

Levin Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

July 2022

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Table of Contents

	Page
Statement of Commitment	4
Section One: Introduction	4
Purpose	4
Guiding Principles	4
Scope	5
Legislation	5
Review	5
Definitions	5
Section Two: Roles and Responsibilities	8
Roles and Responsibilities of Church Workers ..	8
Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Person(s)	8
Section Three: Child Protection Procedures	9
Identification of Abuse	10
Responding to Child Abuse/Suspected Abuse.....	10
Responding to Disclosures	11
Harmful Behaviour by One Child Towards Another ..	12
Reporting Procedures	12
Keeping the Childs Family Informed and Involved	13
Confidentiality and Information Sharing	13
Child Protection Procedures Flowchart	15
Section Four: Safe Recruitment and Appointment, Training and Support 16	
Safe Recruitment and Appointment	
– Paid and Voluntary Church Workers	16
Police Vetting	16
Training	17
Support	17
Section Five: Safe Working Practices	18
Supervision of Children	19
Childhood Ministries	20
- Crèche Ministry	20
- Primary Ministry	21
- Teen Ministry	21
Trips and Transportation	22
Section Six: Allegations against Church Workers	23

Appendix One: Indicators of Abuse	25
Appendix Two: Child Protection Overview	30
Appendix Three: Contact List	31

Statement of Commitment

Levin Baptist Church is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children. Levin Baptist Church is committed to supporting and empowering families to act to keep children safe and will themselves ensure that when making any decision affecting a child, the welfare and best interests of the child will be the prime consideration.

Section One Introduction

➤ Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to ensure that the Levin Baptist Church operates in such a way as to protect children from harm.
- 1.2 This Child Protection Policy confirms the commitment of Levin Baptist Church to the protection of children and is designed to assist Church Workers by providing them with practical guidance for identifying and responding to child protection concerns.
- 1.3 This Child Protection Policy proceeds to:
 - outline the standards and principles by which all Church workers must abide
 - outline the action to be taken by members where any form of child abuse or neglect is known or suspected
 - establish what action is required when allegations are made against Church workers
 - outline safe working practices and the expected behaviour of all Church workers

➤ Guiding Principles

- 1.4 The ministry of the Church should be a place of safety and all forms of child abuse violate the teachings and principles that underlie the beliefs of Levin Baptist Church.
- 1.5 Levin Baptist Church recognises that it has a duty of care for the safety, welfare and well-being of children and will act in ways which protect children from all forms of abuse and harm.

- 1.6 In all matters involving children and child abuse, Levin Baptist Church will be guided by the principle of “the welfare and best interests of the child”

➤ **Scope**

- 1.7 This policy applies to all Church workers of Levin Baptist Church.

➤ **Legislation**

- 1.8 This policy has been written with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in mind and in accordance with the following legislation:

- Care of Children Act 2004
- Children’s Act 2014
- Crimes Act 1961
- Education Act 1989
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Family Violence Act 2018
- Health and Safety Act 1956
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Health Information Privacy Code 1994
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020

➤ **Review**

- 1.9 This policy will be reviewed annually and updated regularly, to ensure it is kept up to date with changes that may have been made to legislation, related policies and procedures, and in light of operational experience.

- 1.10 The overall responsibility for this policy rests with the designated persons for child protection at Levin Baptist Church.

➤ **Definitions**

- 1.11 For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

“Child” means any person under 18 years of age.

“Child Abuse” can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or may arise from a single incident. Child Abuse may take many forms but it can be categorised into four different types:

- i. Physical Abuse
- ii. Sexual Abuse
- iii. Emotional Abuse
- iv. Neglect

“Child Protection Register” is a record of children who are considered to be suffering, or who are considered to be at risk of suffering, or likely to suffer, abuse or neglect. The register includes information around those child protection concerns, including but not limited to:

- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person’s words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when
- All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

The Register must be kept up to date and its contents must be confidential other than to authorised enquirers. It must be held securely and separately from other Levin Baptist Church records.

“Church Worker” refers to any person working at, for, or on behalf of, Levin Baptist Church and includes, but is not limited to, persons employed directly by the Levin Baptist Church, irrespective of whether they are paid or voluntary, or whether they are working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis, or in their roles have direct contact with children. For the purposes of this policy “church worker” also refers to the Levin Baptist Church Pastors and/or Elders and/or trustees and/or crèche leaders and/or crèche helpers and/or ministry leaders and/or ministry helpers.

“Designated Person for Child Protection” is a person within Levin Baptist Church who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is required to undergo regular child protection training and is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within Levin Baptist Church both at a strategic level and on a day to day basis.

It is strongly recommended that Levin Baptist Church appoints a secondary designated person for child protection who is also trained in child protection, and who can be consulted on child protection matters in the event that the primary designated person for child protection is unavailable, or if the child protection concern relates to that designated person.

As at the date of this policy the Designated Person for Child Protection for Levin Baptist Church is:

Andrew Sinclair

As at the date of this Policy the secondary Designated Person for Child Protection for Levin Baptist Church is:

TBA (Will be updated soon)

“Emotional Abuse” is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child.

“Family Violence” can take many forms and includes not only acts of physical violence, but also intimidating behaviour such as threatening to harm people, pets or property. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

“Neglect” is any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and/or development of a child.

“Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children” formally known as Child Youth and Family Services (“CYFS”). Oranga Tamariki is a government ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

“Physical Abuse” is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

“Sexual Abuse” is an act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not. Sexual abuse can be committed by a relative, a trusted friend, an associate, or someone unknown to the child.

Section Two Roles and Responsibilities

➤ **Roles and Responsibilities of *Levin Baptist’s Church Workers***

2.1 Levin Baptist Church recognises that all Church workers have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm. It is the primary responsibility of Church workers to be vigilant, maintain professional boundaries and safe working practices, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect and abuse, whether actual or potential, and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations immediately.

➤ **Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Person(s)**

- 2.2 The designated person for child protection should:
- Be trained in child protection and undergo regular refresher training
 - Adopt, implement, comply with, and enforce the Levin Baptist Church Child Protection Policy
 - Ensure that child protection is a key focus within Levin Baptist Church and that appropriate protocols, procedures and training are in place
 - Ensure that the needs and rights of children come first - the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances

- Promote and model appropriate behaviour at all times
- Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately
- Ensure, and safeguard, clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection concerns
- Ensure that all members are aware of, have access to, and understand, this Child Protection Policy
- Ensure that all Church workers are recruited and delegated responsibilities in accordance with the guidelines identified in this policy
- Ensure that when child protection concerns arise, no internal investigation occurs without a decision as to whether or not a response from Oranga Tamariki and/or the New Zealand Police is required. This decision is to be made following consultation with a secondary designated person for child protection and/or an Oranga Tamariki duty social worker.
- Consult with the secondary designated person for child protection, or an Oranga Tamariki social worker, regarding all child protection concerns.

Section Three Child Protection Procedures

- 3.1 The procedures set out in section three of this policy provide Church workers with guidelines to assist with identifying and responding appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, whether these concerns are their own or are the concerns of a third party.
- 3.2 The procedures set out below will help Church workers with:
- the identification of abuse
 - handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child
 - reporting procedures

➤ Identification of Abuse

3.3 Levin Baptist Church workers should be alert and aware of the fact that child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and child protection concerns may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child;
- Direct or indirect disclosure from someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

3.4 The signs and indicators of abuse to a child may not be immediately obvious or identifiable. **Appendix One** of this policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of signs and indicators to help identify abuse.

3.5 If a Church worker is unsure about what might constitute child abuse, they should ask for advice and guidance from the designated person/s for child protection. At any time, Church workers may seek advice directly from Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) regarding child protection concerns.

➤ Responding to Child Abuse/Suspected Abuse

3.6 Church workers will respond to allegations of child abuse in a manner which ensures the child's safety is the first and paramount consideration. Refer to the "**Child Protection Procedure Flowchart**" below.

3.7 Where child abuse is known, or suspected, everything possible needs to be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned, along with the ongoing safety of any other child who is in close connection to the alleged offender. The child is the primary concern and all other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) must be secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that the child's concerns and safety come first. In a situation where a

Church worker believes that a child is in immediate danger, that worker in consultation with the designated person for child protection, will inform the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki of their concerns.

3.8 In dealing with an allegation or suspicion of child abuse, Levin Baptist Church will respond with sensitivity, objectivity, confidentiality, fairness and honesty.

3.9 **Appendix Two** of this policy sets out an overview for responding to child abuse.

➤ **Responding to Disclosures**

3.10 Disclosures of abuse may come directly from a child. It is important that Church workers of Levin Baptist Church take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the workers own opinion on what is being said. If there is information disclosed regarding actual or suspected child abuse Church workers need to:

- stay calm
- listen and hear
- give time to the child to say what they want
- reassure them that they were right to tell
- tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame
- explain that they have to pass on what the child has told them as soon as they are aware that the child is making a disclosure
- give an age appropriate explanation to the child of what the child can expect to happen next
- record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible.
- Report the concern to the appropriate statutory agency (being the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki)

Church workers must not:

- make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
- promise to keep secrets

- enquire in to the details of the alleged abuse
- ask leading questions

3.11 Under no circumstances should a Church worker of Levin Baptist Church, or the Levin Baptist Church itself, attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse themselves.

➤ **Harmful Behaviour By One Child Towards Another**

3.12 It is important to be aware that children can harm other children. These behaviours are outside of what may be considered the normal range, and can extend to bullying, violence or sexual assault. Therefore, when a child alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child then the child protection procedures outlined in this policy must be considered for both children.

➤ **Reporting Procedures**

3.13 Church workers must report concerns or allegations of child abuse to the designated person for child protection at the first possible opportunity to best ensure the safety of the child. If the designated person for child protection is unavailable, or if it is thought that there is a conflict of interest, or a potential for a conflict of interest, then consultation should occur with the secondary designated person for child protection or an Oranga Tamariki Duty Social Worker. A decision will be made as to whether to formally notify Oranga Tamariki and the NZ Police. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, contact should be made with the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki by Church workers directly. In any situation where an immediate response is required, the NZ Police should be called first.

3.14 All concerns or allegations of sexual abuse must be reported to the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki.

3.15 When reporting an incident members of Levin Baptist Church should:

- Inform the designated person for child protection as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken and keep these records securely in a Child Protection Register.

- 3.16 Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:
- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
 - What was said and by whom, using the person's words
 - What action has been taken, by whom and when
- 3.17 All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection Register with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

➤ **Keeping the Child's Family Informed and Involved**

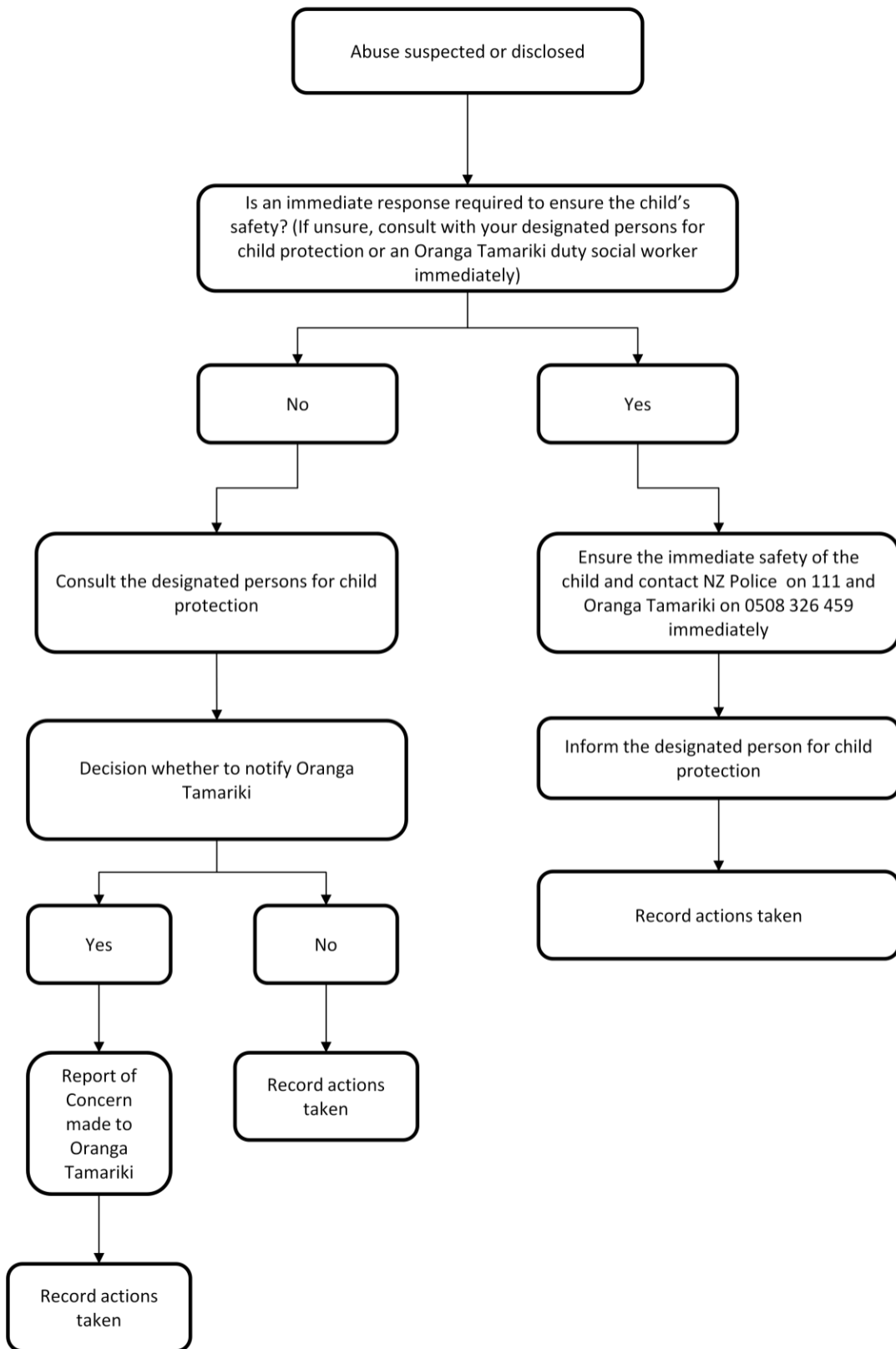
- 3.18 Wherever possible, a child's family should participate in the decisions affecting that child and the relationship between the child and their family should be maintained and strengthened.
- 3.19 Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen in circumstances when:
- the parent or caregiver is the alleged offender
 - it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
 - there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
- 3.20 When it comes to informing the family and whānau, advice can be sought from Oranga Tamariki.

➤ **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- 3.21 Under the Privacy Act 2020, the giving of information to protect children is not a breach of confidentiality. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 2020, states that the sharing of personal information is allowed if "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat".
- 3.22 Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, if a Church worker raises a legitimate concern in good faith about suspected child abuse, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against that Church worker.

3.23 Advice should be sought from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before any information about an allegation that identifies an individual is shared.

Child Protection Procedures Flowchart:



Section Four Safe Recruitment and Appointment, Training, and Support

➤ **Safe Recruitment and Appointment - Paid and Voluntary Church Workers**

- 4.1 Levin Baptist Church has a responsibility to ensure that those entrusted with children are safe to do so. Levin Baptist Church is committed to ensuring robust recruitment and appointment processes are in place, and are followed, which emphasise the importance of child protection, and which ensure that every Levin Baptist Church worker working with children, either directly or indirectly, is safe and suitable to do so.
- 4.2 Before making any appointment, Levin Baptist Church will complete a robust safety checking process to ascertain the candidate's suitability and safety to work for, or at, Levin Baptist Church. Depending on the role, this process may include, but is not limited to:
- i. Identity verification check
 - ii. Employment verification check
 - iii. Reference check
 - iv. Professional membership check
 - v. Criminal history check
 - vi. New Zealand Police vetting check
 - vii. Risk assessment
 - viii. Formal interviews which include questions on child safeguarding
 - ix. Approval by the church pastor and/or elder and/or ministry leader in consultation with the designated person for child protection
- 4.3 All new church workers of Levin Baptist Church will be made aware of, and provided with a copy of, the Child Protection Policy as part of the induction process.

➤ **Police Vetting**

- 4.4 All church workers, including but not limited to crèche helpers, ministry leaders, ministry helpers, and youth leaders, working with children, either directly or indirectly, must

undergo police vetting. Police vetting will be carried out on all church workers over the age of 18 a minimum of every three (3) years.

4.5 Until such time as the police vetting has been completed, and the results have been received, all newly appointed Levin Baptist church workers working with children will be supervised in their role by a Police vetted church worker and will not be permitted to work alone or carry out any alternative duties.

4.6 In the event of a person under the age of 18 is working as a church worker, that church worker will not be permitted to work alone with children. Church workers under 18 must be supervised by a Police vetted church worker.

- i. Church workers under 18 may be able provide short term care and supervision of children provided they are working together with at least one other under 18 Church worker and a Police vetted church worker is nearby onsite to provide oversight and support.

➤ **Training**

4.7 All church workers of the Levin Baptist Church will be required to be familiar with, and adhere to, the Levin Baptist Church Child Protection Policy.

4.8 Levin Baptist Church will ensure that everyone in the organisation has adequate and appropriate information about child abuse in order to protect children and to recognise and respond when children are at risk. As a minimum, this will include being provided with an overview of the signs and indicators of abuse, as well as a copy of Levin Baptist Church's Child Protection Policy and the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse.

4.9 The Designated Person/s for Child Protection, and all church workers working directly with children should receive in depth, regular, and updated child protection training to ensure that those roles can be carried out safely and effectively.

➤ **Support**

4.10 It is recognised that dealing with child protection cases and concerns can have an impact on the wellbeing of church workers. Levin Baptist Church will offer appropriate support to any church worker involved with dealing with a child abuse case or concern. This support may include, but is not limited to, counselling services and/or referring the church

worker to other appropriate agencies.

- 4.11 Where practicable, the Levin Baptist Church will assist members of the congregation who are victims of child abuse by ensuring that they have access to the appropriate support care.

Section Five Safe Working Practices

- 5.1 A relationship between an adult and a child can never be a relationship between equals. This is because there is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children and therefore adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.
- 5.2 Church workers must, at all times, work for the physical, social, educational, moral and spiritual well-being of the children in their care.
- 5.3 Clear boundaries are important in maintaining professional behaviour and Levin Baptist Church Child Protection Policy reinforces the need for high standards of behaviour from its members. These boundaries are in place in order to protect children from abuse and at-risk situations, and to protect the Levin Baptist Church, and its Church workers from unwarranted suspicion.
- 5.4 Church workers should always maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Church workers who work with children must act in a way that is considered to be safe practice, and within cultural boundaries. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Avoiding situations where they are alone with a child;
 - Ensuring that they are visible to others when with a child;
 - Using an open door policy where possible;
 - Avoiding circumstances where their behaviour (both verbal and physical) may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate, offensive, or neglectful.
 - Not transporting a child, other than their own, alone at any time other than in an emergency situation;

- Monitoring visitors to Levin Baptist Church when children are present;
- Not displaying images of children unless they have consent to do so from parents and caregivers;
- Ensuring that all forms of communication with children are transparent and open to scrutiny.

5.5 It is important that in all dealings with children, a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Church workers should use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.

5.6 Any sexual activity between a Church workers and a child will be reported to the NZ Police.

5.7 Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web- cams, websites, social networking and blogs. Church workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

5.8 Church workers should only share relevant, age appropriate, information. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role within Levin Baptist Church.

➤ **Supervision of Children**

5.9 All efforts are made to ensure that a child safe environment is provided on Levin Baptist Church premises.

5.10 Unless express permission is otherwise given, children visiting Levin Baptist Church premises must be accompanied, and supervised, by a parent or caregiver at all times.

The parent or caregiver of any child visiting Levin Baptist Church will be solely responsible for that child. Parents and caregivers will undertake all toileting and changing of their own children.

➤ **Childhood Ministries**

○ **Crèche Ministry**

- 5.11 Crèche services are for children under the age of 5 years and are designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Levin Baptist Church church workers, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.12 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only church workers whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.
- 5.13 Any visitors to the crèche must be approved by the appropriate church worker.
- 5.14 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no church workers, or visitors to the crèche, should be left alone with a child.
- 5.15 Except in emergency situations, no child is to be removed from the crèche by anyone other than the child's parents or caregivers, without express written permission.
- 5.16 Except in emergency circumstances, all children will be signed in by a parent or caregiver and should either be signed out by a parent or caregiver, or delivered directly to a parent or caregiver by a church worker at the end of the session unless expressly authorised by the parent or caregiver otherwise.
- 5.17 The parent or caregiver of the child must provide the crèche with updated contact details.

- **Primary Ministry (Kids Church, Girl's Brigade)**

- 5.18 Primary Ministry services are for children aged between 5 and 12 years and are designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practises will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Levin Baptist Church church workers, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.19 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only church workers whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.
- 5.20 Any visitors to the ministry must be approved by the appropriate church worker.
- 5.21 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no church workers, or visitors to the ministry, should be left alone with a child.
- 5.22 Except in emergency situations, no child is to be removed from the ministry by anyone other than the child's parents or caregivers without express written permission.
- 5.23 Except in emergency circumstances, all children will be signed in by the approved church worker, parent, or caregiver, and should be either signed out by a parent or caregiver or delivered directly to a parent or caregiver at the end of the session unless expressly authorised by the parent or caregiver otherwise.
- 5.24 The parent or caregiver of the child must provide the ministry with updated contact details.

- **Teen Ministry**

- 5.25 Teen Ministry services are for children aged between 13 and 18 years and are designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from Levin Baptist Church church workers, and any other adult or child present.
- 5.26 Any visitors to the teen ministry must be approved by the appropriate church worker.

5.27 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no church workers, or visitors to the teen ministry, should be left alone with a child.

5.28 Levin Baptist Church should hold contact details of the child's parent or caregiver in case of emergency.

➤ **Trips and Transportation *[if applicable]***

5.29 Taking children out of Levin Baptist Church physical environment must be carefully planned and preparation is needed to minimise risks and make the activity a positive experience for each child.

5.30 Before any trips parents and caregivers will be informed by written notice of the planned trip and the details of same, including but not limited to:

- The venue;
- The method of transport;
- The date;
- The time.

5.31 Parents and caregivers must give written consent for their child to attend the planned trip or visit.

5.32 Additional helpers and volunteers involved in any Levin Baptist Church trip must be appropriately safety checked prior to the trip taking place.

5.33 Levin Baptist Church will take all precautions to ensure that when transporting children their safety and wellbeing is paramount.

5.34 Only approved and Police vetted church workers will be responsible for transporting children for Levin Baptist Church purposes.

5.35 Children will not be transported alone with a church worker.

Section Six

Allegations against Church Workers

- 6.1 Concerns may be raised regarding Church workers. These may be as a result of behaviour within the Levin Baptist Church, or of behaviour within their home environment.
- 6.2 All Church workers have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour towards a child, and to maintain this behaviour at all times.
- 6.3 Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against Church workers will be taken seriously and reported to the designated person for child protection who will deal with the allegation, suspicion or complaint immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy.
- 6.4 Any concern of abuse of a child will follow the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. In the event of an allegation of abuse by a Church worker, a report of concern will be made to the Police and Oranga Tamariki.
- 6.5 When there are suspicions of abuse by a Church worker, both the worker's and the child's rights are to be attended to. This means that the safety of the child is of first concern, and that the Church worker should be encouraged to obtain appropriate professional advice.
- 6.6 If Church workers become aware of an allegation of abuse, or they form a reasonable suspicion of abuse, by another worker, that worker shall be suspended from all activities of the Levin Baptist Church immediately. A risk assessment must be undertaken without undue delay to determine what level of access that Church worker should have, if any, to the Levin Baptist Church and/or participate in activities of the Levin Baptist Church. In all circumstances the welfare and best interests of all children will be the paramount consideration.
- 6.7 In all child protection cases, it is important that no internal investigation is to be undertaken, and no evidence is to be gathered, as these might prejudice an official Police or Oranga Tamariki investigation.

6.8 In all child protection cases, Levin Baptist Church will co-operate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police in their investigations and assessments.

Appendix One

Indicators of Abuse

The indicators for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:

- **Physical indicators:** Injuries to a child that are severe, occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given
- **Behavioural indicators:** The child's actions, attitudes, and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions. When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.
- **Caregiver indicators:** Caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that what they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young persons, seek advice from your designated persons for child protection or directly from Oranga Tamariki.

➤ Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators
 - Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
 - Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
 - Non-organic failure to thrive
 - Pale, emaciated
 - Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea
 - Malnutrition
 - Dressed differently to other children in the family
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
 - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
 - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
 - Overly compliant

- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
 - Running away from home, avoiding attending at school
 - Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
 - Anti-social behaviours
 - Lack of self esteem
 - Obsessive behaviours
 - Eating disorders
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name calling)
 - Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child
 - Actively refuses to help the child
 - Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
 - Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
 - Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
 - Withholds physical and verbal affection
 - Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
 - Has unrealistic expectations of child
 - Involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care
 - Exposes child to situations of arguing and violence in the home

➤ **Neglect Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
 - Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
 - Often extremely dirty and unwashed
 - Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
 - Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
 - May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
 - Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
 - Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
 - Lacks adequate shelter
 - Non-organic failure to thrive
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
 - Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
 - Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
 - Poor school attendance and performance

- Demanding of affection and attention
 - Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
 - May steal food
 - Poor social skills
 - No understanding of basic hygiene
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Puts own need ahead of child's
 - Fails to provide child's basic needs
 - Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
 - Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
 - Drug and alcohol use
 - Depression

➤ **Physical Abuse Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
 - Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
 - Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
 - Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc
 - Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
 - Fractures in very young children
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
 - Wary of adults or a particular person
 - Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
 - Cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly
 - May be extremely compliant and eager to please
 - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
 - Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
 - May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
 - May indicate general sadness
 - Could have vision or hearing delay
 - Is violent to other children or animals
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
 - May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing
 - May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
 - Delays in seeking medical attention
 - May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

➤ **Sexual Abuse Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
 - Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
 - Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
 - Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
 - Blood in urine or stools
 - Sexually transmitted infections
 - Pregnancy
 - Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
 - Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
 - Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
 - Fear of a certain person
 - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
 - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
 - Overly compliant
 - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
 - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
 - Eating disorders
 - Compulsive behaviours
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - May be unusually over-protective of the child
 - Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
 - Misuses alcohol or drugs
 - Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
 - May favour the victim over other children

➤ **Family Violence Indicators**

- Indicators in the Child:
 - Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
 - Absenteeism from school
 - Bullying or aggressive behaviour
 - Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
 - Talking about or describing violent behaviours

- Indicators in the Victim:
 - Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
 - Depression and/or anxiety
 - Inconsistent explanations for injuries
 - Fearful
 - Submissive

- Indicators in the Offender:
 - Isolates and controls partner and children
 - Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
 - Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrators own behaviour

Appendix Two

Child Protection Overview - Responding to Abuse:

Abuse is "... the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person" - Section 2, Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

Child abuse can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or it may arise from a single incident. Child Abuse may take many forms but it can be categorised into four different types:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child or someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

When disclosures of abuse come directly from a child, it is important that you take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or your own opinion on what is being said. When a child tells you what has been happening to them, or when you witness or suspect child abuse, it is important that you, as the adult, remain calm and confident.

RESPOND: Respond to the person (adult or child) – Believe what they tell you and/or what you see.

SAFETY: Ensure the safety of the child. Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This will mean contacting Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) or the Police (111) if you think there is an immediate risk to the child.

RECORD: Record immediately all initial statements, observations and concerns to avoid misinterpretations or confusion at a later date.

CONSULT: Do not make decisions alone. Consult with your Child Protection Policy and your designated person for child protection. Oranga Tamariki is always available to give advice.

REPORT: Decide to act on your concerns. If you have told the person you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.

SUPPORT: Seek support for yourself. Responding to a child protection issue can be stressful.

Think "what if I'm right?" Not "what if I'm wrong?"

Appendix Three
Contact List

Your Designated Person for Child Protection Is:

ANDREW SINCLAIR

Your Secondary Designated Person for Child Protection Is:

CATHERINE NEWSON

Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki
0508 326 0459

New Zealand Police
111

Child Matters
(07) 838 3370