

# Newtownbreda Gospel Hall



## Safeguarding Children Principles of Good Practice

## **Introduction**

Children mattered to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 19:14). Throughout His ministry He placed a very high value and dignity upon them (Matt 18:2). He also acknowledged the vulnerable position of children (Matt 18:10). Both old and new testaments encourage the welfare, development and protection of children. (Deut 6:7; Eph 6:4).

This 'Code of Practice' has been introduced to establish a number of 'Principles of Good Practice' for the work amongst children in Newtownbrenda Gospel Hall. There are several reasons why such a set of principles need to be established.

### **Firstly:**

There is a spiritual and moral obligation upon us to provide the highest possible standard of care for children who are entrusted to us.

### **Secondly:**

We have a legal obligation when we accept children into our care to keep them safe.

### **Thirdly:**

We also have an obligation to the workers and teachers, who so generously give their time and effort to the work amongst children, to minimise as far as possible the risk of being the subject of an unfounded allegation.

**Matt 10:16** Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

**Newtownbreda Gospel Hall**  
**Principles of Good Practice**  
**( The Children (NI) Order 1995 )**

1. Protecting children from harm
2. Treating children with dignity and respect
3. Raising awareness
4. Selection of teachers and workers
5. Minimising opportunities for harm
6. Dealing with incidents
7. Parental/Guardian consent
8. Transport
9. Rules of behaviour
10. Record keeping
11. Parent/Guardian Information Form

## **1. Protecting children from harm**

**Newtownbreda Gospel Hall Assembly is fully committed to providing a safe and positive environment, where children are valued in every respect as God intended. Provision is made by us for the physical as well as the spiritual wellbeing and development of every child in accordance with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Matt 18:6** But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

**Matt 18:10** Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

**Matt 18:14** Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

## **2. Treating children with dignity and respect**

**James 2:1** My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

- 2.1** Be impartial in giving prizes.
- 2.2** Only give prizes for a good reason which is made known to others.
- 2.3** Encourage the involvement of all but not forcing any.
- 2.4** Never use threatening, abusive or provocative language or behaviour.
- 2.5** Never do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

### **3. Raising awareness**

**Eph 5:15-17** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

- 3.1** All workers should be given a copy of these principles.
- 3.2** Parents/guardians should be given a copy of the Parent/Guardian Information Form detailing the times of the meetings.
- 3.3** All workers should be aware that not wearing seatbelts, overcrowding cars or speeding may invalidate insurance.
- 3.4** It is the responsibility of the person transporting children to ensure that they are returned to the pickup point.
- 3.5** Regular reviews should be held and regular monitoring should take place to ensure that all comply with this Code of Practice.

## **4. Selection of teachers and workers**

**2 Tim 2:15** Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

- 4.1** A register of workers' names to be kept which each worker must sign, to show that they have read these Principles of Good Practice and agree to abide by them.
- 4.2** All workers must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
- 4.3** All workers must have a commitment to treat all children as equal.

## **5. Minimising opportunities for harm or accusation**

**Phil 2:14-16** Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life;

- 5.1** Minimise as far as possible every situation where a worker is alone with a child when no-one else is informed of it.
- 5.2** Ensure all transport used is insured to carry children.
- 5.3** Always use seatbelts in cars and never speed or overcrowd cars.
- 5.4** Maintain clear and consistent procedures for dealing with disruptive behaviour. (Section 6)
- 5.5** Avoid transporting a child on your own, ensure another worker or one of your own children is with you, try to let other workers know if this is not possible and always put the child in the rear seat.
- 5.6** Avoid private meetings with children without parental consent.
- 5.7** Children should always be supervised by at least one male and one female when in the hall.
- 5.8** When transporting children give consideration to the order in which they are picked up and left off, so that you are never left alone with a single child in the car.

## 6. Dealing with incidents

**Prov 2:6** For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

*Physical force must only be used if a child is presenting a danger to others or to his/her self. Always use the minimum force possible.*

- 6.1 A group of disruptive children should be separated as soon as possible by workers sitting beside them to break the group up.
- 6.2 Where a child is disrupting others ask him/her to move to another seat.
- 6.3 If after being moved, a child is still being disruptive, ask him/her to leave the main hall, and at least two workers must stay with him/her in the foyer. This removal must be recorded in the incident book.
- 6.4 A child that will not respond to the spoken voice and continues to be disruptive must be moved with the minimum of force possible. Always give a clear verbal warning as to your intention to move the child if he/she continues to be disruptive. This removal must be recorded in the incident book.

### **Allegations or suspicions of child abuse**

A worker who becomes aware of or is suspicious of child abuse must not investigate the incident but immediately report the matter to the superintendent who will inform the overseeing brethren.

If a child tells a worker about child abuse the worker must make it clear that someone else must be told. Do not promise confidentiality. The worker must immediately report the matter to the superintendent and they together must make a written record of the details. This information must be passed to the overseeing brethren who will decide the best action to be taken.

## **7. Parental/Guardian consent**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 8:21** Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

- 7.1** It is important to establish and maintain contact with the parents/guardians of the children who come to the hall.
- 7.2** Parental consent must be obtained before taking any children (under the age of 18) away, even for a few hours and the parent must be fully informed as to everything the group will be doing.
- 7.3** When taking a group away there must be 2 workers for the first 8 children plus 1 extra adult for every 12 extra children.
- 7.4** Do not take any children to your own home without parental consent.

## **8. Transport**

**Rom 1:10** Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God...

- 8.1** Ensure all transport used is insured to carry children.
- 8.2** Buses transporting children under the age of 14 must have seatbelts fitted.
- 8.3** Seatbelt and child safety laws must be followed when transporting children in cars.
- 8.4** Avoid transporting a child on your own, ensure another worker or one of your own children is with you, try to let other workers know if this is not possible and always put the child in the rear seat.
- 8.5** Always have at least two adults (excluding the driver) on the bus to supervise the children.
- 8.6** All workers should be aware that not wearing seatbelts, overcrowding cars or speeding may invalidate insurance.
- 8.7** It is the responsibility of the person transporting children to ensure that they are returned to the pickup point.

## **9. Rules of behaviour**

**1<sup>st</sup> Cor 14:40** Let all things be done decently and in order.

- 9.1** Affirming the unacceptability at any time of threatening, violent or degrading behaviour from children or workers.
- 9.2** Affirming the unacceptability of bad or abusive language from children or workers.
- 9.3** Avoiding unnecessary physical contact with children.
- 9.4** Where a child must be removed from his/her seat or restrained to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self injury, a written report should be kept.
- 9.5** Avoiding physical horseplay such as wrestling or tickling.
- 9.6** Minimising as far as possible every situation where a worker is alone with a child when no-one else is informed of it.

## **10. Record Keeping**

**Rev 20:12** And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened:

- 10.1** Attendance Register:  
Stating the children's names and all dates of attendance.
- 10.2** Incident Record Book:  
Detailing all significant incidents occurring whether in the hall or during transport, the names of those involved and the actions taken.
- 10.3** Worker Register:  
Containing names of all who have responsibility for the work or contact with children.
- 10.4** Car Driver Register:  
Containing names of all who help to transport children.
- 10.5** Parent/Guardian Consent Form:  
Parental consent for a child to attend any special outings.
- 10.6** Parent/Guardian Information Form:  
Parental Information Form stating our policy, the pickup, drop-off and the meeting times.

# Parent/Guardian Information Form

**Newtownbreda Gospel Hall**  
**Newtownbreda Road, Belfast**  
( The Children (NI) Order 1995 )

To meet the requirements of the above Order the Newtownbreda Gospel Hall Assembly have adopted the following policy:-

**Newtownbreda Gospel Hall Assembly is fully committed to providing a safe and positive environment, where children are valued in every respect as God intended. Provision is made by us for the physical as well as the spiritual wellbeing and development of every child in accordance with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

We do appreciate your confidence in sending your child/children to our meetings and we would take this opportunity to assure you that we teach from the Word of God the Way of Salvation through faith in The Lord Jesus Christ.

We have two meetings for boys and girls; the Sunday school and the children's meeting on Monday evening. The times of the meetings are given below.

We also have a weekly gospel meeting each Sunday evening at 7.00pm to which we give you a very warm invitation.

Pick up Time      Meeting Time      Return Time

Sunday School:	<b>2.30pm</b>	<b>3.00pm - 3.45pm</b>	<b>4.00pm</b>
Monday Evening:	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>7.00pm - 7.45pm</b>	<b>8.00pm</b>

October 1998  
Newtownbreda Gospel Hall, 96 Newtownbreda Road, Newtownbreda, Belfast BT8 4BP