-seatbelts>

Where a minibus is being used to transport children, leaders should adhere to guidance provided on <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk › articles › driving-minibus>. Castlereagh Fellowship will only use a minibus with seat belts fitted. Leaders will accompany children in minibuses and will sit among the children and preferably near the exit points of the vehicle. The recommended ratios for outings will be used and the group members must be within sight of a leader at all times.

Outings

Outings are a fun experience for children and can enhance friendships. To ensure children are kept safe the following arrangements will be in place:

- ❖ the organisers of outings will plan a detailed programme of activities for the children who are involved. This will be shared with parents,
- ❖ activities described to be of 'high risk' by insurance companies must be approved of by the Leadership of Castlereagh Fellowship,
- ❖ leaders should obtain a signed Parental Consent for Outings form (Annex D) in respect of each child and ensure these forms are available during the outing,
- ❖ in all circumstances, when planned activities are disrupted, e.g. due to weather conditions or civil unrest, then leaders should have an alternative activity planned and parents informed on the outing consent form,
- ❖ workers will remain responsible for the welfare and safety of the children for the whole time they are away from home,
- ❖ children will not be left to their own devices, e.g. in a town for the evening or on shopping expeditions, and
- ❖ all children will be adequately supervised and engaged in suitable activities at all times and each leader will be clear as to which children they have charge of.

To ensure general safety, please refer to Castlereagh Fellowship's Health and Safety Policy.

Photographs

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act 1998, churches must be careful if they use photographs, videos and webcams of clearly identifiable people. The following guidelines should be adhered to:

- ❖ consent to take photographs, a video or webcam image should be obtained before the image is taken,
- ❖ it should be made clear as to how the image is being used,
- ❖ children should not be identified by name or other personal details,
- ❖ carefully consider location and pose, and
- ❖ do not insist that a child participates.

Leaders should encourage young people to be sensible when taking photos or images of each other, especially if they are to be posted on the internet. Young people should be encouraged to let their friends know if their intention is to post photographs online. Young people may need to be reminded that once photographs are on the internet they have no control over where they end up.

Technology and Communication

Leaders of children's organisations at Castlereagh Fellowship need to be aware of the opportunities for abuse through the misuse of the internet, text messaging, video and other media. While good use of media can be beneficial, we must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and the consequences for young people which can result.

When developing the Church website the following must be adhered to:

- ❖ parental/carer consent must be obtained before using any pictures of a child/group, and
- ❖ names and addresses, phone numbers and email addresses should not be given.

With regard to communication with children via the internet, leaders should not add, as a friend or follower on their personal social networking site, a child who attends any children's organisations at Castlereagh Fellowship. Leaders should not post photographs of children from the organisation in which they are leaders, on a social networking site or anywhere on the internet, unless they have written parental consent. Comments made on the internet should be considered the same as if they were made in a public place. If a child discloses something to a leader via a social networking site, then the disclosure must be dealt with by following the normal reporting process.

In relation to communicating with children via mobile phones, the following good practice should be adhered to:

- ❖ parental permission should be sought if the leader, in this role, will be contacting children via mobile phone,
- ❖ when a text is sent to a child or group of children, at least one other leader should be included to ensure accountability,
- ❖ if a leader has a child's phone number, it should only be used for the purposes it has been given; the leader should not share this number with other church members,
- ❖ texts should be used for the purposes of reminding children about up and coming events,
- ❖ texts can also be used to encourage children if it is appropriate e.g. support during exam time, and
- ❖ if a text turns into a conversation, communications should be ended; a leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event, or, if they are concerned about that child, an arrangement to meet up to talk further, within the usual child protection parameters, can be agreed.

Vetting of volunteers

The following are the arrangements which must be in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These practices will be adhered to within the various children's activities organised as part of the life of the church.

In order to comply with the law and good practice, all potential leaders, taking up a regulated position to work with children, must be successfully vetted in advance. The process of vetting leaders involves taking one character reference and requesting an Access NI check.

If a person has convictions of abuse against children or a vulnerable adult, they will never be admitted to a position of leadership with children.

All applicants who have been vetted as being suitable to take up a regulated position will be asked to complete a Leader's Declaration (Annex C). Access NI checks will be repeated on a five yearly cycle and training offered five yearly.

All certificates, forms and conviction information will be treated sensitively and in adherence to guidance set out by Access NI and Castlereagh Fellowship's Data Privacy Policy.

Whistleblowing policy

Castlereagh Fellowship is committed to the highest possible standards of conduct, openness, honesty and accountability. If anyone is concerned regarding someone's behaviour toward children, they should discuss their concerns with the Designated Person or Church Leadership.

Section Four **Best Practice For Working with Adults at Risk**

Adult safeguarding is based on fundamental human rights and on respecting the rights of adults as individuals, treating all adults with dignity.

In Castlereagh Fellowship we will promote a culture where safeguarding is everyone's business. In meeting minimum safeguarding expectations noted in section 8.3 of Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership HSSPS 2015, we want to safeguard adults who may be at risk by:

1. recognising that adult harm is wrong and that it should not be tolerated,
2. being aware of the signs of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect (section two of this policy),
3. reducing opportunities for harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect to occur (section four of this policy), and
4. knowing how and when to report safeguarding concerns to HSC Trust or PSNI (section two of this policy).

Premises

The church building will be made as accessible as possible to all people. Any restrictions to access, visibility, audibility, toilet facilities, or lighting will be addressed where possible and where necessary, aids and adaptation put in place. A loop system is in place for people who use hearing aids.

Financial Integrity

Arrangements are in place for dealing with money, financial transition and gifts, as outlined below:

- if anyone is asked to support an adult at risk with some aspect of personal finance e.g. shopping or banking, they must always obtain receipts or evidence of what has been done and inform the Adult Safeguarding Champion,
- no-one should seek personal financial gain or be influenced by offers of money,
- any gifts received should be reported to the church Leadership who will decide whether or not the gift can be accepted,
- any money received by the church will be handled in the normal way, and
- care will be taken not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk.

Photographs

Workers should make sure that they have the person's permission to take a picture, and that the subject is happy with the intended use of the pictures.

Restraint

Principles and practice in relation to restraint of adults at risk are the same as those noted in page 13.

Section Five **Safe Environments**

Health and Safety

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with Castlereagh Fellowship's Health and Safety Policy.

Everyone must remain mindful of the risks associated with the busy road to the front of Castlereagh Fellowship building. Safety devices are fitted to the main door; however this is only part of the plan to keep children safe. Leaders of children's activities are to remind children to remain in the room where the children's activity is taking place until collected by their parent/carer. From this point on it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure the safety of their child.

If, during Junior Bible Class and Adventurers, a child needs to use the toilet, a leader must check that no other adult is in the toilet area before allowing the child to enter. The leader should remain in the reception area until the child is ready to return to the activity. If another adult wishes to use the toilet, the leader should ask him or her to wait in the reception area until the child leaves the toilet area.

Toileting arrangements for children who attend crèche should be agreed between parent and crèche leader in advance of child attending crèche.

Fire Safety

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with Castlereagh Fellowship's 'Responsibilities in the event of a Fire', 'What to do in the event of a Fire' and 'Fire Evacuation' notices.



Review of Safeguarding Policy

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually or within an earlier timescale if deemed necessary by the Designated Person. The date of the next review is March 2024.

Annex A



CONSENT FORM FOR	PLEASE TICK
Adventurers	
Castlereagh Youth	
Other	

FULL NAME OF CHILD: _____ D.O.B _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ POSTCODE _____

PLEASE PROVIDE THE CONTACT DETAILS OF TWO PEOPLE

NAME: _____ RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD _____

TELEPHONE: _____

NAME: _____ RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD _____

TELEPHONE: _____

GP DETAILS: NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

Details of any additional needs, medical conditions or allergies the leaders should be aware of (including details of any medication prescribed or management plans)

To provide consent please tick 'yes' or 'no' before signing.

I agree to be contactable by phone at all times during any activities/clubs that my child attends.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

In the event of illness or accident, I give consent for administration of medical treatment by a nominated first aider. In an emergency and if I am not contactable, I am willing for my child to be taken to hospital and to receive any necessary hospital treatment. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

I give consent for photographs and video footage to be taken and used in the church newsletter or for display purposes. Children's names and addresses will not be shown with the photograph.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

I give consent for my child to take part in the activities of the above Club.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

I will commit to inform a leader if any of the above information changes.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Name (print) _____ (Parent/guardian with parental consent only)

Signature _____

Date _____

You are advised to read a copy of Castlereagh Fellowship Safeguarding Policy & Data Privacy Policy

Annex B

REPORT OF CONCERN

Please use this form to record any concern you have about a child or adult at risk. The completed form will be given by the leader-in-charge of the organisation to the Designated Person or Adult Safeguarding Champion.

Child/Adult's Name:		
Address:		
Age:	DoB:	Tel No:

State as clearly as possible, why you are concerned, from whom you received the information and when. Continue overleaf if necessary.

What is the nature of the concern?
Are there any visible injuries?

Has medical attention been sought?
Have there been any previous concerns?
Has the child/adult made a disclosure of abuse, state the name of person he/she spoke to, include date, time and place.
If a child/adult has made a disclosure of abuse, record as precisely as possible what was <u>actually</u> said.
Has anyone expressed concern in relation to the safety of the child/adult? Record the concerns and ask him/her to confirm that the details as written are correct.
Have possible signs or indicators of abuse been identified? If so, please outline.
Record the name(s) of the persons(s) alleged to have abused the child/adult.

Details of Person reporting concerns

Name:	Tel No:
Signed:	Organisation:
Date:	

Details of Action Taken by Designated Person or Adult Safeguarding Champion

Name of Designated Person:
Action Taken:

Print Name: Signature:	Date:

Annex C

LEADER'S DECLARATION FORM

To be completed upon receipt of successful Access NI check and satisfactory Character Reference

Declaration

I have received a copy of Castlereagh Fellowship's Safeguarding Policy.

I have read and understood Castlereagh Fellowship's Safeguarding Policy.

I agree to abide by the arrangements set out in Castlereagh Fellowship's Safeguarding Policy.

I will inform The Designated Person if I am subject to an investigation alleging abuse to children or adult at risk.

I will inform The Designated Person if I am convicted or cautioned by police for any offence.

I will inform The Designated Person of any changes to my personal circumstances which may affect my capacity to continue in this role e.g. health.

I will exercise a duty to care for any child or adult at risk I come into contact with in connection with the life and work of Castlereagh Fellowship.

Name (print)

Signed

Date

Annex D

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR OUTING

To be completed by leader in charge

Name of children's Organisation.	
Date(s) of planned outing/activities/residential (please delete).	
Details of Planned programme:	
Departure & return details:	
Transport arrangements:	
Secondary plan if the above cannot take place eg due to weather.	
Cost:	
Advice: e.g. clothing	
Name and contact details of leader in charge	Name and contact detail of a leader

To be completed by parent or carer with Parental Responsibility

Name of Child
Please indicate medical conditions, special needs, allergies or dietary requirements relevant to your child. Please include details of any medication taken and anything else that would be helpful for the leaders to know about:

CONSENT

In the event of illness, accident or incident, I consent to first aid being administered where considered necessary by a first aider or medical treatment to be administered by suitably qualified medical practitioner.

I consent to a commitment to inform the leaders of any important changes to my child's health, medication or needs and of any changes to our address or to any of the phone numbers given.

I give my consent for photographs or other forms of footage to be taken, for general church purposes, in adherence to the guidance set out in Castlereagh Fellowship's Safeguarding Policy.

Name (print):

Signature:

Date: