



First Portadown Presbyterian Church

Positive Behaviour Policy

March 2024

Purpose

As a congregation we exist to make Jesus known and grow together in Him; we want every area and aspect of church life to align with this purpose. We provide youth activities because they provide age appropriate means to make Jesus known and help us all to grow together in Him.

Our Kirk Session's part in this is to work in partnership with parents / carers to help children and young people grow towards maturity in Christ by proclaiming to them the good news of Jesus, in the context of genuine Christian community.

This document sets out agreed actions and guidance for our children and volunteers on how best to model and teach positive patterns of Christian behaviour to children and young people.

First Portadown Presbyterian Church values all children and young people. We understand that children and young people usually behave with respect and good intentions but may sometimes behave in ways that create challenge for smooth running of their groups. We therefore aim, through a consistent and fair policy of behaviour management, to establish a caring, safe and stimulating environment in which each child and young person may develop his or her own full understanding of what it means to know Jesus and make Him known.

We also recognise that in some circumstances, behaviour perceived as disruptive may be the child's attempt to communicate. It is our intention to have compassion for all. Therefore, in every such situation, we have to make a judgement about what behaviour can safely be tolerated, and what behaviour must be restricted or prevented for the safety of all concerned.

Each group will work out and publicise some simple headline 'ground rules' for acceptable behaviour within their group, and how such ground rules will be protected.

Celebrating and reinforcing positive behaviour

The Kirk Session believes that good behaviour should be recognised and praised. Leaders will:

- Recognise and highlight good behaviour and genuine achievement as it occurs ensuring that children and young people are praised for behaving well referring to the positive behaviour being praised in order to exemplify it.
- Explain, and importantly demonstrate, the positive behaviour we wish to see. We recognise that our behaviour will influence the behaviour of the child/young person.
- Let parents and carers know about their child's / young person's good behaviour.

Protecting the ground rules for each group

Suitable actions may include:

- A positive reinforcement from the children's leader about better choices following a negative incident or series of incidents.
- Let parents / carers know about their child's/young person's negative behaviour.
- Intervention conversation with leader, parent / carer and child.

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- Temporary loss of privileges.
- Remove the child/young person from the group session for a few minutes (to calm down) or remove the child/young person back to their parents/carers for the remainder of the session. (This action should only be used with prior agreement of a parent/carer bearing in the mind the possible impact of a separation action for some children and young people.)
- Reparation for deliberate damaged equipment or possessions.
- As part of our commitment to protecting all those involved from harm we will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour, for example:

Bullying, swearing, fighting, violence, racism, name calling, spitting, vandalism, stealing, alcohol and drug use or dealing.

When challenging behaviour arises, leaders should debrief after the meeting, in order to learn from mistakes, make a record, decide what needs to be done, and how other leaders will be communicated with / supported. It is good practice to share this with the Enabling Elder.

If challenging behaviour becomes part of a group's culture, leaders should meet with the Minister / relevant parents or carers to plan how to address it.

Expectations

Church & Volunteers

- To provide volunteer children's leaders with access to sufficient guidance and training regarding best practice for positive behaviour management, and to follow safeguarding procedure for recruiting leaders.
- To provide a safe, well-ordered and caring environment with a positive ethos where children and young people can feel safe without fear of threat or harm from others. Encourage high standards of behaviour, always leading by example.
- To build relationships with parents / carers in order to provide effective solutions to difficult problems.
- To promote an ethos in which everyone shows concern and respect for others and their property.

Parents / Carers

- Encourage a positive attitude and high standards of engagement and behaviour to church / organisation and learning more about Christianity taking an interest in the learning and activities of my child.
- To the best of my ability, ensure my child knows what to expect at youth activities and aims to take a full and active part.
- Let the church / organisation know about any problems which may affect my child's learning or behaviour.

Children / Young People

- Agree to behave by the group ground rules. Remember that I represent my family wherever I am.
- Try and get on with others who are part of our church family / organisation showing respect and concern for other people and their belongings.