

NORTHERN IRELAND

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

HANDBOOK

OPEN TO ALL

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TO ALL TEACHERS AND POTENTIAL TEACHERS

In the 9th of January 2001 letter from the Universal House of Justice the Baha'i community in regard to the five year plan are called on to address the education of children:

At the outset of the Twelve Month plan we underscored the need for Baha 'i children to be nurtured spiritually and to be integrated into the life of the Cause. There is every indication from the response to the friends thus far that a raised awareness of the importance of child education will, in fact, be a hallmark of this brief yet significant Plan. A new impetus has been given to Baha 'i Children's classes. Increased awareness has also brought to light opportunities to offer moral and spiritual 'education to children in general, as exemplified by the success of the efforts to introduce courses on the Baha 'i Faith into programmes of official school systems. "

We have the opportunity to share the spiritual message of Baha'u'llah with a shattered community. In Italy a high school teacher created a program for her students. The project was a study circle in Book One, two w^lere formed. In a later period in a parent teacher meeting in the school a parent thanked her for the spiritual care that she had taken of their children. One parent said, 'Nobody cares about young people and their spiritual life, you have been so fantastic in doing this.' Another said;, 'My daughter is so happy when she comes back home from this spiritual course and she tells me everything and reads the pages that you share with them and I become happy too.'

Reflections on Growth Feb 2005

The children's classes we form must be primarily open to all as a resource to a troubled community. However if Baha'i children attend such a class, a letter dated 25th September 2001 to Argentina may help us integrate their differing needs. I hope to be sharing guidelines on this matter with you soon. A further document compiled by the International Teaching Centre July 2000 may further help your understanding of the issues needing to be addressed on a broader scale.

Northern Ireland Children's Class Co-ordinator

25 September 2001

Transmitted by email: bahaiargentina@ciudad.com,ar

The Spiritual Assembly of the
Baha'is of Argentina

Dear Baha'i Friends,

The Universal House of Justice received your email message dated 30 July 2001 seeking clarification regarding children's classes which include non-Baha'i children.

It is possible, of course, to create a programme for children which is inspired by the Baha' teachings and conveys such topics as moral education, comparative religion, peace, concern for the environment, service to humanity, or world citizenship. Such programmes might also convey practical subjects such as literacy, academic tutoring, or vocational training.

In its message dated 9 January 2001, however, the House of Justice refers specifically to Baha'i children's classes as also being open to non-Baha'i children. In the case of these classes, which are intended to address the complete spiritual education of Baha'is, it would not be possible to eliminate Baha'i religious teachings, and topics such as Baha'i history, Baha'i laws, and the Covenant would be an integral part of these classes.

While Baha'i religious teachings are part of the programme of child education in Baha'i classes, the design of the programme, particularly the sequencing of content, may make it more attractive to non-Baha'is. For example, in the approach taken to child education in *Ruhi Book Three*, the emphasis is placed initially on character development, and only later are specific aspects related to the life of Baha'u'llah and the Bab introduced. So too can we see the same principle at work in the main sequence of books in which many non-Baha'i youth have participated. *Book One* addresses such broad topics as prayer and life and death (from a Baha'i perspective, of course). It is in *Book Four* that history is presented in detail. Thus a non-Baha'i can feel welcome to participate and is not overwhelmed by new, purely religious teachings. When, if attracted by the principles and general spiritual teachings, the non-Baha'is would not hesitate to engage in the full programme; alternatively, they are free to withdraw or not participate in some segments.

Of course, Baha'is would always be clear about the nature of the curriculum when describing it to their friends and acquaintances. In some areas, many of the non-Baha'i parents may be happy to have their children participate in a full programme of Baha'i child education; in others, however, a national community may find it advantageous to complement its Baha'i children's classes with a Baha'i-inspired programme for children because it results in attracting a larger number*

Clearly, one set of instructions about how to structure a programme, or an integrated combination of programmes, would not meet the needs of all communities. Your National Institute and/or Child Education Committee will need to consult on the specific conditions and interests in the general population and the Baha'i community, select the most promising alternative, and then modify and improve the approach over time based on your practical experience.

With loving Baha'i greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

THE SPIRITUAL EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND JUNIOR YOUTH BAHA'I CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

A document prepared by the
International Teaching Centre

July 2000

The Universal House of Justice has advised the Baha'i world that beginning with the Twelve Month Plan special emphasis should be given to the education of children and junior youth. This group constitutes a significant percentage of today's world population, and demographic studies indicate that the percentage will increase in the decades to come. The purpose of this document is to offer suggestions and stimulate consultation in Baha'i communities on the all-important subject of systematizing Baha'i children's classes.

OVERVIEW

The spiritual education of children and junior youth is a shared responsibility of parents, the community, and the institutions of the Faith. It is multifaceted and, to some extent, must be sensitive to variations in culture. Offering a program of spiritual education presents every community with a range of challenges that must be met progressively. Regular children's classes, supported by parents and the institutions, are a fundamental aspect of such a program and are essential to the consolidation of Baha'i communities. The history of the Baha'i community in Iran, where children from age five attend regular weekly classes in a 12-year sequential program of Baha'i education, is a striking testimony to the value of systematic efforts for the spiritual education of children.

The establishment of children's classes is also an indispensable element of any plan for the sustained, large-scale expansion of the Faith. In its message of 26 November 1999 to the Baha'i world, the Universal House of Justice stated:

Strategies to advance the process of entry by troops cannot ignore children and junior youth, if the victories won in one generation are not to be lost with the passage of time. It is imperative, then, that at this point in the process of systematization of the teaching work, definite steps be taken to ensure that the vision of the community fully embraces its younger members. The education of children, an obligation enjoined on both parents and institutions, requires special emphasis so as to become thoroughly integrated into the process of community development. This activity should be taken to new levels of intensity during these twelve months and then be further raised in the years immediately after. That the programs of most institutes in the world provide for the training of children's class teachers represents an element of strength. Spiritual Assemblies and Auxiliary Board members will need to mobilize these newly trained human resources to meet the spiritual requirements of children and junior youth.

The majority of Baha'i communities are gradually creating and consolidating the various components of a distinctive Baha'i life. Many of these communities have addressed, in one way or another, the question of the Baha'i education of children. Yet significant strides remain to be taken. In those localities where children's classes exist, they are not always offered for different age groups, often are not held regularly, and may only reach a small percentage of the children. The most limiting factors are the insufficient number of teachers and the unavailability of children's class materials. The extraordinary success that has been achieved with the establishment of training institutes all over the world now endows national communities with the capacity to address the teacher training needs with greater vigor. Participation in institute courses is enabling the believers to gain a deeper Baha'i identity, including an awareness of the responsibilities of parents and institutions towards children. It can be expected that as institutes succeed in training a larger and larger number of teachers for children's classes, and as classroom materials become more readily available, new conditions will be

created at the local level, which will promote a dynamic process of spiritual education. Children's classes, open to both Baha'is and non-Baha'is, initiated by individuals and supported by Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, might well be one of the first organized activities carried out in a fledgling community.

In communities with active Local Spiritual Assemblies that enjoy close collaboration with the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, more extensive activities can be undertaken and sustained in the development of child education programs. Here, too, regular children's classes, which will benefit from the growing capacity of the national or regional institute for training teachers, will be at the heart of the process. The effective use of talent within the community also makes possible other initiatives, such as organizing programs for parents, producing special materials, and even collaborating with like-minded organizations outside the Faith in the area of moral education.

Counsellors and National Assemblies have learned valuable lessons in their joint efforts to develop training institutes. These experiences can now be applied to the equally challenging process of the systematization of children's classes.

LINES OF ACTION

In their consultations, Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies will need to ensure that adequate attention is given to three interrelated lines of action: (1) the selection and development of a curriculum, (2) the training of teachers, and (3) the administration of classes for children. These, of course, should be complemented by such efforts as strengthening Baha'i families, integrating children into community life, publishing special materials, and promoting economic development.

1. Curriculum

The first step in establishing a systematic program of children's classes in a country or a region is to identify a suitable curriculum with related lesson plans and classroom materials. The training institute clearly has to play an important role in this process, as it is ultimately charged with the responsibility for training the human resources who will be teaching the curriculum selected. Although a number of curricula have been developed by Baha'i communities in various parts of the world, these generally remain inaccessible to the vast majority of teachers. Further, the lack of lesson plans and classroom materials makes the recruitment of volunteer teachers difficult and diminishes the effectiveness of classes.

The complexity of the task of developing a curriculum with proper lesson plans and accompanying classroom materials should not be underestimated. Simply compiling a list of topics and offering suggestions on lesson plans is insufficient, and a great deal of effort is needed before a well-tested curriculum emerges. Clearly, it would not be wise to postpone the holding of classes until locally developed materials become available. During the Four Year Plan it soon became evident that the use of existing materials greatly assisted communities to advance their institutes more rapidly. Likewise, it would be advantageous for the children's class curriculum to be chosen as early as possible from the materials readily available; as experience is gained, these can gradually be adapted to the circumstances of a given national community. A list of some of the existing sequential classroom materials is given in Appendix

The translation of curriculum material into the vernacular should be given high priority. Some institutes are developing practical and efficient approaches to the translation of materials used in their courses. Similar methods could perhaps be employed to ensure the rapid and accurate translation of children's materials into major local languages.

It should be noted that some national communities are finding that junior youth (roughly those between the ages of 12 and 15 years) benefit from classes that are structured to meet their special needs and concerns. In addition to such classes, supplementary programs have also proven to be effective specifically for that age group. In certain cases, the study circles may follow the regular courses of the institute; but, in general, these courses are more effective with youth 15 years and above.

2. Teacher training

Once appropriate curriculum materials have been selected, the matter of teacher training needs to be addressed. Local communities often begin with one teacher, and as they expand their program of children's classes, they draw on the services of more teachers in order to reach different age groups. Not all volunteers, however, are able to continue serving over extended periods of time. Therefore, the training of teachers of children's classes will remain an ongoing focus of every institute. A list of some available materials on teacher training is given in Appendix B.

Establishing a well-conceived program for the training of children's class teachers, with the necessary follow-up and refresher courses, is not an easy task and may require years for an institute to develop. This basic long-term strategy can be complemented by an initial thrust to have classes up and running as soon as possible. There are capable and willing believers in every community who, with little training, could take on this responsibility. Holding a series of weekend workshops has, in various parts of the world, proven to be effective in providing the training necessary for such individuals, allowing the process to be set in motion immediately. At such workshops, materials can be reviewed and themes such as the principles of child education, the qualities of the teachers of children, the meritorious nature of this service, and the skills of managing a class, can be studied.

As in so many other areas of endeavor, youth represent a valuable asset to any community's efforts, and constitute a pool of potential children's class teachers. Mothers and young women are also a natural resource for this meritorious service. However, it should be noted that in some cultures too much emphasis on having women serve in this capacity might give rise to the notion that the teaching of children is not a task for men.

3. Administration of children's classes

The systematization of classes that provide spiritual education to an increasing number of children requires a sound administrative structure. In communities where the Local Spiritual Assembly is established on firm foundations, the Assembly itself can, generally through the appointment of an appropriate committee, establish classes and supervise their administration, ensure the proper placement of teachers trained by the institute, and distribute the relevant material from national and regional agencies. In regions and areas where Local Spiritual Assemblies are not yet able to carry out this complex task, another structure or agency will have to establish and administer the classes. Area teaching committees are a natural candidate to take on this responsibility. In such cases, the role of the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants will be of special importance. Indeed, the assistants to Auxiliary Board members are usually the ones who initiate the children's classes in such communities. In general, enthusiastic but often inexperienced teachers will need support and encouragement if they are to continue in this service.

Beyond the structures at the local and regional levels mentioned above, and apart from the institute and its agents, the promotion of child education on the scale required will call for some administrative structure at the national level. Such a structure would largely attend to logistical matters, leaving the development of the teacher training program to the institute. This agency could publish classroom materials, administer funds, monitor the regularity and the quality of the classes, encourage the production of special publications and periodicals for children, and organize programs for parents.

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Clearly, the administration of such a system implies the expenditure of funds. Materials need to be published and classroom supplies provided. Generally, believers who offer to teach children's classes do not require remuneration. Under some circumstances, however, National Assemblies may wish to consider the possibility of having full-time teachers who can attend to classes in a number of adjacent communities and who may, therefore, need financial assistance for a period of time. As the number of children's classes increases, there will be a need to monitor them; this could require the services of part- or full-time regional staff. Financial support for the education of children can come from a variety of sources. National Spiritual Assemblies or Regional Baha'i Councils usually allocate funds for programs of child education in their annual budgets. The institute budget can cover the cost of teacher training and the translation of materials. Costs related to the services of part- or full-time regional staff could be met through funds allocated to the area growth programs.

Counsellors may use teaching subvention funds, wherever additional assistance is needed, to

support the efforts of the National Assembly in strengthening the overall program of child education. These funds would cover expenses jointly approved by the two institutions and could include the remuneration of national and regional monitors. The Counsellors may also decide to authorize Auxiliary Board members to disburse small sums for the general support of local children's classes.

RELATED INITIATIVES

1. Fostering Baha'i family life

The strengthening of family life is, in its own right, an ongoing concern of Baha'i institutions. In the context of this document, the importance of the role of parents in the spiritual education of their children must be underscored. The Ridvan 2000 message of the Universal House of Justice made a moving appeal to parents in regard to their responsibility towards the education of their children. Assemblies and their agencies, on the one hand, and Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, on the other, would naturally include in their efforts to foster Baha'i family life such topics as the development of a strong Baha'i identity from early childhood, and the need for parents to support a program of children's classes by ensuring that children attend classes on a regular basis. Fully understanding the important role that parents play in nurturing their children spiritually will contribute greatly to the success of Baha'i children's classes.

Education of their children in the home, to complement what they receive in their classes, may need to be developed. A list of some of the existing materials is given in Appendix C.

2. The integration of children into community life

Concern for the spiritual education of children finds expression in ways beyond the holding of children's classes. The collection of accurate data on Baha'i children of various ages can assist in the process of their integration within the community. Examples of questions that may need to be brought to the attention of Assemblies are

- How many Baha'i children reside in the locality?
- After the declaration of adult believers, are parents asked how many children they have?
- How soon after their declaration do they become aware of their responsibilities as Baha'i parents to foster the spiritual education of their children?
- Are the children of a newly declared couple made to feel welcome at Baha'i children's classes and other community gatherings?

Since, in the vast majority of villages and towns throughout the world, parents are eager to see their children receive moral education and are often happy to have their children take part in Baha'i classes, children of non-Baha'i families well-disposed towards the Faith may also be invited to attend Baha'i classes. Additionally, every community needs to ensure that special programs for children are in place for the observation of Baha'i Holy Days and other gatherings.

3. Special publications for children

Baha'i and Baha'i-inspired children's publications, audiovisual materials, and periodicals are all useful aids for both parents and the institutions of the Faith as they strive to provide spiritual education to children. A number of questions will need to be addressed if a significant increase in the availability of suitable children's materials is to occur. Among these are the following:

- Are enough authors inspired and motivated to write and develop books and audiovisual materials for children through personal initiative or might some friends need to be invited to focus on this service?
- Can pre-youth and youth be encouraged to help with the production of attractive periodicals for children?
- What can be done so that the Baha'i Publishing Trusts produce a greater number of suitable materials for children?

- Are parents fully aware of the importance of their children's having access at home to Baha'i books and electronic and audiovisual materials?
- Are Baha'i materials for children sold at reasonable prices?
- Do the institutions of the Faith make children's materials affordable through subsidies?
- How can information about the availability of children's materials be actively shared with Baha'i communities worldwide?

4. Social and economic development

Children and junior youth can also be reached through other Baha'i inspired educational endeavors, including establishing academic schools and moral education programs. Teaching about the Baha'i Faith in official school systems and implementing youth empowerment and literacy projects are other examples of efforts to provide spiritual education to the younger generation. Offering teacher training to government school teachers is another fruitful avenue for reaching children and youth with the moral and spiritual teachings enshrined in the Writings.

1. Overview of children's classes in Northern Ireland

Children's classes are one of the core activities which are central to the life of every Baha'i community. Classes teach Baha'i education which is open to all the inhabitants of an area, whether from Baha'i families or not.

Administration

In Northern Ireland, children's classes are administered by the Training Institute Board, under the guidance of the Baha'i Council for N. Ireland. The Children and Junior Youth Coordinators works for the Training Institute, maintaining statistics on children's classes, and offering support and training for class teachers.

If you start a children's class, you should inform the Area Coordinator for Children's Classes using the 'Children's Class Start Record' form on page 16 of this document. If your class has to stop for some reason, or there is a change in the teachers or participants, please also notify the coordinator.

It is vital that accurate data is kept for children's classes. This data is used by the Council, the National Spiritual Assembly, and the World Centre of the Faith to analyse whether the number of local, open to all classes is multiplying, and whether all Baha'i children have access to education in their area. It also ensures that we comply with child safety procedures, and can communicate with the class teachers efficiently.

Materials

The training for becoming a children's class teacher is Book 3 of the main sequence of courses offered by the Training Institute. In addition to providing teacher training, this book contains lesson plans for children aged 5-6. Following this, Book 5 of the main sequence offers further training, and lesson plans for ages 7-8.

There are many resources across the world for teachers who would like to run classes for children aged 9 upwards. These are listed on pages 12-14.

2. Frequently asked questions

1. What is meant by "local" children's classes?

Each Local Assembly is in the best position to decide how local it wants its classes to be, and this can be done in consultation with the Assistants and with the Area Coordinator for Children's Classes. The NSA has recommended that we should be thinking in terms of the LSA boundaries as "local". From guidance sent by the ITC it is clear that we are continually multiplying children's classes, and that eventually we are aiming for "neighborhood" classes. So, one LSA area might start out with one or two centralised classes, but would be aiming to multiply those by making them more and more local. Clearly the only way to do this is through teaching, and inviting non-Baha'is to attend.

2. What should we teach the non-Baha'i children?

The classes that are offered to our Baha'i children should also be offered to the non-Bahá'ís. We are opening up our regular classes, rather than putting on something different for the non-Baha'i children. The Book 3 lesson plans are intended to be the first year of an education for Baha'i children and not simply 'virtues classes'. The idea is that we teach the children virtues and then move on to other Baha'i topics. The lesson plans in Book 5 are aimed at 7-8 year olds, and teach the history of the Faith.

3. What about the Baha'i identity of our Baha'i children?

Some people have expressed concern that there is a process of forming Baha'i identity which goes on in a solely Baha'i environment. There are at least 2 aspects to this: one is that if you have a class with one Baha'i child and 5 non-Baha'i children (as many people now do), you would expect that some of the parents and children will eventually enrol in the Faith. Another issue is the kind of identity which we want our children to grow up with. If they become accustomed to sharing the Faith with their friends and peers from an early age, then they will have the strongest possible Baha'i identity, as they will be at ease with sharing the Faith with others. In the past, children attending classes with only Baha'i children have expressed that they felt a "dual identity" in which they behave one way with their Baha'i friends, and another way with their school friends.

3. POCV FORMS

All class teachers must be cleared by a child protection agency (POCV) to work with young people. Any teacher working with children under 18 years of age must have this clearance. In addition. No-one can teach classes or be a classroom assistant unless they have obtained CRB clearance on behalf of the NSA.

Some people will have obtained clearance for their professions or other voluntary activities, but this does not cover them for Baha'i voluntary work. These people will still need to obtain clearance from the POCV on behalf of the NSA, following the same procedures as everyone else.

Here is the procedure:

Follow guidance for child protection procedures given on page 15 and the check list on page 22.

4. List of resources for teaching children's classes

- ***Baha'i Education for Children* by A.A. Furutan**

A series of 6 books, for ages 5-10. These are available from Baha'i Books UK priced £3.95 each, and are also available to download free of charge for personal use from: www.iuxta.com and click on the link for 'Baha'i Education for Children'.

- **USA 'Core Curriculum'**

www.core-curriculum.org

Lesson plans are available to download from:

www.education.usbnc.org/child_spir ed/ts_tbox_gen.htm

- **Educational resources CD-ROM.** Includes lesson plans for ages 2 1/2 -18. To order, send a cheque for £3.50 (UK) or £4.50 (overseas) to:

Alan Woodhurst, 16 Freshfields Avenue, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2BZ, or email afwoodhurst@hotmail.com for further information

A syllabus based on the **UK National Curriculum** www.dayspring-magazine.org.uk/education/syllabus/index.htm

- ***Baha'i Crafts for Children***

www.bahaicrafts.com

A website dedicated to the book
The book can also be purchased from Baha'i Books UK.

- A Baha'i website with resources for junior youth (ages 12-14).
www.junioryouth.org
- A USA based website for Baha'i youth.
www.bahaiyouth.com
- **New World Order Games Manual** which contains 150 games is available to download by clicking a link from [ww.junioryouth.org](http://www.junioryouth.org) under the section 'lesson plans' and then 'other lesson plans'
<http://home.earthlink.net/~l.gualls/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/1agamesrules.pdf>
- **Australian 'Peace Pack'** for ages 5-12 www.wa.bahai.org.au/BESS It costs around £60 to purchase the full course, including shipping to the UK.
- Online lesson plans and resources from the Ottawa community.
www.bahai-ottawa.org/new_files/education/children_education.html
- A Christian website with lesson plans and ideas.
www.goodcharacter.com
- **Brilliant Stars playgroup** in Perth, Australia, for groups of mums with babies and small children:
www.wa.bahai.org.au/brilliantstars/
- Spiritual Education website
www.spiritual-education.org
- A website on Baha'i parenting
www.bahaiparent.com
- A compilation of Baha'i songs http://bahai-library.com/?file=compilation_bahai_songs
- **GEORGE TOWNSEND SCHOOL LESSON PLANS**
Ask the resource person Rosemary Johnston
- For pens paper scissors glue and paint, reference material: books toys, games puzzles, play equipment and tapes Ask the resource person Rosemary Johnston
- **Children's CD and songbook**
The CD and songbook cost £8.00 (+ 80p postage and packing for UK deliveries). For details on how to order, please visit www.cheshirebahai.org. or write to Baha'i Community of Macclesfield and Prestbury, PO Box 462, Macclesfield, SK10 2YX
- **The Garden of Baha'u'llah: Visual Lessons for the Study of the Baha'i Faith**, by Peter A. Oldziey. (Baha'i Publishing Trust, New Delhi, India: ISBN 81-85091-63-3)
- **Treasure Chest: A Workbook about Baha'u'llah for ages 7-11**

Written & designed by Gail Radley & Debbie Wilke
(George Ronald, Oxford; ISBN 0-85398-445-X)

Order from: **Baha'i Books UK** or from Beman Khosravi: 028 90798885
Tel: 01572 722 780
www.bahai-publishing-trust.co.uk Email: reception@bahai-publishing-trust.co.uk

5. Contact details

Children's Class Co-ordinator - Patricia Jamshidi mob: 07834717309 H: 028 90485288
12 Ferndene Gdns Dundonald BT16 2EP Email:
iam@iamshidis.freemove.co.uk

Resource Person: Rosemary Johnston mob: 07841427431

6. Forms

The following forms should be completed for your class. Follow the procedure listed in
Procedures for Child Protection.

Forms: CP 1, CP 1&2, CP3 and CP11 should be sent to:

Mrs Pat Craig

11 Haddington Gdns Belfast BT6 OAN

Forms: CP4 & CP5 to:

Dorothy Riordan (address on Form)

Form For the start class record to: Children's Class Co-ordinator, Patricia Jamshidi

Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland

Procedures for Child Protection

Record keeping

In order to comply with the national procedures for child protection the Baha'i Council requires the following records to be kept and forwarded to the Council:

- Form CP1 - For children up to age 18, a general consent form is required.
- Forms CP1 and CP2 - For children up to age 16 a medical consent/information form is also required.
- Form CP3 - For each adult that has the possibility of being alone with a child or a group of children a teacher/leader declaration form is required.
- Form CP4&5 - POCVA check forms are required for all adults that have the possibility of being alone with a child or group of children. These forms need to be sent as stated on them to the designated officer for POCVA.
- Form CPU - This form needs to be completed within a week of a class starting.

The forms for adults should be completed in advance of the event. Forms CP1 and CP2 should be completed at the beginning of the event. All forms apart from CP4 & 5 should be submitted to the Council as early as possible to enable the necessary checks to be undertaken.

In addition to these forms event organisers are required to keep an attendance register. The attendance register must be submitted to the Baha'i Council immediately after the event (or at the end of term in the case of children's classes).

Designated person

Event organisers are asked to nominate a person who will have designated responsibility for child protection. Approval for the appointment of the nominated person must be sought from the Council before the person is contacted.

The designated person for child protection will be given training on their role by the Council.

20031203 Child Protection
guidance #2 Revised 2004-03-02
Revised 2005-08-14

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
GENERAL CONSENT FORM - USE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS UP TO AGE 18

- This form is to be completed by parents in advance of the event
- A young person cannot be permitted to attend the event without a parental consent form completed
- In case of any emergencies, during the project to, there must be a responsible adult at home of the child to be contacted

Event being held:

Venue: Date(s):

Organiser:.....

I (full name) am parent/guardian of

(full name of young person) of

address of young person).....

I can be contacted at (insert daytime and evening telephone numbers or mobile):

I consent to the above child/young person attending the event and participating in the activities organised by and under the auspices of the above-named organiser; its representative named below has explained to me/us the nature and scope of the activities the child/youth may be engaged in.

Name of event organiser.....

Role of organiser.....

I agree that you may exercise my parental responsibility during the event as you may consider reasonably necessary

(Signature and date of signing)

..... Date

The Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland on behalf of
NSA of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom
27 Rutland Gate LONDON SW7 1PD
Registered in England - Company limited by guarantee - No 355737
Registered Charity (1967) 250851

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GENERAL
CONSENT AND MEDICAL CONSENT USE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS UP
TO AGE 16

Event being held:

Venue:..... Date(s):

Organiser:.....

I (*fullname*)am parent/guardian of

(*full name of young person*) of

(*address of young person,*).....

I can be contacted at (*insert daytime and evening telephone numbers or mobile*):

I consent to the above child/young person attending the event and participating in the activities organised by and under the auspices of the above-named organiser; its representative named below has explained to me/us the nature and scope of the activities the child/youth may be engaged in.

Name of event organiser.....

Role of organiser.....

I agree that you may exercise my parental responsibility during the event as you may consider reasonably necessary.

I advise you that the above child has the following medical condition(s):.....

and is taking the following medications (*name, dosage, frequency.*)

I have provided the appropriate stock of these and authorize you to administer them appropriately and to seek such medical attention for my child as you deem necessary in case of emergency or concern. (*Please use back of this form if there is not enough space here, and to provide further information if you feel it would be helpful.*)

(Signature, date of signing)

..... **Date**

The Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland on behalf of
NSA of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom
27 Rutland Gate LONDON SW7 1PD
Registered in England - Company limited by guarantee - No. 355737 Registered
Charity (1967) 250851

**Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland
Child Protection Policy**

- This form must be completed by all adults that have substantial access to children at Baha'i events.
- It must be completed for every separate event.
- Completed forms should be returned to the Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland before the event commences.

Name/nature of event OR name of school: _____ Date(s) of

event or term date(s) of school: _____ Baha'f body responsible:

Name of proposed teacher/assistant/helper:

DECLARATION:

I, (*name*), _____ declare that:

(a) I have never been convicted of a sexual offence (as defined in the Sexual Offences Act, 1997), and

(b) I am not now receiving, nor in the past have I received, any medical or psychological treatment (including counselling) in respect of inappropriate behaviour or urges towards young people.

I understand and accept that making a false declaration is a serious matter which could lead to my membership privileges ("voting rights") in the Baha'i' community being suspended or removed.

Signed _____

Date: _____

Address _____

Signature witnessed by:

Name of witness (block capitals) _____

Signature of witness _____ Date:

Address of witness _____

Bahá'í Council for Northern Ireland
Confidential
POC(NI) Service Check Consent Form – Form CP4

Part A - INFORMATION ABOUT THE POC(NI) Service CHECK

The post you have applied for involves substantial access to the following group:

- Children or young people under 18 years of age

Before appointing anyone to such a post, it is the policy of the Bahá'í Council for Northern Ireland to ask for a POC, (Protection of Children), (NI) Service check to be carried out by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's (DHSS&PS) Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (POCVA) Team. The check is to make sure that people who might be a risk to children or adults with a learning disability are not appointed.

The check will tell us if you have a criminal record, or if the DHSS&PS has any other information about you which might show you are not suitable. Any information which we get will be treated confidentially, and we will talk to you about it before we make a final decision. After the decision is made the information will be destroyed.

We will only ask for the check if we are thinking of appointing you, but you **must** tell us now if you have ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or cautioned by the police, or bound over. You **must** tell us about **all** offences, even minor ones such as motoring offences, and 'spent' convictions, that is, things which happened a long time ago. If you leave anything out it may affect your application.

Please complete the section below to give us this information and return it with your application. The form also asks you to give your written consent to the check. If you do not consent we will not accept your application.

PART B

CONSENT TO POC(NI) SERVICE CHECK

Do you have any prosecutions pending or have you ever been convicted at a court or cautioned by the police for any offence? **YES / NO** (delete as appropriate)

If yes, please list below details of **all** pending prosecutions, convictions, cautions, or bind-over orders. Give as much information as you can, including, if possible, the offence, the approximate date of the court hearing and the court which dealt with the matter.

I understand that a POC(NI) Service check must be carried out before my appointment can be confirmed. This has been explained to me and I am aware that spent convictions may be disclosed. I declare that the information I have given is accurate and I consent to the check being made.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Please return this form to the Council's POC Officer at the address below:

Bahá'í Council for Northern Ireland,
POC Officer
Dorothy Riordan
3 Brett Wood,
Lurgan
BT66 6HR

(Tel 3834 9038) THE BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

64 Old Dundonald Road, Belfast BT16 0XS

Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland
Confidential POC (NI) (Protection of Children) Teacher and
activity leader register - Form CPS

This information is required by the Council to ensure that it has accurate information for the purposes of child protection. For those teachers or leaders who have substantial and unavoidable access to children, this information will enable the Council complete the necessary documentation for a record check by the POCVA (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults) Team. This is a service provided by the Child Care Policy Directorate of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). A POC(NI) Service Check provides independent and confidential record checking of police, social services and education files.

Block Capitals Please

Title: Dr/Mr/Miss/Mrs (delete as appropriate)	Date of birth:
Surname:	Previous surnames (if any)
Full forenames	National Insurance number
Present address: Post Code:	Previous address(es) (within the last five years):
Telephone(s)	If you have ever lived elsewhere in the UK or the Republic of Ireland, please list the addresses and dates on the reverse of this page
BahcTf Community	
Place of birth	

Please ensure that you have read and completed the following additional forms:

- NSA child protection declaration form - **Form CP3**
- BCNI consent to the PECS check - **Form CP4**

Return this form to the following:

Baha'f Council for Northern Ireland
 POC Officer
 Dorothy Riordan
 3 Brett Wood,
 Lurgan
 BT66 6HR
 (Tel 3834 9038)

THE BAHAI'J COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
 64 Old Dundonald Road, Belfast BT16 OXS T: 028 9048 0500 F: 0870 131
 2199 E: bcni@bahai.org.uk

**Bahá'í Council for Northern Ireland
Report on child protection**

- This form is to be completed within a week of any event involving children.
- In the case of a programme of events such as a study circle it is to be completed within one week of the second meeting of the group.
- The completed form should be sent to the Council's liaison member for child protection.

Name of event or series of events e.g. summer school, study circle or children's class

_____ Date(s): _____

Number of participants under 18: _____ Number of CP1 forms: _____

Number of participants under 16: _____ Number of CP2 forms: _____

Number of adults with substantial access: _____ Number of CP3 forms: _____

Was notification given to the Council in advance of the names of the leaders for clearance by the National Spiritual Assembly? Yes/No

If not please explain: _____

Have all leaders been cleared by PECS? Yes/No

If not please explain: _____

Bahá'í institution responsible:

Name of person completing this form: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Bahá'í Council for Northern Ireland
Hackney House, 64 Old Dundonald Road, Belfast

bcni@bahai.org.uk

20040920 Form CP 11

Please fill in the information that you can, and send a copy to the children's class coordinator Patricia Jamshidi. If you do not have all the information, please do send in the form with the information you have. The most important thing to know is that the children's class has started. Many thanks!

LOCAL CHILDREN'S CLASS START RECORD

Name of teacher filling in form:	Names of additional teachers:	Location of children's class:	Cluster:

Date of first class:	How often the class intends to meet:	Materials used (eg Book 3 or Book 5 lessons)

Number of Children	Date of Birth/ Age	Community	Cluster	Registered in Bahai Community Y/N
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

Aims of the Class

Each session may include stories, songs, and quotations for memorisation, artwork and games.

Activities are designed for the 5-11 age group.

The aim of the class is to help the children to develop virtues, and to learn to co-operate with one another. There will be an emphasis on improving behavior and conduct towards each other.

Teachers of the Class

The teachers of the class have all been POCVA checked and have undergone training in Book 3 and 5 of the Ruhi Institute.

These classes are offered by the Bahá'í community as a resource to help develop the potential of children in the Northern Ireland community whatever their religion, culture or racial background. They are open to all children from 5-11 years old.

We would encourage parents to come along to the first class to see for themselves how it is conducted.

*Informative web sites:
www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/bahai
www.bahai.org*

Weekly Children's Class

VENUE

Times:

Dates:

Cost:

"Children are the most precious treasure a community can possess, for in them are the promise and guarantee of the future"

(From the Baha'i Writings)

Baha'i Principles in Education

- All humans are created noble. • Everyone is a unique creation of God, endowed with his or her own talents and capacities.
- Everyone has the capacity to develop spiritually and to attain his or her full potential.
- Teachers should guide young people with an attitude of love, understanding, and respect.

The spiritual education of young people is seen by as one of the most important and meritorious of services. The classes are offered to those of all faiths, or none.

Bahá'ís believe that all the major world faiths are divine in origin, and we encourage children and young people to understand the essential truth and oneness of all faiths.

The Teachers

Names:.

Both teachers have obtained police clearance to work with children

For further information contact:

Among the Spiritual Qualities encouraged...

- Unity
- Justice
- Love and kindness
- Truthfulness
- Service to humanity
- Humility
- Generosity
- Trustworthiness
- Reliance on God
- Courage

*"Regard man as a mine rich in gems
of inestimable value."*

(Baha'i Writings)

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

... Baha'i education, just like any other system of education, is based on the assumption that there are certain natural deficiencies in every child, no matter how gifted, which his educators whether his parents, schoolmasters, or his Spiritual guides and preceptors, should endeavour to remedy. Discipline of some sort, whether physical, moral or intellectual, is indeed indispensable and no training can be said to be complete and fruitful if it disregards this element. The child when born is far from being perfect. It is not only helpless, but actually is imperfect, and even is naturally inclined towards evil. He should be trained, his natural inclinations harmonized adjusted and controlled, and if necessary suppressed or regulated, so as to ensure his health) physical and moral development. Baha'i parents cannot simply adopt an attitude of non resistance towards their children, particularly those who are unruly and violent by nature It is not even sufficient that they should pray on their behalf Rather they should endeavour to inculcate, gently and patiently, into their youthful minds such principles of moral conduct and initiate them into the principles and teachings of the Cause with such tactful and loving care as would enable them to become "true sons of God" and develop into loyal and intelligent citizen: of His Kingdom This is the high purpose which Baha'u'llah Himself has clearly defined as the chief goal of every education

Shoghi Effendi: *Balid 'i Education*, p. 303

The child must not be oppressed or censured because it is underdeveloped, it must be patiently trained...

Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 180

Whensoever a mother seeth that her child hath done well, let her praise and applaud him and cheer his heart; and if the slightest undesirable trait should manifest itself, let her counsel the child and punish him, and use means based on reason, even a slight verbal chastisement should this be necessary. It is not, however, permissible to strike a child, or vilify him, for the child's character will be totally perverted if he be subjected to blows or verbal abuse.

'Abdu'l-Baha: *Selections*, p. 125.

Ask everyone to say what thoughts they have about the discipline of children.

When everyone has given their ideas, ask members of the group to read through the following ideas which may be of help:

- 1 The best way to manage the children's behaviour is through trying to pre-empt any difficulties before they happen. If the teacher can establish a bond of affection with children they are less likely to misbehave and more likely to want to please.
- 2 Rewards are better than punishments Rewarding good behaviour reinforces that behaviour

and raises the child's self-esteem Punishing bad behaviour lowers self-esteem and the child is gaining the desired attention for the wrong reasons A good idea would be to give stickers, or a child's name could be entered in a 'golden book' etc Children could be allowed to choose music to listen to during lessons.

- 3 If a child is misbehaving in a small way, it is sometimes enough to praise a near-by child for behaving in an opposite, good way For example, if a child is fidgeting, the teacher could say to another child, "Well done, John, for sitting so still", or "You did very well, Vahid, being so quiet during the prayers Well done."
- 4 If a child is misbehaving, and you need to stop him. instead of speaking to him while everyone listens, you could draw an unhappy face on a piece of paper, and place it beside him where only he can see He might appreciate the element of secrecy between the two of you and find it easy to respond.
- 5 If bad behaviour continues try to use an "appropriate' sanction
If you are in the middle of a game, make the child sit out (Just for one game). If you are working in a circle, make the child sit out of the circle (for 2 or 3 minutes only - an egg timer is very good for this, as the child can see the passage of time and knows he will soon be allowed back)
- 6 If a child appears to be unhappy / bored / disruptive etc you may feel its worth while co-opting another adult / youth to come in and work with the child. Often the child craves attention, and will be difficult until he gets it. We don't know his circumstances- maybe he really does need more attention. Whatever happens, everyone is going to benefit from an extra helper. Remember, the welfare of the children is the responsibility of the whole school / community. Don't be afraid to ask for help
- 7 If a child remains uncooperative it may be that the work of the class, or the method, is inappropriate. Children have different capacities and may find the pace too slow or too fast. You may need an assistant to support an individual child, or you may allow a child to work alone, separate from the group, on their own project at their own pace. This is something that may suit an intelligent child But make sure you are directing him, and having his feedback into the rest of the class
- 8 If one child continually has difficulties getting on with the others, you could all consult together about this in the circle. Have the child tell the others how he feels, and ask the others for ideas how they could help. Ask one or two willing children to make a special effort in befriending and supporting the child This is surprisingly effective in improving

CHILDREN'S CLASSES OPEN TO ALL

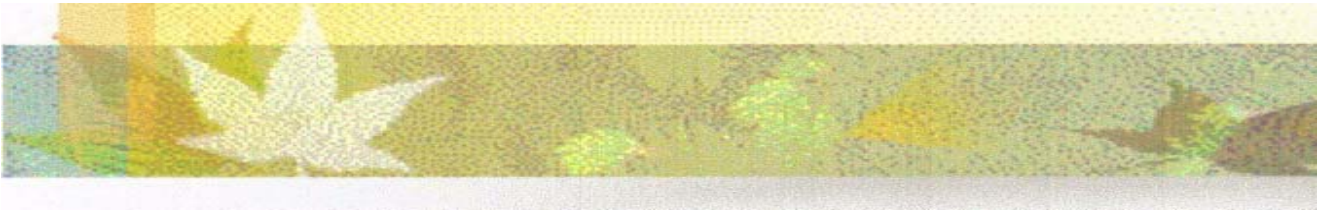
POLICY FOR INTEGRATION 29th

December 2005

- Mutual respect for and account taken of all children attendant's family belief system.
- The class should honour the holy days of the belief system of all children attending.
- If a class chooses to use specific Baha'i material that goes beyond a focus on the virtues, such use should be balanced by relevant material from the religious background of the other children attending. This should be done in a sensitive and relevant manner.
The successful implementation of this would necessitate an initial consultation with the parents of all children that are not Baha 'i.
- When giving homework or memorisation do so in a way that is relevant to the child's level of support and religious background.
- Make use of games and methods of learning that encourage interaction across groups of age, gender and religious background.

CHECK LIST FOR STARTING A CLASS

- **Ensure that you are POCVA checked (CP 4&5) which are sent to Dorothy Riordan (address on form) and NSA clearance CP 3 which is sent to Pat Craig (address on page 14). No class can start without these clearances.**
- **Talk to the parents of the children and get their consent by signing CP1 for 16-18yrs and CP1&2 for 16yrs and under and send consent forms to Pat Craig (address P14).**
- **Fill in a CP11 form check list and send to Pat Craig.**
- **Complete a start class record form after the first class and send to Patricia Jamshidi (address on page 14).**
- **If you have not completed Books 3 and 5 of the Ruhi material endeavour to do this as these two books are excellent basic training for all teachers.**
- **If you are in an Assembly area, notify your Assembly of your class and if possible consult with them.**



A LIGHT TO THE WORLD

"Whatever a child learns during childhood, it will not forget. There is a proverb in Arabic that says: "Teaching a child is like carving upon stone. It can never be erased." A child is like a fresh branch. It is tender. In whatever way you wish you can train it. If you want to keep it straight it can be done. But when it grows up, if you want to straighten it out, it cannot be done except through fire."

Abdul' Bahá