

POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN:

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

VIII. Guidance for Day Care



(Picture © Bahá'í World Centre)

OCTOBER 2010 (Updated April 2018)

Among the signs of moral downfall in the declining social order are the high incidence of violence within the family, the increase in degrading and cruel treatment of spouses and children, and the spread of sexual abuse. It is essential that the members of the [Bahá'í] community . . . take the utmost care not to be drawn into acceptance of such practices because of their prevalence. They must ever be mindful of their obligation to exemplify a new way of life distinguished by its respect for the dignity and rights of all people, by its exalted moral tone, and by its freedom from oppression and from all forms of abuse.¹

1. Universal House of Justice, 24 January 1993, to an individual believer quoted in *Antidotes to Domestic Violence* by Dr Michael Penn, an article in *The Bahá'í World: 2003-2004* (2005: page 148).

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the UK

Telephone 020-7584-2566 Fax 020-7584-9402 [E-mail nsa@bahai.org.uk](mailto:nsa@bahai.org.uk)

Registered in England - Company limited by guarantee - No. 355737

Registered Charity (1967) 250851

The Assembly also represents the Bahá'í communities of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands

Registering Day-Care and Occasional Day-Care

WHO MUST REGISTER?

A carer providing day-care or supervised activities on non-domestic premises for one or more children aged under eight.

Registration is required where the day-care provider is offering a service for children aged under eight for a period or total periods of more than two hours in a day. Even if a child attends for less than two hours, if the facilities are available for more than two hours then the facilities must be registered.

OCCASIONAL DAY CARE FACILITIES

The obligation to register does not apply to occasional day-care facilities.

Occasional day-care facilities are those which are used on less than six days in a year. This covers conferences and other occasional events.

However, in ALL cases, before using the premises to provide day-care for the first time, the organiser has to notify the relevant local authority that a day care facility is being provided. (S)he should give information about its location, the numbers and age range of the children, numbers of staff and opening hours. Local authorities have to keep a record of such notifications. It is unnecessary for them to visit the premises on each occasion but this should be done from time to time, so that the local authority can satisfy themselves about the suitability of the premises.

WHO IS A FIT PERSON TO BE A DAY-CARE PROVIDER?

Various criteria are given that the local authority will take into consideration. These include previous experience of working with children, ability to provide warm and consistent care, an understanding of multi-cultural and racial issues, commitment and knowledge to treat all children with respect and equality, as well as good physical health, mental stability and no known involvement in criminal cases involving child abuse.

SUITABILITY OF PREMISES

There are detailed specifications relating to amounts of space and room organisation. These are available on request, the most crucial being that

- children from 3-5 years of age require 25 sq feet per child,
- no room should accommodate more than 26 children,
- there should be a minimum of one lavatory per ten children,
- there should be outside play space, preferably adjacent to the building and exclusively for the use of the children. (Where not possible, children should be taken regularly to local parks, playgrounds or the equivalent.)

In addition, several other stipulations apply:

- children should be unable to leave the premises unsupervised,
- safety of outside play space and indoor equipment,
- safe glass doors,
- arrangements for arrival and departure,
- safety of fires, electric sockets, windows and floor coverings,
- cleaning arrangements,
- rest facilities, and
- if more than one floor is used, there should be proper arrangements for safeguarding access to stairs.

ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS

Below are suggested ratios of adult to child, recommended for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event. These are the ratios required in regulations governing day care for under 8's and as on the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) website:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children-guidance/>

	Adult	:	Children
0 to 2 years	1	:	3
2 to 3 years	1	:	4
4 to 8 years	1	:	6
9 to 12 years	1	:	8
13 to 17 years	1	:	10

NB. Day Care regulations (OFSTED) cover activities which last for six days or more, for children up to eight years of age where there is no one with parental responsibility with them and where the activity lasts for two hours or more in a day.

It may not, in practice, be possible to achieve the same standards as for registered activities, but it is vital to ensure there are sufficient adults for child supervision. .

For children over 8, there is no official guidance.¹ A suggested ratio is two adults (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 children, with an additional leader for every 10 children. Following a risk assessment, this ratio would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered high risk or dangerous, or when catering for children with disabilities/special needs.

In some circumstances a worker might be alone with a child. Examples include a small group situation, listening to a child, acting as a befriender/mentor or in transport arrangements. Be specific in your written guidance and expectations.

REGISTRATION

The full regulations applying to registration are longer and more complex. If you feel that your facilities need to be registered please contact the National Office. They will advise you.

All people working with children in any capacity must have obtained an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance through the faith before commencing work. Clearances obtained from other agencies are not acceptable unless a person has subscribed to the DBS online Update Service through another organisation or employment within the same 'Child Workforce'. The person must inform the Office for Safeguarding Children (osc@bahai.org.uk) as their consent is required to check online the status of their disclosure certificate. Even so, in addition, a clear Enhanced Disclosure paper certificate, along with a person's personal details being entered on the National Assembly's Accredited Children's Tutor list, will both still be a requirement for working within the Bahá'í community with under 18's.

1. Anyone not wearing a badge or recognised as a member of the host site staff must be challenged and where necessary reported to the working party/child protection agents.
2. Use no photography (still or video) without first ensuring that the necessary parental permission has been obtained.
3. Ensure all activities comply with laid down staff/child ratios (under 2s = 1:3, 2 - 3yrs = 1:4, 4 - 8 yrs = 1:6, 9 - 12 yrs = 1:8, 13 -17 yrs = 1:10)

¹ For guidance from the National Assembly on a dedicated adult to child ratio for events in the age group 11 to 18, please read the policy, 'Safeguarding Children: Frequently Asked Questions (Updated April 2018)' page 25. For a copy please email osc@bahai.org.uk