

# Child Protection Policy

## Cornerstone Bible Fellowship

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WHEREAS Cornerstone Bible Fellowship (hereinafter referred to as Cornerstone) is committed to the safety and welfare of all children and vulnerable adults whom it may serve in any capacity whatsoever, and

WHEREAS Cornerstone recognises that the welfare of all such children and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all such persons, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability or beliefs

THIS POLICY STATEMENT IS ADOPTED by the Leadership of Cornerstone.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Policy applies to each person, whether a paid employee or not, who acts on behalf of Cornerstone in its service to children and vulnerable adults.

1.2 Definitions:

“Vulnerable Person” means a Child or Vulnerable Adult.

“Child” means a person under the age of 18.

“Vulnerable Adult” means someone 18 years of age or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, or is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

“Staff” means any person, whether paid employee or not, who does anything on behalf of Cornerstone in any of its activities.

“Abuse” includes neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse that is inflicted or knowingly not prevented that causes significant harm or death.

1.3 Staff shall be guided by this policy statement when conducting any of the ministries of Cornerstone that involve children or vulnerable adults.

### 2. MISSION STATEMENT

2.1 The Leadership of Cornerstone (“The Leadership”) recognise their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who are entrusted to Cornerstone’s care.

2.2 All persons have needs and rights:

- The need for physical care and attention
- The need for intellectual stimulation
- The need for love and security
- The need for social contact and relationships
- The right to have their needs met and safeguarded
- The right to be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- The right to be protected from ostracism and bullying
- The right to be treated as an individual

2.3 As part of its mission, Cornerstone is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and vulnerable adults, as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all staff.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those in Cornerstone affected by abuse.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities and other organisations.

### **3. CORNERSTONE POLICY**

3.1 The Leadership recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all children and vulnerable adults. They acknowledge that children and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The Leadership have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter "the Policy"). They also recognise the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. The Policy and attached practice Guidelines take into account relevant provisions of the Children Act, 1998, together with subsequent amendments. The Leadership undertakes to ensure that Cornerstone acts in compliance with this Act, and any other relevant statutes. The Leadership shall file a copy of this Policy and practice Guidelines with Child and Family Services and The Charities Commission.

3.2 The Leadership are committed to on-going child protection training for all staff and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.

3.3 The Leadership also recognise that children and adults may be particularly susceptible to influence by persons in a position of trust and therefore stress that it is unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

### **4. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

4.1 Under the provisions of the Children Act, 1998, and other statutes, all staff of Cornerstone who work with children and vulnerable adults are mandated to report all incidents of abuse. The Leadership recognise and stress this obligation for themselves and staff.

4.2 Under no circumstances should any member of staff carry out their own investigation into any allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- a. Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to the Child Protection Co-ordinator, or Deputy, named below, (hereafter the "Co-ordinator") who are nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse.
- b. Upon consultation with the Co-ordinator the reporting staff member shall, where warranted, refer the matter to Child and Family Services or the Police. It is the task of these authorities to investigate the matter under the Children Act.
- c. The reporting staff member shall also fill out Cornerstone's Accident and Incident Form, together with any reporting documentation required by the Department of Child and Family Services.
- d. In the absence of the Co-ordinator, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Co-ordinator, then the report should be made in the first instance to Child and Family Services at 278-9111. Alternatively, the Police can be contacted at 295-0011.
- e. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with Cornerstone's Guidelines and kept in a secure place.

- f. Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Co-ordinator, the absence of the Co-ordinator should not delay referral to the authorities.
- g. The Leadership will support staff and the Co-ordinators in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- h. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection agencies or seek advice from the same. If the individual with the concern feels that the Co-ordinator has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Co-ordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate the commitment of Cornerstone to effective child protection.

4.3 Upon receipt of an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Co-ordinator shall:

- a. Offer advice to the reporting staff member, and to ensure, where warranted, that the matter is referred to Child and Family Services or the Police. It is the task of these authorities to investigate the matter under the Children Act.
- b. The Co-ordinator shall inform Cornerstone's Child Protection Board that such concern has been reported to him, and whether the matter has been referred to the authorities.
- c. The Co-ordinator may also be required by conditions of Cornerstone's Insurance Policy to immediately inform the Insurance Company.

## 5. ALLEGATIONS OF NEGLECT

5.1 If a child has a symptom of neglect, the Co-ordinator and reporting staff member shall:

- a. Ensure that Child and Family Services is contacted for advice.
- b. Inform Cornerstone's Child Protection Board that such concern has been reported, and whether the matter has been referred to the authorities.
- c. Will not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so by Child and Family Services.
- d. Ensure that medical help is sought if needed urgently, and that medical staff are informed of any suspicions.
- e. For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of injury.
- f. Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of ongoing concern, if they still fail to act, contact Child and Family Services direct for advice.
- g. Seek and follow all directions given by Child and Family Services or the Police.

## 6. ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

6.1 In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety, or if a child is afraid to return home, the Co-ordinator and reporting staff member shall:

- a. Ensure that Child and Family Services or Police are contacted direct. They will ensure that staff NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- b. Seek and follow all directions given by Child and Family Services or Police Child Victims Unit.
- c. Ensure that medical help is sought if needed urgently, and that medical staff are informed of any suspicions.

## **7. APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF STAFF**

7.1 The Leadership will ensure all staff will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in government guidelines, and Practice Guidelines attached.

7.2 Where any accusation is made against any staff member resulting in an investigation being initiated by the Department of Child and Family Services, the staff member shall be immediately suspended from all Cornerstone activities involving children or vulnerable adults until such time as the investigation has been completed to the satisfaction of DCFS.

7.3 Safe recruitment practices will be applied for all staff working with children or vulnerable within Cornerstone, by checking their suitability to work safely (those recruited to work may be existing staff). These practices will include:

- a. At initial recruitment to any activity involving children or vulnerable adults all potential staff shall complete an application form and interview process which shall elicit information about the applicant's past, including relevant work experience, and references;
- b. All recruited staff shall undertake pre-activity training provided by Cornerstone to include:
  - clarification of activity requirements and responsibilities
  - explanation of Child Protection procedures and training if necessary
  - commitment by staff to Cornerstone's Child Protection Policy
- c. Staff shall be selected based on their suitability for the activity requirements and responsibilities and their ability to demonstrate that they can work safely with children and vulnerable adults;
- d. Where staff will take responsibility for safeguarding children during Cornerstone's activities they will also be required to undergo vetting by the Department of Child and Family Services and/or the Police Service.

## **8. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC/VIDEO EQUIPMENT**

8.1 All images obtained of children for use by Cornerstone shall only be recorded by persons properly authorised and directed by Cornerstone.

8.2 Images of children shall only be for internal use by Cornerstone, and may include displays in meetings, seminars or other related events. Public use (including internet postings, printed materials, or other publicly viewed media) shall not be permitted without the express permission of a parent or guardian.

8.3 Application materials for Cornerstone activities, when used, shall inform parents or guardians that images may be recorded of children for internal use only. A parent or guardian may choose to object in writing to such use, which Cornerstone shall accommodate.

## **9. SUPERVISION OF GROUP/CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES**

9.1 The Leadership will provide details for the supervision of specific activities of Cornerstone events in the Guidelines attached.

## **10. SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

10.1 The Leadership are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and supporting those served by Cornerstone who have been affected by abuse.

## **11. WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

11.1 When someone attending Cornerstone events is known to have abused children, the Leadership will ensure supervision of the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but because of Cornerstone's commitment to the protection of children, will set boundaries for that person which they will have to keep.

**12. CHILD PROTECTION BOARD**

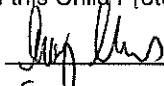
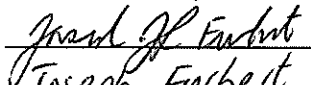

The following persons have been appointed by the Leadership to oversee the implementation of the Policy.

Child Protection Board: Brian Frick, Karen Durham, LeeAnn Simmons, William Francis, Nic Scanlon, Aaron Medeiros  
Legal Advisor: William Francis  
Child Protection Co-ordinator: Brian Frick  
Deputy Co-ordinators: Karen Durham, LeeAnn Simmons

**13. IMPLEMENTATION**

13.1 This policy will be reviewed annually on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

13.2 On behalf of the Leadership of Cornerstone, we the undersigned undertake to oversee the implementation of this Child Protection Policy and to take all necessary steps to ensure that it is adhered to.

Signed	<u></u>	Date	<u>Sep 11, 2018</u>
Print Name	<u>EVELYN LEWIS</u>	Appointment	<u></u>
Signed	<u></u>	Date	<u>Sep 11, 2018</u>
Print Name	<u>Joseph Farbelt</u>	Appointment	<u></u>
Signed	<u></u>	Date	<u>11th Sept 2018</u>
Print Name	<u>William A Francis</u>	Appointment	<u></u>

# Cornerstone Bible Fellowship

## POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

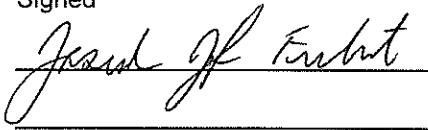
The following policy was agreed by the Leadership of Cornerstone on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

- We are committed to supporting parents and families
- We are committed to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons
- We recognise that such protection is everybody's responsibility
- We are committed to following the agreed procedures and complying with all statutory requirements and guidelines
- We seek to support all we work with who may be affected by abuse

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable person in relation to any child protection matter then speak to one of the following who have been approved as child protection co-ordinators for the Church.

A copy of the full policy can be seen in our Head Office.

Signed

  
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Date

Sep 11, 2018