

# Grace Ministry

Trash to treasure (Proverb 25:4)

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## Child Protection Policy

This Child Protection Policy has been drawn up in line with Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Grace Ministry in London Borough of Newham child protection procedures.

***Everyone who works in any way with children has responsibility to protect them from harm.***

We therefore believe that all children in our care should be safe and prevented from coming to any harm. In order to achieve this, the management committee will consider the issues related to child protection. All management committee members and volunteers will go through a vetting procedure (Criminal Record Bureau enhanced check) to check their suitability for working with children. The committee have appointed a designated person to be responsible for these issues on their behalf (see below). Training will be undertaken in basic Child Protection procedures, most importantly by the designated person (or another representative in his/her absence).

If you have concerns that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm, you have a duty to share your concerns with the designated person who will take the appropriate action. All matters concerning child protection issues will be treated within the bounds of our Confidentiality Policy. Everyone working with children will have a copy of this policy.

### **It is not the responsibility of Grace Ministry to do enquiries**

Any referral should be made through the designated Person

**Sister Betha Mbawe: Tel:0203 620 93990 Mob: 07825612993**

### **ABUSE AND NEGLECT (DEFINITIONS)**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting: by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. (DOH-Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999).

### **What is Child Abuse?**

The following definitions are taken from the Department of Health document (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 1999).

## 1 Physical Harm

Physical harm may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

## 2 Emotional Harm

Emotional harm is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional harm is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

## 3 Sexual Harm

Sexual harm involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## 4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or in the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I SUSPECT A CHILD IS BEING HARMED?**

The welfare of the child is paramount and must always come first, and **any** concerns that a child may be suffering harm must be reported. This can be a very difficult thing to do but is essential for the welfare of the child.

### **THE PROCEDURES FOR MAKING A REFERRAL**

If somebody believes that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then he/she should always refer his or her concerns to the local authority's Children's and Young People's Service or to the police. The NSPCC can be contacted, and they will transfer the case to the local services.

Children's Services will clarify with the referrer:

- 1 the nature of concerns;
- 2 how and why they have arisen;
- 3 and what appear to be the needs of the child and family;
- 4 whether there are concerns about significant harm,
- 5 what is their foundation, and?
- 6 whether the child/ren may need urgent action to make them safe from harm.

When a case constitutes, or may constitute, a criminal offence against a child, Children's Services will inform the police child protection unit at the earliest opportunity.

The referrer and the Children's Services Directorate should be clear about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken. The decision should be recorded by the Children's Services Directorate, and by the referrer.

The referrer should confirm the referral in writing within 24 hours (an e-mail is sufficient).

The Children's Services Directorate will:

- 1 discuss with any referring professional/service
- 2 look at any existing records, including SSID
- 3 involve other professionals and services as necessary
- 4 make an enquiry to the child protection register at the Child Protection Team and decide on the next course of action within 24 hours.

## **INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CHILD'S NEEDS**

Children's Services will commence an initial assessment which should be completed within a maximum of seven working days of the date of referral. However, the initial assessment period may be very brief if the criteria for initiating s. 47 enquiries are met.

When the initial assessment is complete, Children's Services will decide whether the referral should be pursued under s. 47. If it should, they will discuss further action with the police.

The family, the original referrer, and other professionals and services involved in the assessment, should be told what action has been taken, consistent with respecting the confidentiality of the child and family concerned, and not jeopardising further action in respect of child protection concerns (which may include police investigations).

## **MAKING THE REFERRAL**

If you are seriously concerned about the welfare of a child or young person, you ring 02033734600 or Freephone 02084302000.

This will put you in touch with London Borough of Newham Council's duty social worker - you can speak to the social worker in confidence.

You can also call the police at any time on 999.

The following information should be ready:

- 1 Full name of child
- 2 Date of birth
- 3 Home address
- 4 Details of siblings
- 5 Names of persons with parental responsibility
- 6 Details of the concerns

Children's Services will then assess the case and take appropriate action as they deem necessary. They may need confirmation of the referral in writing, and to speak to you again.

## **IF A CHILD TELLS YOU THAT S/HE IS BEING ABUSED**

### **What records need to be kept?**

- 1 All concerns need to be kept as a clear written record; observations of the facts, not opinions.
- 2 If a child confides in you, record what they said, using their exact words. This is important for any investigations that may follow.
- 3 Do not question the child; allow them to freely recall their experience and always take what the child says seriously.
- 4 Do not promise to keep a secret.
- 5 Tell the child you will need to pass the information on.
- 6 Do not tell anyone else about this, unless you need to tell the designated person.

Think of the possible consequences if a child confided in you, or you suspect signs of abuse and you made the decision not to pass the information on – **Leave the decision to the Child Protection Professionals.**

### **What do I do if an allegation is made about me or another member of our organisation?**

If an allegation is made against a member of the organisation, the case will be investigated as any other allegations are. Anyone with a concern has a duty to refer it to the Child Protection Team.

### **Confidentiality**

Do not discuss issues surrounding a child with anyone, your partner, best friend or another member of the organisation. If it was your child, would you want them to be talked about?

### **Parents/Carers of the children**

If you have a concern, you should work with the designated person to, wherever possible, share your concern with the parent or person with responsibility for the child, unless by doing so it will place them at increased risk of significant harm. If in doubt, contact the **Newham Local Safeguarding on 08001111.**

## Training

For details of any available courses or for further information, please contact the designated officer or speak to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (Tel: **02084302000**).

### PROCEDURES RELATED TO HEALTH AND SAFETY TO ENSURE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SAFE IN GRACE MINISTRY

*It is the belief of Grace Ministry that all people while in our care should be in a safe, clean, well-maintained and caring environment.*

In order to do this, the following points will be considered and, if appropriate, put into place. These points are intended to safeguard employees, volunteers and visitors to Grace Ministry building.

- 1 All adults, staff, volunteers and visitors will be aware of and respect the organisation's safety policies.
- 2 Regular checks will be carried out on the premises and any outdoor areas.
- 3 Any items of equipment used for activities will be regularly checked for damage and safety and discarded or replaced if necessary.
- 4 Adequate provision for fire safety will be put in place there should be agreed procedures for fire drills and maintenance of equipment.
- 5 All dangerous materials and substances will be kept out of reach.
- 6 Care will be taken in respect of heating appliances, low level sockets, windows, doors and staircases.
- 7 Electrical equipment will be regularly checked by qualified people. Free-standing equipment will be safe and stable and electrical outlets fitted with appropriate covers.
8. Young children will not meet in rooms that contain chairs that are stacked more than 4 high. Volunteers are asked not to stack chairs more than 4 high at anytime.
- 9 Food hygiene standards will be observed. Training in this area will be sought and given.
10. Every Grace Ministry session will have an adult in attendance who has a first aid qualification. Volunteers will be offered paediatric first aid training.
11. An accident book will be kept, and all accidents will be recorded. In case of accident/incident, a designated worker will always have access to a telephone during children's activity sessions.
12. Records of the children's activities will be kept, monitored and evaluated on a sessional basis.
13. Permission for a child's attendance at a children's activity and any medical information will be sought from the parents using the appropriate forms.
14. The following appropriate ratio of staff to children will be adhered to.

➤	o	0-2years	1 staff for every 3 children.
➤	o	2-3years	1 staff for every 4 children.
➤	o	3years+	1 staff for every 8 children.

People under 18 years old cannot be included in staff ratios and will not be solely in charge of a group of children.

- 15 There will be a minimum of 2 adults with any group of children.

**Information form: Reporting allegations of suspicions of abuse**

Everyone involved in the above Ministry should always be aware of the identity of the person within the Ministry who should always be informed of any concerns about a child.

**Name of designated person: Sister Betha Mbawe**

Job/role/title: Volunteer/Safeguarding officer

All people working in Grace Ministry should be aware of appropriate contacts outside of the organisation:

**Children's Services:** 08001111 all hours or Freephone 0800 800 5000

**Police switchboard:** 999

**The Local Safeguarding Children's Board:**

Address: 1000 Dockside Road, E16 2QU Tel:02033734600

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline:** 0800 800 5000 (free 24-hour service which provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse).

# Grace Ministry

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## Checklist for Reporting Suspected Abuse

To be completed by nominated person responsible for reporting allegations or concerns.

Name of child:

Age and date of birth:

Ethnicity:

Religion:

First language:

Physical or learning difficulties (if any):

Resident parent/carer name:

Home address:

Post code:

Telephone number:

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of someone else? Give details.

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the child? If so, what was said?

Have you spoken to the parents/carers? If so, what was said?

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.

Have you consulted anyone else?

Give details of who you reported to, their status and role and date of reporting.

Details of any advice or instruction given by this person:

Your name and position (please print)

Your signature:

Date: