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**Health & Safety and Child Protection Policy 2020**

**Whakatane Baptist Church**

**Supervision Guideline:**

This guideline defines the supervision requirements in any given Children’s Ministry situation.

This policy is aimed at keeping leaders and children safe from inappropriate behaviour.

Guide:

* There will always be at least two leaders present in a room where there is a child present.
* Those two adults must not be partners as determined by the CML.
* The following leader – child ratios must not be exceeded.
* 5 to 8 years 1:10
* 9 to 14 years 1:20
* On social outings at least two leaders are present and the leader: child ratio should not exceed 1:8. (Primary aged children)
* Where the previous guidelines are unable to be met, the activity or outing cannot go ahead, until enough leaders are found.
* Any counselling of children is always performed in public view. Doors are to be kept open or glass is fitted into doors.
* Leaders are not to be on their own with a child anywhere at any time.
* No-one is permitted to visit a child alone. Visits can only occur in pairs.
* Parents are asked to take their children to the bathroom before Children’s Ministry Programme starts.
* No Leaders are to be involved in the children’s ablutions. With the exception of young children when absolutely necessary and in sight of another leader.
* Leader is to check the toilet first before the child goes in then waits at the door until the child is done.
* Leaders are expected to call a parent should a toddler need a nappy change.
* All leaders can be clearly identified through nametags, T-shirts or other clearly identifiable means.
* In the case of children with disabilities (mental or physical) individual supervision guidelines suited to the child will be worked out in partnership with the parents/caregivers.
* Parents/caregivers ONLY to change soiled nappies – helpers are NOT ALLOWED to do this.
* When taking pre-schoolers to the toilet, let another adult know what you are doing. Only take children that can use the toilet independently, otherwise you will need to get the parent/caregiver.
* Stand outside the door, while the child uses the toilet independently.
* Have an adult outside by playground supervising, if there are children playing outside.
* First Aid Kit is available in the kitchen cupboard (inside main door on left) if there is an injury.
* Please record any injury in the book located in the First Aid Box.
* Any incident, more than a plaster, needs to be reported to the Team Leader and recorded on the Incident and Accident Reporting Form, located in a folder in the office.
* Try to settle upset children as much as possible, but if they continue to be very upset, then their parent/caregiver can be sent for. It is a good idea to discuss with each parent who leaves their baby/child what they would prefer to be done if their child cries, as every parent is different.

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**Access to children guideline:**

**Definition:**

This policy restricts access to children when they are under the care of the Children’s Ministry.

**Rationale:**

This policy provides a procedure to provide appropriate access to children when access is

contested.

**Guideline:**

* The registration sheet is to be completed before any child is left in the care of the Children’s Ministry Team. The registration form will advise on who may have access to the child.
* It is recommended that churches have a check in/out policy, for caregivers to comply with weekly. This is to restrict adult access to children but also for an emergency so the leaders will know how many children are in their care.
* Caregivers and prospective leaders are welcome to observe and participate in the programme at the discretion of the Primary Leader of the group. If in the opinion of the Primary Leader an adult is disruptive or behaving inappropriately, they should be asked to modify their behaviour or leave the room.
* Children from birth to Year 2 at school will be supervised until they are picked them up by a designated adult.
* Children in Year 3 and older will be released 10 minutes after the service ends, or can be picked up by an adult earlier.
* As a courtesy Parents should pick their children up within 10 minutes of the service ending.
* Special needs children and children from parents under custody disputes (no matter what age) are only released to a guardian.

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**Touching guideline:**

**Rationale:**

Children need to be touched, but the Standard of Conduct states that inappropriate touching is to be avoided by Leaders. As an aid to Leaders inappropriate touching is defined below.

**Definition:**

* Inappropriate touching is bodily contact with any part of the body except:  Hands
* Arms
* Shoulders
* Upper Back
* A child may only sit on a leader’s lap if the child initiates the event.
* A leader may only hug a child if the child initiates the event.
* Sideways hugs are best.  In the case of a child needing comfort a leader must use their discretion.
* If a child or their Caregiver asks a Leader to discontinue contact, this should be done immediately.

**Guidelines:**

* Be aware of how you are being perceived by the child you may be in contact with, and by others who may be observing you.
* Be aware that different cultures have different standards for inappropriate touching.
* Different situations may also demand different standards.
* Do not kiss or cuddle unwisely or do anything that is potentially sexual.
* Be aware of children using sexual language or innuendo that is inappropriate for their age.

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**What is child protection?**

Child protection is the response to the different ways in which a young person’s or child’s physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health are damaged by the actions of another person.

**What you should do:**

* Listen to the child/young person
* Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone.
* Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the child/young person to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture.
* It is not the role of the worker is to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the named child protection officer.  If necessary, speak immediately to the Local Authority or NSPCC for further advice and guidance.

**What you should NOT do:**

* Volunteers should not begin investigating the matter themselves.
* Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.
* Do not form your own opinions ad decide to do nothing.

**Things to say or do:**

* ‘What you are telling me is very important’
* ‘This is not your fault’  ‘I am sorry that this has happened/is happening’
* ‘You were right to tell someone’
* ‘What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you’
* Made notes soon after the event. Try to write exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions or conjecture.

**Things NOT to say or do:**

* Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?
* Do not say ‘are you sure?’
* Do not show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief
* Do not make false promises

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**In case of an emergency:**

* See the Emergency Evacuation Procedures attached to the wall in each room. Please become familiar with the exit procedures - see attached.
* Account for the children in your care and exit the building as indicated under the guidance of a Warden.
* In case of an Earthquake, you will need the children to drop to the floor, if possible go under a table and hold on. You will need to hold and protect babies and young children.
* In case of other emergencies, follow general guidelines and the direction of the Leader or Warden in your area.

**Whakatane Baptist Church**

**Purpose:**

To provide guidelines and practices for the health and safety of our children and families

during Covid-19 under Alert Level 1 status.

**Alert Level 1:**

At Alert Level 1, the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and transmission in the New Zealand

community is very low. Movement around the country, and most other restrictions and legal

requirements on businesses, services and individuals have been relaxed. COVID-19 is still

uncontrolled overseas, so we must continue to be vigilant.

There are no legal requirements for business and services at Alert Level 1, however we, as

a faith community, desire to follow the public health guidelines to protect those within our

community.

**Guidelines:**

* Encourage people who are unwell must stay home
* Encourage children and volunteers to wash hands and/or use hand sanitiser
* Encourage children and volunteers to cough or sneeze into their elbow or into a tissue and safely dispose of the tissue immediately
* Encourage volunteers to keep surfaces clean
* Encourage physical distancing where practical  A church QR code is available for families to help keep track their movements

**For further information in relation to health and safety for Covid-19, please see the**

**Whakatane Baptist Church Covid-19 Policy Guidelines.**

**If you have any concerns please discuss with your Children’s Ministry Leader/Pastor as soon as possible.**