

Taking Care Update



Issue 3
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Presbyterian Board of Social Witness



Taking Care Conference -

Superb! Helpful! Valuable!

310 delegates, 14 speakers, 6 workshops - the Taking Care Conference was a great success. Thanks to everyone who made the journey and participated in the days events. I think all who attended would agree that the highlight of the day was Colin Turner and Mandy Ross from CEOP (Child Exploitation Online Protection). We really enjoyed listening to their presentation but we were frightened by the statistics and information which was put before us: At least 1 in 8 children and young people have met someone in reality whom they first met Online and often without an adult present. But it was encouraging to know that we can do something about this...



Lindsay Conway (Secretary to the Board of Social Witness) with Colin Turner and Mandy Ross from Child Exploitation on line Protection.

CEOP will be back!



If you would like to take part in their training programme in order to deliver internet safety training to the children and young people in your congregation and in other congregations nearby, contact the Taking Care Office. Details will be sent to Designated Persons and full time Youth Workers in due course.

Welcome Gail!

Gail McCullagh has joined the Taking Care Office as our Taking Care Administrator. It will be Gail's job to process POCVA checks and to answer enquiries to do with application forms and the POCVA process. You may have already come across Gail who has been working for the Board of Social Witness in the main office for three years, so Gail is already familiar with POCVA and we are delighted that she will be dedicated to working on the POCVA checks. This will speed up the POCVA process and keep the system working as efficiently as possible.



Taking Care takes an 'All Ireland' Approach

The Taking Care Committee has decided due to the fact that much of child protection is different in the Republic of Ireland, new legislation, different issues etc. a new Taking Care Advisory Committee for the Republic of Ireland will be set up. The Taking Care Committee will remain the parent group of this new committee. Presbytery Clerks in the R.O.I have been written to, asking for nominees. If you are a member of a congregation in the Republic of Ireland and would like to be part of this group then please speak to your Minister.

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Email: takingcare@presbyterianireland.org

1. What does POCVA stand for?

The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

2. Is it law that everyone working with children and young people should receive a POCVA check?

It is not law at the moment, but it soon will be. It is good practice and it is the policy of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

3. Who should be POCVA checked?

All leaders, volunteers, teachers and staff members who are working with children and young people on a regular basis need to receive a POCVA check if they have been appointed since 2005.

4. Can all existing leaders be POCVA checked?

No, only leaders who have been appointed since 2005 are checked.

5. Do I have to receive a POCVA check from the Presbyterian church when I am already checked through another organisation i.e. Education and Library Board, Sport Association?

Yes! Each appointment is treated separately.

6. How long will a POCVA check take to process?

4 to 6 weeks in normal circumstances but sometimes longer.

7. Do leaders used on a rota basis have to be POCVA checked?

No. As long as they are only used occasionally and never have one to one contact with members of the group other than their own children.

8. How often do I need to renew POCVA checks?

Only one POCVA check is needed for each person at this moment in time.

9. If someone who is already POCVA checked takes up a new position within the same congregation do they need to be re-checked?

No. POCVA is valid for any position within the same congregation. So if a Youth Club leader who has a POCVA check decides to help out in the BB he does not need a new POCVA check.

10. If a person has a POCVA check for their congregation and they move churches, do they need to apply again for a new POCVA check?

Yes. A POCVA check will only be valid for the one congregation. The only exception to this is a Church which is a 'Joint Charge'.

11. What about Young Leaders, do they have to be POCVA checked?

A 'Young Leader' or helper is a person aged 15-18. Only persons aged 18 and over can be POCVA checked. Therefore, young leaders can volunteer but they are not to be left alone with children and must be with someone else who has been POCVA checked.

12. Do volunteers have to pay for a POCVA check?

No, currently there is no cost incurred for a POCVA check either by the volunteer/paid worker, congregation or the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

13. Surely if leaders have a POCVA check I can do without interviewing and references?

No! POCVA complements standard recruitment practices but cannot replace them.

14. What happens if a prospective leader refuses to fill in the Application Form for a POCVA check?

Their application cannot be processed and your congregation/organisation will not be able to use them.

15. Where can I get an application form?

If you do not already have one, the current application form (TCF02/05) can be found on our website www.presbyterianireland.org/takingcare or can be obtained from the Taking Care Office. Once completed, a copy of the form should be kept and the original sent to the Taking Care Office.

Before you send an application form to us, please check:

- Are you using the correct form (TCF02/05)?
- Have applicants answered every question including their National Insurance number?
- Have the forms been signed by the Minister or Kirk Session representative?