

The Code of Good Practice

At the General Assembly of 1997, Kirk Sessions were instructed to implement the Church of Scotland's *Code of Good Practice for Kirk Sessions and Congregations in the Church of Scotland*. This *Code* consists of the following 13 articles which, when implemented, will help to ensure that the Church of Scotland has taken all reasonable steps to provide a high standard of care to children and young people.

1. Adopt the Policy Statement agreed by the General Assembly on safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.
2. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children and young people may occur.
3. Appoint a suitable person as Co-ordinator for the Safety and Protection of Children and Young People.
4. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children and young people to all paid staff and volunteers.
5. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
6. Use supervision as a means of protecting children and young people.
7. Treat all applicants for any position involving contact with children and young people in the same way.
8. Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering, if any, with children or young people.
9. Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children or young people in an interview before appointment.
10. Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children or young people.
11. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
12. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse, and advise on the risk of false and malicious claims of abuse.
13. Train paid staff and volunteers, their co-ordinators or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.

A revised *Code of Practice*

The *Code of Practice* will be reviewed and, where appropriate revised, during 2005/2006 to reflect the many changes in policy and practice since its publication in 1997.