



### Useful websites...

ireland.anglican.org  
pcibsw.org/takingcare  
dycw.info  
bbni.org.uk

gbni.co.uk  
scoutsni.com  
girlguidingulster.org.uk



**Church of Ireland**  
A province of the Anglican Communion



**The Methodist Church  
In Ireland**

Working together  
to protect children...

*Copies of the Common Protocol are available in:*  
**Safeguarding Trust** - The Church of Ireland code of good practice for ministry with children.  
**Taking Care** - Child Protection Guidelines for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland.  
**Also available from:**  
BB (NI), GB (NI), the Scout Association (NISC) and Girlguiding Ulster.



### A Common Protocol

This protocol is an agreed procedure to assist:

Churches that regularly allow independent childrens/youth organisations to use their premises

AND

Independent organisations\* working with children and young people, regularly using church premises for meetings.

\*See explanation inside

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For use in Northern Ireland

# The Common Protocol...

## What is it?

This is an agreed procedure for churches relating to independent organisations working with children and young people, regularly using church premises. The Protocol has been agreed by the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Methodist Church in Ireland and Boys Brigade (NI), Girls Brigade (NI), the Scout Association (NISC) and Girlguiding Ulster. It also has application with any sporting, arts or leisure groups using church premises.

## What does it do?

This protocol clearly sets out the expectations and responsibilities of both the churches and the independent organisations, particularly in the areas of child protection, appointment of leaders, information sharing and reporting of concerns of a child protection nature which may arise within an organisation.

## Who should use it?

- Individual parishes and congregations whose premises are used by independent (non-parochial/ congregational) organisations.
- All independent organisations working with children and young people, and regularly using church premises.



## What is an independent organisation?

The nature of the independence of children's and youth organisations varies. BB(NI) and GB(NI), although both national organisations, where they are placed within churches are an integral part of the churches' work with children and young people; the Scout Association (NISC) and Girlguiding Ulster are also national young people's organisations but are fully independent. Sporting, arts or leisure groups may be affiliated to national networks or may be smaller stand-alone organisations. The Common Protocol has application for churches and organisations in all of these settings.

## What the church is responsible for:

1. Recruiting, selecting and appointing (including vetting) all church based children's/youth leaders including **leaders for BB (NI) and GB (NI)**.<sup>1</sup>
2. Providing child protection training to all church based children's and youth leaders **and leaders for BB (NI) and GB (NI)**.
3. Supplying to the leader of the fully independent organisation the names and contact details of the church personnel who are responsible for the premises and for child protection in the parish/congregation.
4. Ensuring that the Clerk or Session/Secretary of the Select Vestry/Secretary of the Church Council signs annually, on behalf of the church, the Common Protocol with each fully independent organisation using church premises.
5. Ensuring the safety of the premises.

*BB(NI) and GB(NI) companies should satisfy themselves of the extent of insurance cover provided for their activities within their organisation's annual capitation.*



<sup>1</sup> BB (NI) and GB (NI) are organisations operated by the local church but also have separate external headquarters. Leaders are nominated and appointed by the local church and registered by the BB/GB - hence for these organisations points 3 and 4 above do not apply.



## What a fully independent organisation is responsible for:

1. Recruiting, selecting and appointing (including vetting) leaders/ workers in their organisations.
2. Providing child protection training to the leaders/ workers of their organisation.
3. Providing annually to the church the names and contact details of all leaders following appointment and confirming that all new appointees have been subject to a mandatory criminal record and background information check.
4. Reporting to the statutory agencies any concerns of a child protection nature that have arisen within the independent organisation.
5. Provide written confirmation to the church that adequate insurance cover is in place for its activities.
6. Ensuring that the leader in charge signs annually on behalf of the organisation, the Common Protocol with the church providing premises for the organisation's meetings.

