



Bishops' Conference of Scotland

**NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND
VULNERABLE ADULTS**

**AWARENESS & SAFETY
IN OUR CATHOLIC
COMMUNITIES**

Welcome Guide

Information Line:

0141 353 1177

2007

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our challenge in producing this document is clear and straightforward: to answer the real life questions that face members of the Church when working with others to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect.

Meeting that challenge, however, is a complex and lengthy process. Bishops, clergy, religious, advisers and other personnel at the diocesan offices and parishes within the Church in Scotland have all taken part in the extensive consultation that is required. Other key members of the Church's diocesan team, as well as staff from key agencies, have also played their part.

The Catholic Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (COPCA) policies have been formative documents in the development of these policies. Local Authority Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Guidelines have also been a valuable source together with the Manuals for Child Protection and Safe Practice from the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Services, the Church of Scotland and the Episcopal Church.

Bishops' Conference of Scotland
National Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults
Diocesan Advisers
National Reference Group

THE PROTECTION
OF
CHILDREN

1. Welcome

Without people like you, the Church's work among children and young people would not be possible.

The purpose of this booklet is to give you basic information to help you:

- *keep the children and young people you work with and yourselves safe from harm, and*
- *know what to do if you have concerns about a child or young person.*

Please speak to your Parish Co-ordinator for further information.

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland has appointed:

- **Jackie McCaig**
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to co-ordinate the development of policies in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults within the Church community.

2. *Useful Telephone Numbers*

This page is for you to record telephone numbers that you might need in the future.

Contact Names/Numbers

The Leader of my Group is:

Parish Co-ordinator in my Church:

Members of Clergy:

Diocesan Adviser:

National Information Line: 0141 353 1177

National Co-ordinator: 0141 332 7177

PA to National Co-ordinator: 0141 332 7177

Police:

Social Work Services:

Care Commission:

3. Induction

To demonstrate that the work of volunteers with children is valued highly, the Catholic Church operates a robust recruitment procedure.

The following checklist shows what should be covered during that period:

1. An application form has been completed and references taken up.
2. A job description has been signed and there is a clear understanding of role and who to report to.
3. An interview has taken place.
4. A self-declaration form has been completed and the applicant has gone through the 'Disclosure' process.

A probationary period will follow during which people will be guided and supported in work with children.

1. People know where they will be working and where the resources are.
2. Everyone has been made aware of the group's policies and procedures (child protection, health and safety, transport, etc.).
3. Everyone has received a 'Summary of Good Practice for Paid and Voluntary Workers' card.
4. Everyone has been introduced to children, parents, carers and colleagues as appropriate.
5. There are regular support meetings to enable people to discuss work and roles.
6. Everyone has been offered relevant training.

4. What is Child Protection About?

4.1 The Code of Good Practice

Mission Statement

“The Catholic Church in Scotland is concerned with the lives, safety, wholeness and well-being of each individual person within God’s purpose for everyone.

It seeks to safeguard the welfare of people of all ages who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations.

As a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us, ordained, professed, paid and voluntary members, to work together to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults.”

The Poster containing the Mission Statement should be displayed in all Parishes.

Why Do We Need a Code of Good Practice?

The Catholic Church has a special regard for and mission to children and young people. Everyone has a responsibility to put the needs of children/young people first and every Parish needs to set an example by safeguarding the children/young people with whom it comes into contact. Recent legislation concerning safeguarding means that the Church must show that all reasonable steps have been taken to create a safe environment for children, young people and Church workers.

What Does the Code Aim to Achieve?

The Code of Good Practice helps to ensure:

- ***all our Parishes work to develop safe and nurturing environments for all;***
- ***safe recruitment procedures allow only those people suitable to work with children and young people to be appointed;***
- ***leaders and volunteers know what to do if they see or hear something that makes them concerned about the safety of a child or young person;***
- ***the Church has a clear referral process and everyone feels supported and valued in their work.***

4.2 Building Good Relationships

The expectation of all who provide and receive care in our Church today should be to feel loved and safe.

Our aim should be to build easy, open and trusting relationships, i.e.:

- *do we listen to children/young people, get to know them and act as good 'role models'?*
- *do we put them in touch with the right people if they have difficulties or problems?*
- *do we respect and value others, and how does this show itself in our behaviour?*
- *do we feel respected and valued by others while working within the Church?*

4.3 Health and Safety

Keeping children and young people safe is about being aware of and minimising risk. It is everyone's job to make sure that health and safety is a priority. You may want to consider the following:

- (1) *Do you know where the fire exits and extinguishers are; have you been involved in any fire drills?*
- (2) *Do you have easy access to a telephone for emergencies?*
- (3) *Do you know where the First Aid Box is and who the First Aiders are; is there an accident report book?*
- (4) *If a child/young person is injured during a Church activity, who is responsible for informing the parents and what procedures are in place for doing this?*
- (5) *Do you know if any children/young people in your group have special medical needs? (e.g. insulin)*
- (6) *Do you obtain the written permission of parents for activities?*
- (7) *Are parents well informed about drop-off and collection arrangements – do you ask them not to leave their children/young people until they are sure the leaders have arrived?*
- (8) *Do you check the premises and equipment regularly to ensure they are safe? Are there areas of the Church and buildings out of bounds to children/that require a higher level of supervision?*
- (9) *Do you monitor who enters and leaves the hall?*
- (10) *Are cleaning materials child-proof and safely stored away?*
- (11) *Are the toilets well lit and is the water at a reasonable temperature, so as not to scald?*

If you have any concerns about health and safety issues, report them to your Parish Co-ordinator.

4.4 Hugging and Touching

We are often led to believe that physical contact between an adult and a child is unacceptable and must be avoided; this is not the case.

- *Touch should be related to the child's/young person's needs and not the adult's.*
- *Keep everything public – a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.*
- *If a child/young person is upset you may comfort them.*
- *How you comfort a child/young person depends on how old the child is and the context.*
- *Touch can demonstrate love and care, providing reassurance when needed.*
- *It is inappropriate and unwanted physical contact that must be avoided.*
- *Children/young people are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.*
- *When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc.) encourage the child/young person to do what they can manage themselves but consider the child's/young person's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.*

4.5 Supporting a Worried Child/Young Person

Children and young people sometimes need to talk about things that are bothering them. When they do, they need a safe place and a safe person to share their worries with.

To ensure confidentiality without compromising your own or the child's safety, tell another adult where you are going and why.

4.6 Working Alone with Children/Young People

Although it may sometimes be necessary and helpful for you to speak with a child alone, it is good practice, as far as possible, not to be regularly left alone in charge of a group. This is to ensure that your care and safety needs, and those of the children and young people, are met appropriately.

When considering adult/child ratios, you should consider:

- *the nature and location of activities;*
- *the age range of the children/young people;*
- *the behavioural and emotional needs of the children/young people;*
- *what would happen in the event of a child/young person or worker becoming ill or having an accident.*

Check the manual '**Awareness and Safety in our Catholic Communities**' for guidance on adult : child ratios.

4.7 Transport Arrangements

Parents may be able to make their own arrangements for transporting their children/young people to events.

If it is necessary to provide transport make sure that:

- *there is a minimum of two adults in the vehicle;*
- *parental consent has been given and collection arrangements are agreed;*
- *children/young people must sit in the rear seats of the car and wear seatbelts;*
- *car seat legislation is complied with?*

There is a transport permission form in the 'Awareness and Safety in our Catholic Communities' manual.

4.8 Intimate Care Needs

The management of all children and young people with intimate care needs must be carefully planned.

Intimate care that involves helping with toileting, nappy changing, washing or the administration of medicine must always be discussed with the parents/carers of the child/young person. No child/young person should be attended to in a way that causes distress or embarrassment. A child's/young person's right to privacy should be respected.

You must endeavour to undertake only those tasks that the child/young person is clearly unable to do him/herself.

4.9 Support and Supervision

During your probationary period you can expect to be supervised and offered opportunities to discuss your work and your feelings about it.

Regular get-togethers for all those volunteering will give support and the opportunity for airing ideas and views.

5. When Things Are Not As They Should Be – Children and Young People Can Suffer Harm in Many Ways

5.1 Definitions of Harm

(i) ***Physical***

Actual or attempted physical injury to a child.

(ii) ***Sexual***

The involvement of children and young people in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent.

(iii) ***Emotional***

Failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs so as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child. Includes taunting, shouting, ridiculing, negative criticism, threats or verbal attacks.

(iv) ***Neglect***

Failing to provide for the child's basic needs of food, warmth, clothing, emotional security, physical safety and well-being.

(v) ***Non-organic failure to thrive***

Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated. This may result from inadequate diet, lack of emotional support or lack of physical care.

In addition, children can also find themselves in abusive situations caused by, for example:

- ***drug/alcohol abuse;***
- ***domestic violence;***
- ***bullying;***
- ***verbal abuse.***

5.2 Bullying

Bullying is a big fear for many children and young people and can destroy their happiness and well-being.

Bullying hurts – no-one deserves to be a victim of bullying.

These are ways children and young people have described bullying:

- *being called names or teased;*
- *being pushed or pulled about;*
- *being hit or attacked;*
- *having your possessions taken and thrown around;*
- *having rumours spread about you;*
- *being ignored and left out;*
- *being forced to hand over money or possessions;*
- *being attacked because of your religion or colour.*

If bullying does occur, children/young people should be encouraged to tell and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

If a child/young person tells you that he/she is being bullied:

- *take time to listen;*
- *take what has been said seriously;*
- *reassure that he or she is right to tell;*
- *let the child/young person know what you are going to do next;*
- *address any concerns about the child's/young person's safety;*
- *contact the person to whom you are responsible to discuss the matter fully.*

Eliminating bullying is the responsibility of all of us working together. In all our activities children and young people will be encouraged to be polite, helpful and considerate to others.

5.3 What is a Child?

A “child” is defined as anyone under 16 years of age at the time when an offence or alleged offence took place. In certain circumstances, such as children with additional needs or children subject to supervision requirements, the upper age limit for protecting from abuse may be extended to 18 years. However, in the Church we are concerned about the safety and well-being of all people, regardless of age.

5.4 Who Causes Harm?

There is no stereotype. In almost all cases, the person who causes harm is known to and often trusted by the child or young person.

5.5 Where Does It Happen?

In the home, at school, in Church or anywhere where children and young people spend their time.

5.6 To Whom Does It Happen?

To children and young people of any age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability.

5.7 Effects of Harming a Child or Young Person

It is important to recognise the extremely damaging and often lasting effect on children/young people of serious abuse. This is true irrespective of the nature of the abuse, as child abuse is not limited to sexual acts but includes physical injury, emotional abuse and neglect. The effects can include:

- *behavioural problems;*
- *relationship difficulties;*
- *educational problems;*
- *mental health problems;*
- *drug and alcohol problems;*
- *suicide and other self-harm;*
- *in extreme cases, death.*

Children/young people can be helped – it's the job of everyone who works with children/young people to recognise the possible signs of harm so that any child/young person who has been badly treated is given help to recover.

5.8 Signs and Indicators

You must never attempt to decide whether a child/young person has been subjected to abuse; leave it to the professionals.

You may find yourself in a position to notice changes in a child/young person. These changes might be physical injuries or symptoms of abuse such as unusual behaviour or signs of distress.

Considering the following may prove to be helpful:

- ***Is the injury minor, superficial, treated and easily explained?***
- ***Is the child/young person constantly hungry, tired with poor personal hygiene?***
- ***Is the child/young person often late, absent or frequently not collected from activities?***
- ***Does the child/young person play out sexual acts in too knowledgeable a way with other children/young people?***
- ***Does the child/young person hint about secrets they cannot tell?***
- ***Does the child/young person begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating, have unexplained sources of money?***

A knowledge of indicators of abuse can help to alert you to the possibility that a child/young person could have experiences of abuse.

However, whilst you must remain vigilant, it is important to keep an open mind. You have to consider that child abuse could be one of several explanations for behaviour that causes concern.

If you have any concerns about a child, you must seek help and advice. See the Church's Referral System on page 19.

6. Responding to Allegations/Concerns of Abuse

6.1 Listen, Record, Refer

When a child/young person is disclosing details of abuse it is important that you know how to respond.

If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse:

- listen with care and let the child or young person talk;
- take what is said by the child or young person seriously;
- re-assure that he or she is right to tell;
- affirm the feelings as expressed by the child/young person;
- do not give a guarantee of confidentiality or secrecy;
- do not ask leading questions and/or push for information;
- ask open-ended questions that seek to clarify information;
- do not prejudge, dismiss, minimise or express opinion;
- remain neutral;
- avoid displaying emotions as this may hinder the child/young person from giving further information;
- do not introduce personal or third-party experiences of abuse;
- let the child/young person know what you are going to do next, and that you need to tell someone else;
- explain that you will only tell people whose job it is to keep children/young people safe.

DO NOT INVESTIGATE.

6.1.1 Record as soon as possible. Write down everything the child/young person has said to you using the child's/young person's own words. (A recording form for this purpose is in the 'Awareness and Safety in our Catholic Communities' manual.) The key features of your record are that it should be accurate, objective, concise, immediate, dated, signed and confidential.

6.1.2 Refer

Report what you have heard or seen to the Diocesan Adviser (or, if unavailable, to the person to whom you are responsible). In an emergency situation, where you have immediate concerns for the safety of the child/young person, you **must** contact the Police/Social Work Services/Medical Services direct (see the Church's Referral System on page 19).

Keep what you have heard or seen confidential between yourself, the child/young person and the person to whom you have reported your concerns.

Seek support for yourself. It is recognised that dealing with concerns or all allegations relating to child abuse can be stressful. Speak to your Group Leader/Parish Priest or Diocesan Adviser.

Parish (Tel. No.)
Diocesan Office (Tel. No.)
Diocesan Adviser's Name
National Office (Tel. No.)	0141 353 1177

6.2 Helpful Responses

- You were right to tell.
- Thank you for telling me.
- You were brave to tell.
- Do you want to tell me anything else?
- It is not your fault.
- I will talk to who will know what to do.
- It is okay to feel

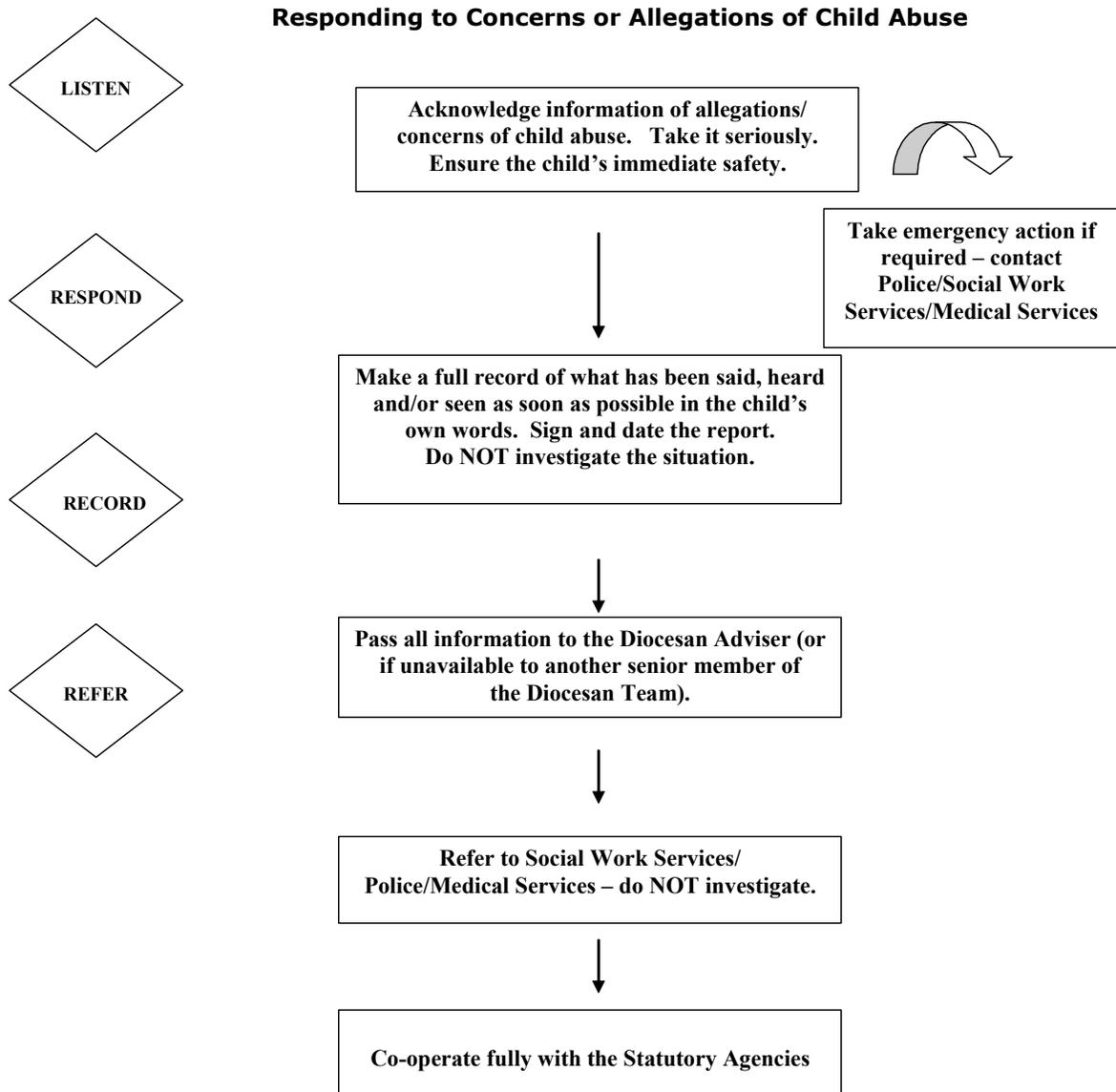
6.3 What to Avoid Saying

- That is shocking!
- That can't be true!
- Did he touch?
- Did it happen in?
- Why didn't you say before?
- Don't tell anyone.
- This is really serious.
- Are you sure?
- Did your Dad do this?
- I won't tell anyone.
- Why did you let him do that?
- What did you do/say?
- What were you wearing?

6.4 Why You Must Not Investigate

- Social Work Services and the Police have the statutory responsibility to undertake investigation of child protection enquiries.
- Referral to the Police and Social Work Services must be made immediately.
- Failure to do so leaves the potential for subsequent abuse of children/young people.
- You are not trained/authorised in your role as a volunteer in the Church. You must remember that in Church situations you must follow the Church's policy, which is to refer, **not** to investigate.
- Knowing the individuals involved can sometimes hinder the helper and prevent constructive support being given.
- Confronting an alleged abuser can provoke him/her to further action.
- The person causing harm may have the opportunity to construct a false alibi or could 'disappear'.
- The child/young person may become confused or distressed if asked to retell and review their disclosure. A child/young person who presents confusing information will not be thought capable of presenting well in court.
- Physical evidence may be lost.

6.5 The Catholic Church's Referral System



7. What Next?

- (1) Check what you have understood from this booklet – there are some questions on the following pages to help you.
- (2) Read the Summary Card again.
- (3) Attend Child Protection Training. Speak to your Parish Co-ordinator for details of an event near you.

Finally ...

- Enjoy your work with children/young people in the Church.
- If you have any questions, worries or concerns, speak to your Group Leader/Parish Priest/Parish Co-ordinator/Diocesan Adviser.

8. Question and Answer Explanations

Now check what you have understood. Put a cross/tick next to the answer that you think is correct. To check your answers and find out why an answer is correct, refer to the explanations in the next section.

1. The Church has a Child Protection Policy because:

- (a) It distrusts everyone who wants to work with children.
- (b) Everyone has one these days.
- (c) It values children's ministry.

2. Child Protection in the Church is about:

- (a) Catching child abusers.
- (b) Creating safe and nurturing environments for children, young people and adults.
- (c) Having a written policy.

3. Health and Safety is the responsibility of:

- (a) Everyone.
- (b) The person in charge of the group.
- (c) The Parish Co-ordinator.

4. It is okay to cuddle a child/young person:

- (a) When you need cheering up.
- (b) If they are hurt/upset and you ask if they would like a hug
- (c) Because you particularly like this child.

5. If a one-to-one situation with a child is unavoidable, you:

- (a) Refuse to talk to the child without another adult present.
- (b) Ask another child to witness the discussion.
- (c) Ensure another adult knows where you are and why.

6. **A child who is potty training has an “accident”, you:**
- (a) Wait for the child’s parents to arrive.
 - (b) Call across the room to your colleague to let them know what has happened and where you are taking the child to change their clothes.
 - (c) Discreetly let another adult know that you are taking the child to the toilet to change their clothes.
7. **A child tells you that his best friend in the group is calling him names. He says this is the first time it has happened. You:**
- (a) Reassure him that he has done the right thing by telling you and, at the appropriate time, have a quiet word with the culprit.
 - (b) Tell him not to be a tell-tale.
 - (c) Report the incident to the Parish Co-ordinator.
8. **A 17 year old in your youth group tells you she has been hit by another girl in the group, you:**
- (a) Reassure her that she had done the right thing by telling you, but regret you are unable to do anything because she is no longer legally a child.
 - (b) Reassure her and ask her what help and support she needs.
 - (c) Record the incident in a confidential log-book, but do nothing.
9. **Who is more likely to harm a child?**
- (a) Someone the child knows well and trusts.
 - (b) A stranger.
 - (c) An acquaintance.

10. **People who harm children come from a wide variety of social and intellectual backgrounds.**
- (a) True.
- (b) False.
- (c) Only people from “poor” areas abuse children.
11. **A normally outgoing child has become withdrawn and moody and appears at the group with a large bruise on his leg. You:**
- (a) Tell his parents he is being abused when they come to collect him.
- (b) Do nothing but go to bed that night worrying about the child.
- (c) Record your observations and report them to your Group Leader/ Parish Priest/Parish Co-ordinator/Diocesan Adviser.
12. **A 13 year old in your group tells you her father has been hitting her every night for the last week. How do you respond?**
- (a) That’s dreadful! We’ll have to go to the police.
- (b) Thank you for telling me; you’ve done the right thing. I will have to speak to the people whose job it is to protect children; they will know what to do.
- (c) I know your Dad; he is a nice man. I’m sure he wouldn’t do something like that unless he was provoked.
13. **If you observe a colleague behaving inappropriately towards a child, you must:**
- (a) Do nothing; nobody in the Church would deliberately harm a child.
- (b) Follow the Church’s referral procedure.
- (c) Try to reason with the person concerned.
14. **If you receive an allegation about an adult, or about yourself, you must:**
- (a) Leave it for a while to see if it blows over.
- (b) Record the facts and follow the Church’s referral procedure.
- (c) Try to reason with the person concerned.

15. In urgent cases, where you are worried about the immediate safety of a child, you should first:

- (a) Report to the person to whom you are responsible.
- (b) Ask a colleague for advice.
- (c) Contact your local Social Work Services/Police.

16. When should you NOT share your concerns with parents?

- (a) If the child is upset.
- (b) If you think it could put the child at greater risk.
- (c) You must always share your concerns with parents.

17. Why should you NOT investigate any concerns you have about a child?

- (a) What other people do is none of your business.
- (b) You could be wrong and upset the family.
- (c) You are not trained/authorised in your role as a children's worker in the Church.

Answer Explanations

1. (c) **The Church has a Child Protection Policy because it values children and those who work with them.** *The Code of Good Practice* was not introduced to undermine trust or create suspicion, but to help ensure that the trust is honoured.
2. (b) **Child Protection in the Church is about creating safe and nurturing environments for children, young people and adults.** We want to create an environment where the risks of accident and harm are minimised and a place where those who have been harmed will be listened to and believed.
3. (a) **Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone.**
4. (b) **It is okay to cuddle a child/young person if they are hurt/upset and you ask if they would like hug.** Even a baby who can't yet speak can give an indication through non-verbal communication whether a cuddle is welcome.
5. (c) **If a one-to-one situation with a child is unavoidable, you ensure another adult knows where you are and why.**
6. (c) **You must respect a young person's right to privacy.**
7. (a) **You reassure him that he has done the right thing by telling you and, at the appropriate time, have a quiet word with the culprit.** Calling people names is not acceptable behaviour and this has to be made clear. You will want to keep an eye on the situation and make sure that this is only a 'one-off' and not evidence of bullying. If the situation develops, you would want to discuss with your colleagues how to address the issue within the group and let the Parish Co-ordinator know what has happened and what you propose to do about it.
8. (b) **You are in a position of trust and the young person obviously feels the need to confide in you.** She may only want someone to listen to her, but she may want you to help her and take action. You should record the incident and report to the Parish Co-ordinator in case the situation worsens.
9. (a) **In almost all cases, the person who causes harm is known to and often trusted by the child.**
10. (a) **People who harm children come from a wide variety of social and intellectual backgrounds; there is no stereotype.**
11. (c) **It is your responsibility to record your observations and pass your concerns to the person to whom you are responsible.** It is not your responsibility to diagnose or investigate.

12. (b) **You say, 'Thank you for telling me; you've done the right thing. I will have to speak to the people whose job it is to protect children; they will know what to do'.** You may be shocked by what you hear, but you must try not to show it to the child and you must not allow your personal knowledge of someone to cloud the issue.
13. (b) **If you observe a colleague behaving inappropriately towards a child you must follow the Church's referral procedure.** Although it may be difficult, your first responsibility is to protect the child.
14. (b) **If you receive an allegation about an adult, or about yourself, you must record the facts and follow the Church's referral procedure.** Even if you don't believe what you hear, you must still follow the referral procedure.
15. (c) **In urgent cases, where you are worried about the immediate safety of a child, you should first contact your local Police and ask for the Family Protection Unit.** This department will be a mixture of Social Workers and Police Officers.
16. (b) **You should NOT share your concerns with parents if you think it could put the child at greater risk.** It is the responsibility of the child protection authority to inform the parents.
17. (c) **You should NOT investigate any concerns you have about a child because you are not trained/authorised in your role as a children's worker/volunteer in the Church.** Your responsibility is to refer any concerns you may have to someone who is trained and authorised to investigate. Do not ask for more information – if you question the child, it could jeopardise any future enquiry.

9. Child Protection in the Catholic Church

The National Co-ordinator for the Bishops' Conference of Scotland:

- *continues the development of policy and procedure on child protection;*
- *works with the Diocesan Child Protection Teams to ensure that the Catholic Church's Policy is implemented;*
- *facilitates training in child protection of children's workers, co-ordinators and all those in ministry by offering training sessions;*
- *develops resources relating to child protection;*
- *provides support, advice and guidance;*
- *liaises with other Church denominations, statutory bodies and other voluntary organisations.*

THE PROTECTION
OF
VULNERABLE ADULTS

10. Welcome

Without people like you, the Church's work among vulnerable adults would not be possible.

The purpose of this booklet is to give you basic information to help you:

- *keep the vulnerable adults you work with and yourselves safe from harm, and*
- *know what to do if you have concerns about a vulnerable adult.*

Please speak to your Parish Co-ordinator for further information.

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland has appointed:

- **Jackie McCaig**
National Co-ordinator
National Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults
274 Bath Street
Glasgow
G2 4JR

Tel. No. **0141 332 7177**
Fax No. **0141 353 1177**
E-mail: **jmccaig@nopcva.org**
Web: **www.nopcva.org**

with administrative support provided by:

- **Mary Stein**
PA to National Co-ordinator
National Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults
274 Bath Street
Glasgow
G2 4JR

Tel. No. **0141 332 7177**
Fax No. **0141 353 1177**
E-mail: **mstein@nopcva.org**
Web: **www.nopcva.org**

to co-ordinate the development of policies in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults within the Church community.

11. Useful Telephone Numbers

This page is for you to record telephone numbers that you might need in the future.

Contact Names/Numbers

The Leader of my Group is:

.....

Parish Co-ordinator in my Church:

.....

Members of Clergy:

.....

.....

Diocesan Adviser:

National Information Line: 0141 353 1177

National Co-ordinator: 0141 332 7177

PA to National Co-ordinator: 0141 332 7177

Police:

.....

Social Work Services:

.....

Care Commission:

12. Induction

To demonstrate that the work of volunteers with vulnerable adults is valued highly, the Catholic Church operates a robust recruitment procedure.

The following checklist shows what should be covered during that period:

1. An application form has been completed and references taken up.
2. A job description has been signed and there is a clear understanding of role and who to report to.
3. An interview has taken place.
4. A self-declaration form has been completed and the applicant has gone through the 'Disclosure' process.

A probationary period will follow during which people will be guided and supported in work with vulnerable adults.

1. People know where they will be working and where the resources are.
2. Everyone has been made aware of the group's policies and procedures (vulnerable adult protection, health and safety, transport, etc.).
3. Everyone has received a 'Summary of Good Practice for Paid and Voluntary Workers' card.
4. Everyone has been introduced to vulnerable adults, parents, carers and colleagues as appropriate.
5. There are regular support meetings to enable people to discuss work and roles.
6. Everyone has been offered relevant training.

13. Protecting Vulnerable Adults

13.1 The Code of Good Practice

Mission Statement

“The Catholic Church in Scotland is concerned with the lives, safety, wholeness and well-being of each individual person within God’s purpose for everyone.

It seeks to safeguard the welfare of people of all ages who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations.

As a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us, ordained, professed, paid and voluntary members, to work together to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults.”

The Poster containing the Mission Statement should be displayed in all Parishes.

Why Do We Need a Code of Good Practice?

To ensure that all adults have the right to be safe, secure and protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

We recognise that some adults are vulnerable due to their age, disability, mental health problems or general poor health and may need protection to ensure their rights are maintained.

It is the duty of all of us to take steps to try to prevent abuse from happening and to act appropriately when it does occur by reporting concerns that we may have relating to possible or suspected abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult.

Responsibilities that are common to all agencies and organisations are to:

- ***recognise concerns about abuse of vulnerable adults;***
- ***take steps to protect the individual;***
- ***co-operate with other agencies;***
- ***share information;***
- ***keep accurate records.***

13.2 The Facts

Most adults and older people with mental illness, physical or learning disabilities, or other additional needs manage to live their lives comfortably and securely either independently or with the assistance from caring relatives, friends, neighbours, professionals and volunteers. However, for a small number, dependence on someone may lead to abuse, exploitation, conflict, mistreatment or neglect.

Abuse of vulnerable adults has in recent years received much awaited attention from the Government. It is vital that as a volunteer working with vulnerable adults in the Catholic Church in Scotland you understand the nature of abuse in the lives of vulnerable adults and have knowledge about the extent of abuse.

13.3 Who is Vulnerable?

All adults could be considered potentially vulnerable from time to time. You may come into contact with people who will be vulnerable to abuse, and some people will be more vulnerable than others. For example, a person with limited or no verbal communication may be particularly vulnerable to abuse as they may have difficulty sharing their distress with people who could help them, especially if they have no code for describing words relating to abuse.

A vulnerable adult may be a person who:

- *is elderly and frail;*
- *has a mental disorder including dementia or a personality disorder;*
- *has a physical or sensory disability;*
- *has learning disabilities;*
- *has a severe physical illness;*
- *is a substance misuser;*
- *is an unpaid carer;*
- *is homeless.*

The presence of a disability or age alone does not signify that an adult is necessarily vulnerable, i.e. unable to take care of themselves from abuse and exploitation.

14. Abuse

14.1 What is Abuse?

Definitions of abuse are varied. Abuse means different things to different people. However, abuse always constitutes a violation of rights.

Abuse involves elements of power imbalance, exploitation and the absence of full consent.

Abuse is often divided into different forms or types of abuse.

It can be difficult to separate the categories of abuse as some indicators are common to all forms of abuse, e.g. low self-esteem.

14.2 Types and Forms of Abuse

These descriptions are the most common.

14.2.1 PHYSICAL ABUSE

The deliberate infliction of pain, physical harm or injury, for example:

- *hitting;*
- *slapping;*
- *punching;*
- *pushing;*
- *kicking;*
- *hair pulling.*

Indicators include:

- *bruising;*
- *a history of unexplained falls and/or minor injuries;*
- *fractures not consistent with falls or explanations of the injury.*

14.2.2 SEXUAL ABUSE

Any act with a sexual content carried out to which a vulnerable adult has not given consent, or could not consent, or was pressurised into consenting to, and may include:

- *rape or sexual assault, fondling or inappropriate touching;*
- *sexual innuendos, offensive or suggestive language;*
- *sexual activity or viewing sexually explicit materials.*

Indicators include:

- *unexplained behaviour change – becoming aggressive, withdrawn, moody;*
- *unwillingness to be with a particular person;*
- *indicators that will be apparent only to medical, nursing or someone entrusted with personal care.*

14.2.3 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Any pattern of behaviour by another person that results in psychological harm to a vulnerable adult, and may include:

- *threats of harm or abandonment, insults, ridicule, bullying, enforced isolation, deprivation of contact, lack of privacy or choice;*
- *denial of dignity;*
- *harassment, verbal abuse;*
- *withdrawal from services or supportive networks.*

Indicators include:

- *strain within the relationship, indications that the abuser acts differently with another person present than when alone with the vulnerable adult;*
- *an air of silence in the home when the alleged abuser is present;*
- *a general lack of consideration for the needs of the vulnerable adult;*
- *refusal to allow the vulnerable adult an opinion of their own.*

14.2.4 FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE

The misappropriation of the funds, theft or misuse of property of a vulnerable adult, and may include:

- *misuse of finances;*
- *theft or fraudulent use of money;*
- *pressure in connection with wills or property or inheritance or financial transactions;*
- *misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.*

Indicators include:

- *situations where, despite having a personal income/pension, the vulnerable adult is without money soon after its receipt, particularly where that person is not able to spend money without assistance;*
- *unexplained shortage of money despite a seemingly adequate income.*

We need to be aware that a symptom of a person's increasing confusion or dementia may be an allegation of misuse of property or misuse of finances and may not be financial abuse. Such allegations should not be dismissed, but should be investigated having regard to the possibility that it may not be proven.

14.2.5 NEGLECT AND ACTS OF OMISSION

May be deliberate or by default where the abuser is not able to provide the care needed and may not recognise the need for that care to be given.

The abuser may also be neglecting her/himself.

Indicators include:

- *persistent hunger, loss of weight, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress;*
- *consistent lack of supervision for long periods, especially during activities that hold danger for the individual;*
- *denial of religious or cultural needs;*
- *constant fatigue or listlessness;*
- *physical problems and medical needs that are not addressed;*
- *failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services;*
- *withholding the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.*

14.2.6 DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

Can occur in many ways and frequently will include a combination of forms of abuse. What differentiates it from the other categories is that the abuse is motivated by a prejudice and discrimination against the individual because he or she is perceived to belong to a specific group or groups. These may be:

- *age;*
- *gender;*
- *sexual orientation;*
- *race;*
- *religion;*
- *cultural background;*
- *disability.*

Abuse may include – bullying, humiliation, harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

14.2.7 INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE/ABUSIVE REGIMES

Institutions may develop practices that may intentionally or unintentionally cause the abuse of vulnerable people. It is abuse that has become commonplace in a setting and that restricts the freedom of vulnerable adults, harms them or denies them human rights. This includes:

- *ignoring people's beliefs;*
- *expecting them to conform to the majority;*
- *disregarding special diets;*
- *providing a minimum 'standard' service and disregarding the individual needs of a person.*

14.2.8 SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual needs are real needs. Our caring, supportive programmes include opportunities to access spiritual fulfilment, **not** to deny or **not** facilitate access to spiritual development or to force people to accept religious ideas or values. Vulnerable adults may be more susceptible to suggestion. We need to take care when interpreting their wishes on spiritual matters.

14.3 Who Might Be the Abuser?

There is a very straightforward answer to this question: the perpetrator could be anyone. Abusers may be individuals, groups or organisations.

Vulnerable adults may be abused by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, neighbours, friends and associates, carers, other vulnerable people, members of the public or complete strangers.

Vulnerable adults may also be abused by Church members, whether voluntary – undertaking tasks on behalf of the church with a vulnerable person – or professional – a member of clergy or other paid church worker.

In almost all cases, the person who causes harm is known and often trusted by the vulnerable person. Abuse will sometimes be deliberate, but it may also be an unintended consequence of ignorance or lack of awareness, or alternatively arise from frustration or lack of support.

Relatives who are main carers will often experience stress, distress, frustration and lack of respite from the caring role. This may lead to the unintended abuse of the person for whom they are providing care. Relatives who are main carers may be subject to abuse by the person for whom they are providing care. This abuse is often endured for long periods, is unreported and unnoticed.

The image of the unknown ‘stranger’ being the biggest risk is far from accurate. People are much more vulnerable to abuse by people they know.

Abuse can range from an individual shouting disrespectfully at an elderly woman to the Church having restricted access to toilet facilities, preventing someone from participating in events that are important to their social, emotional and spiritual well-being. It is important to note that poor practice can constitute abusive practice.

14.4 Where Does Abuse Occur?

Abuse can take place in any environment, e.g. an individual’s own home, a care setting, whilst on holiday, whilst out and about in the street, a public place, or a social or church setting.

14.5 The Effects of Abuse

The impact of abuse will vary from person to person. The consequences can be both physical and emotional. The impact can have both short/long-term effects.

15. *What Are We Doing to Protect Vulnerable Adults?*

As the saying goes: '**Prevention is better than cure**'.

Minimising the risk of abuse is the responsibility of all of us who are working with vulnerable people.

Vulnerable adults have the right to:

- *be treated with respect and dignity;*
- *privacy;*
- *be able to choose how they lead their lives;*
- *the protection of the Law;*
- *have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background;*
- *their chosen language or means of communication.*

You may wish to consider the following:

- Do you treat vulnerable adults with respect, referring to them by name?
- Do you act respectfully, such as knocking before entering their room/house, asking permission to join them, and respecting their privacy and possessions?
- When visiting, do you use cards or letters of authority?
- Do you respect differences, their likes and dislikes?
- Do you respect dignity and feelings; ask about personal preferences, forms of address and how much help might be required?
- Do you take care over language used? – Be positive, e.g. a person **has** a physical, mental or learning disability, they **are not** the disability.
- Do you use appropriate language and provide for those who do not have spoken language? Do you include all in conversation or question and answer sessions?
- Do you actively promote the empowerment and well-being of vulnerable adults through appropriate opportunities?

For all adults who have vulnerabilities our aim should be to:

- make the whole church premises and serving areas accessible and welcoming, not simply for people who use wheelchairs or have difficulty walking, but also for those who cannot hear or see everything, and for people who cannot ask for or read anything;
- think about appropriate forms of worship and provide them;
- ensure clear sight-lines to anything being presented for all, and consider the use of hearing loops in halls and meeting rooms where the vulnerable meet;
- remember the needs of carers;
- be aware that the abuse of vulnerable adults does happen; create an informed listening, watching and caring culture with this in mind;
- ensure that all workers with vulnerable adults take part in training.

16. Support and Supervision

Where there is, for example, a team of pastoral visitors, there should initially be training for new members and then regular meetings where issues are discussed with the member of Clergy or the person leading the team. This should be supportive and would be about the condition of health, emotional state, extent of care being given and required, and any concerns about the welfare of people visited.

If a group of vulnerable adults meets regularly as a Church group, those planning the activities and usually present should observe the behaviour of volunteers, and be able to discuss issues with them. It is best to have initial training, then 'get-togethers' for all those helping, about three times a year. This will give support and opportunity for airing ideas and views, and flag up the importance of the immediate reporting of any suspicion of harm to a vulnerable person.

17. Responding to Concerns or Allegations of Abuse

ACTION TO TAKE

If you are a church worker who becomes aware of a vulnerable adult who is being or has been abused, or you suspect is being or has been abused, the Church's Referral System should be followed (see the Church's Referral System on page 44):

- **If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, contact the emergency services, Police or Ambulance, by dialling 999.**
- Safeguard the vulnerable adult, if this is necessary. This may simply be making the person comfortable or ensuring that a reliable person stays with the vulnerable adult until the emergency services arrive. The vulnerable adult may be distressed, in which case someone will be required to remain with her/him with the emergency services.
- If the vulnerable adult makes the disclosure of abuse directly to you, listen carefully to what is said. Be sensitive to the fact that the person may be from a different cultural, religious or language background, or gender from you.
- Make a note of the words of the vulnerable adult, recording the details as fully as possible, including the time, date and location that the disclosure was made and the time, date, location and nature of the alleged abuse. Do this as soon as possible after the disclosure is made.
- Only seek clarification about the details of what has occurred. Do not prompt the person or ask leading questions. Remember that you are only receiving information that the person feels it necessary to tell you. ***You are not the investigating officer.***

Remember it is not up to you to judge the situation; allegations must always be reported to your immediate supervisor.

You may wish to seek advice from the Diocesan Adviser/National Co-ordinator for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

If a church worker or member of clergy is suspected or alleged to have abused a vulnerable adult, you should contact the Diocesan Adviser/Bishop/Congregational Leader/National Co-ordinator immediately.

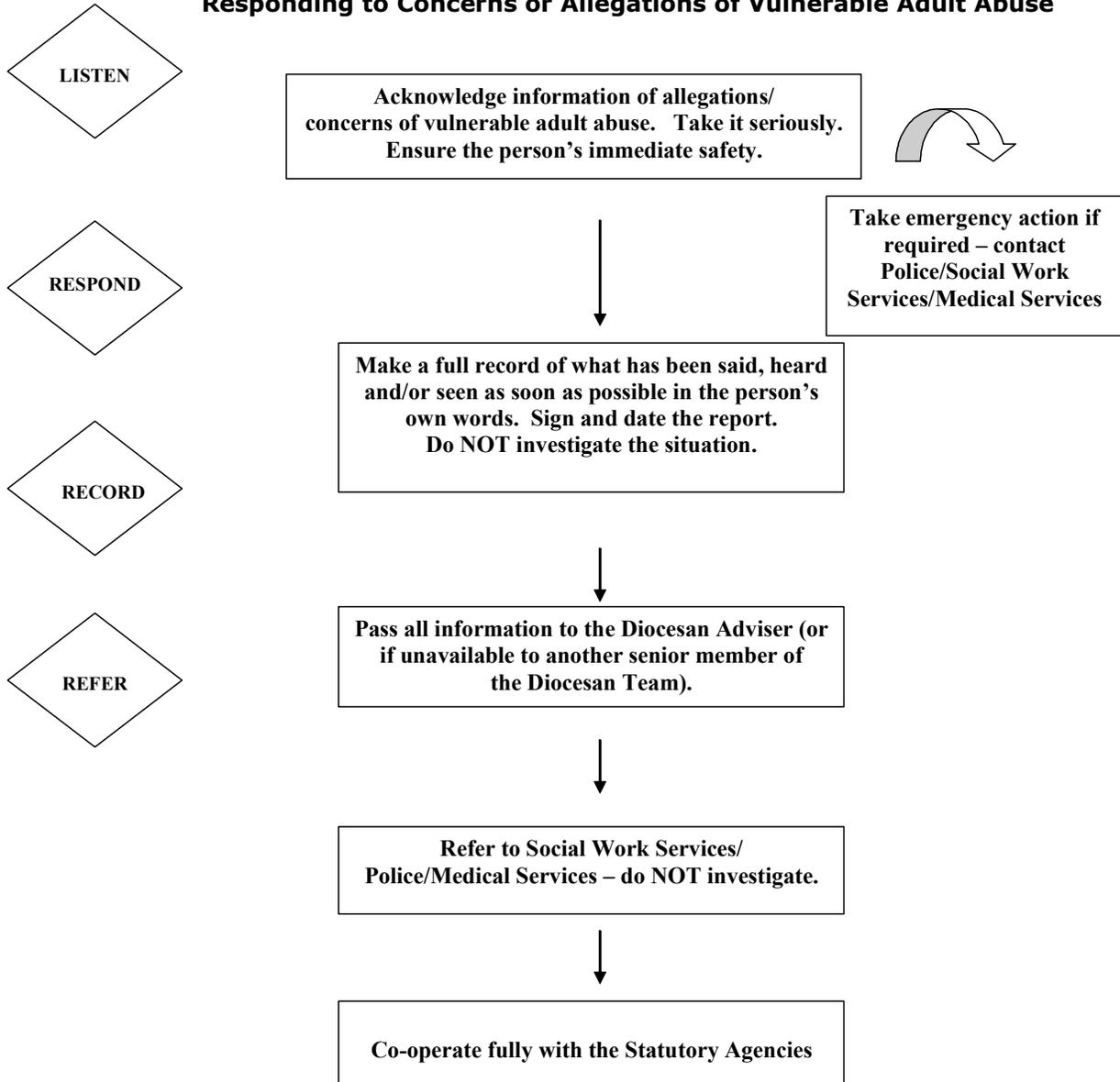
You may have reason to feel that an allegation is unfounded or exaggerated. However, it remains your responsibility to report the allegation or concern as outlined above. You should record your misgivings.

Principles:

- Any information gained about a vulnerable adult should be handled with sensitivity and should not be disclosed to others except on a 'need to know' basis; e.g. it will be necessary to provide relevant information to the person to whom you are responsible for your work and in particular to give details of any concerns about a vulnerable adult, especially if you think the person may be a victim of abuse. The person giving the disclosure should be made aware of this.
- The wishes of the person who may be experiencing abuse will be respected, unless there is a responsibility to override them. ***An individual's wishes cannot undermine an organisation's legal duty to act.***

The Church's Referral System

Responding to Concerns or Allegations of Vulnerable Adult Abuse



USEFUL CONTACTS

18. Useful Contacts

The following groups and organisations can provide information and support.

The National Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults
274 Bath Street
GLASGOW
G2 4JR

Tel. No. 0141 353 1177
E-mail: info@nopcva.org
Web: www.nopcva.org

Barnados

235 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh EH12 7AR
Tel. No. 0131 334 9893
Fax No. 0131 316 4008
Web: www.barnados.org.uk

ChildLine Scotland

18 Albion Street
Glasgow G1 1LH
Tel. No. 0141 552 1123
Fax No. 0141 552 3089
E-mail: scotland@childline.org.uk
Web: www.childline.org.uk
Helpline: 0800 1111

The Boys' Brigade

Scottish Headquarters
Carronvale House
Carronvale Road
Larbert FK5 3LH
Tel. No. 0132 456 2008
Fax No. 0132 455 2323
E-mail: carronvale@boys-brigade.org.uk

The Girls' Brigade

11a Woodside Crescent
Glasgow G3 7UL
Tel. No. 0141 332 1765
Fax No. 0141 331 2681
E-mail: q@girls-brigade-scotland.org.uk

Bullying Online

E-mail: help@bullying.co.uk
Web: www.bullying.co.uk

The Guide Association

Scottish Headquarters
16 Coates Crescent
Edinburgh EH3 7AH
Tel. No. 0131 226 4511
Fax No. 0131 220 4828
E-mail: GA_Scotland@guides.org.uk

Children 1st

83 Whitehouse Loan
Edinburgh EH9 1AT
Tel. No. 0131 446 2300
Fax No. 0131 446 2339
E-mail: children1st@zetnet.co.uk
Web: www.children1st.org.uk

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0DG
Tel. No. 0207 730 3300
Helpline: 0845 1205 204
Web: www.kidscape.org.uk

Children in Scotland

Princes House
5 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh EH2 4RG
Tel. No. 0131 228 8484
Fax No. 0131 228 8585
E-mail: infor@childreninscotland.org.uk
Web: www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Save the Children (Scotland)

7th Floor
Haymarket House
8 Clifton Terrace
Edinburgh EH12 5DR
Tel. No. 0131 527 8200
E-mail: scotland@scfuk.org.uk

The Scout Association

The Scottish Council
Fordell Firs, Hillend
Dunfermline
Fife KY11 7HQ
Tel. No. 01383 419073
Fax No. 01383 414892
E-mail: hq@scouts-scotland.org.uk

Action for Blind People
Web: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk
Helpline: 0800 915 4666

Age Concern Scotland
Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside
Edinburgh EH9 1PR
Tel. No. 0845 833 0200
Fax No. 0845 833 0759
E-mail: enquiries@acscot.org.uk
Web: www.ageconcernscotland.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society
Web: www.alzheimers.org.uk
National Helpline: 0845 300 0336

Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse
CSSA National
c/o 38 Sydenham Villas Road
Cheltenham GA52 6DZ

CRUSE
Web: www.crusescotland.org.uk

Debtline
FREEPHONE: 0808 808 4000
Web: www.nationaldebtline.co.uk/scotland

Enable Carers
Web: www.carerscotland.org
Glasgow Carers Support Line: 0141 353 6504

Help the Aged
11 Granton Square
Edinburgh EH5 1HX
Tel. No. 0131 551 6331
Fax No. 0131 551 5415
E-mail: infoscot@helptheaged.org.uk
Web: www.helptheaged.org.uk
SeniorLine: 0808 800 6565

Louise Women's Centre
(for women involved in prostitution)
135 London Road
Glasgow G1 5BS
Tel. No. 0141 552 8546
E-mail: margaret@louiseproject.fsnet.co.uk

RNIB Scotland
Dunedin House
25 Ravelston Terrace
Edinburgh EH4 3TP
Tel. No. 0131 311 8500
Fax No. 0131 311 8529
E-mail: rnibscotland@rnib.org.uk
Web: www.rnib.org.uk
Helpline: 0845 766 9999

RNID Scotland
Empire House
131 West Nile Street
Glasgow G1 2RX
Text: 0141 341 5347
E-mail: rnidscotland@rnid.org.uk
Web: www.rnid.org.uk
Information Line: 0808 808 0123
Textphone: 0808 808 9000

Samaritans Scotland
Tel. No. 0141 248 4488 and 08457 909090
Web: www.samaritans.org

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline
44 Springvale Street
Saltcoats KA21 5LP
Tel. No. 0800 027 1234
Textphone: 0800 027 1234
Fax: 0129 446 5725
Web: www.domesticabuse.co.uk

Seniorline
Web: www.seniorline.com

SENSE Scotland

43 Middlesex Road
Kinning Park
Glasgow G41 1EE
Tel. No. 0141 429 0294
Fax No. 0141 429 0295
Text: 0141 418 7170
E-mail: info@sensescotland.org.uk
Web: www.sensescotland.org.uk

Shelter

Web: www.scotland.shelter.org.uk
FREEPHONE: 0808 800 4444

St. Vincent De Paul

546 Sauchiehall Street
Glasgow G2 3NG
Tel. No. 0141 332 7752
E-mail: svdp.scotland@btconnect.com

Victim Support Scotland

15/23 Hardwell Close
Edinburgh EH8 9RX
E-mail: info@victimssupportsco.demon.co.uk
Web: www.victimssupportsco.demon.co.uk
Tel. No. 0131 668 4486
Fax No. 0131 662 5400

Women's Aid

Web: www.womensaid.org.uk
Helpline: 0808 2000 247