

Recommended Good Practice for all who work with Children & Young People

1. **Adult / Child Ratios:** The Children Act recommends the following numbers of leaders to children according to their age:
 - For 0 to 2 years – 1 leader to every 3 children (1:3)
 - For 2 to 3 years – 1 leader to every 4 children (1:4)
 - For 3 to 8 years – 1 leader to every 8 children (1:8)
 - For over 8s – 1 leader for the first 8 children, followed by 1:12 (i.e. 32 children would require 3 leaders).
2. **More than One Leader:** There should always be more than one leader for any group. (If possible have at least 1 male and 2 female leaders if the group is mixed.)
3. **Time Alone:** Minimise time alone with any child or young person. If it is vital to be isolated with an individual ensure that another leader is informed of where you will be and why. If possible remain in the view of another leader. Try never to be behind a closed door and tell someone that you are there.
4. **Administration:** Keep an up to date register and record of children, their parents and contact phone numbers, attendance and other specific information (such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies etc.) A daily register must be kept and be easily accessible in an emergency.
5. **Insurance:** Most existing parish insurance covers **indoor** activities for children and youth. PCCs need a record of any other activities that may take place and it must be checked that insurance cover is adequate.
6. **Premises requirements:**
 - 6.1. Toilets – the *ideal* is 1 toilet and 1 hand basin per 10
 - 6.2. Warm and Clean – Group areas should be warm, adequately lit and ventilated. Maintain high standards of cleanliness.
 - 6.3. Special Needs – Be able and willing to accommodate children with special needs. Be aware of access to your building and toilet facilities.
 - 6.4. Entrances and Exits – Should be well-lit and easily accessible.
 - 6.5. Registration – Social Services need to register premises where activities take place for more than 2 hours in any one day or if a holiday club runs for more than 6 days a year.
7. **Health and Safety:**
 - 7.1. All leaders should know the location of the nearest telephone.
 - 7.2. Adults must be aware of a safety/fire procedure. A fire drill should be carried out regularly. Fire extinguishers should be available and regularly checked.
 - 7.3. Children with infectious illnesses must not attend.
 - 7.4. No smoking should be permitted near the areas children will be in.
 - 7.5. Children should submit a health form before an activity. Take health forms when going off-site.
 - 7.6. Accidents should be recorded with a note of any action taken and signed by the leader involved.
 - 7.7. A first aid kit should always be available and its location must be well-known. No medication should be administered without written parental consent. One leader

should ideally be a first aider.

7.8. A responsible adult should make sure that the premises are open in good time.

- 8. Transport:** If at all possible do not give lifts to children and young people on their own other than for short journeys. If they are alone ask them to sit in the back seat. Check that insurance covers the vehicle and passengers. Seat belts must be worn.
- 9. Finance:** If money is collected account of this should be given to the PCC.
- 10. Volunteers:** Volunteers particularly those under the age of 18, should never work unsupervised and should be given clear guidance and support.
- 11. Casual Visitors:** Casual visitors, i.e. those who have not been authorised by the Church as leaders or helpers, should not have access to children without the presence of an adult who is deemed to be responsible for the group.
- 12. Communication:** Clergy, the PCC, and parents should be clearly informed of all the activities in which children and young people may take part on church premises and through the church in any way.
- 13. Good Practice of Workers:**
 - 13.1. Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; watch language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.
 - 13.2. Do not engage in any of the following:
 - 13.2.1. Invading the privacy of children when they are showering or toileting;
 - 13.2.2. Rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
 - 13.2.3. Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in fun;
 - 13.2.4. Inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form;
 - 13.2.5. Any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.
 - 13.3. Learn to control and discipline children without using physical punishment.
 - 13.4. Do not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
 - 13.5. Do not invite a child or young person to your home alone or invite a group; or if you do, ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.
 - 13.6. Do not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people if you take a group away.
- 14. Touch:** Touch is an important part of human relationships: for example, it can be necessary to stop a young child from hurting herself or himself; it can also be a natural way of responding to someone in distress. However everyone working with children should be sensitive to what is appropriate and inappropriate physical contact, both in general terms, and in relation to a specific individual. Leaders need to be conscious of situations in which their actions, however well intended, could be misconstrued by others or be harmful.
- 15. Good Practice with Colleagues:** If you see another member of staff acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to your supervisor about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
- 16. Uniformed Organisations:** Parishes need to be clear whether organisations using their premises are tenants or have a sponsoring agreement with the parish. Such sponsoring agreements need to be renewed every five years and with each new incumbent.

Where there is a sponsoring agreement with another organisation, the Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator should also ensure that all procedures of the organisation comply

with parish policy.

Where an organisation is a tenant of the church building, they take full responsibility for their children and leaders.

17. What to do if you are concerned or become aware of possible abuse:

17.1. Listen carefully to the child, avoiding the use of leading questions.

17.2. Take the child seriously.

17.3. Take appropriate action, by informing the Parish Child Protection Co-Ordinator (01249 655608 or 07778 895887) as soon as you can and/or the Diocesan Child Protection Co-Ordinator (0844 892 0104). If immediate action is called for telephone Wiltshire Social Services Child Protection Unit (01249 444321, out of hours: 0845 60 70 888) or the Police (0845 408 7000 and ask for Child Protection Team) or 999. If a child needs medical help this should be the first consideration and the hospital staff informed of the child protection concerns. If it would be dangerous or the child is unwilling to return home the emergency social services should be contacted through the police.

17.4. Carefully record the concern and keep the record in a secure place.

18. If a child or young person speaks about being harmed physically, emotionally or sexually by another person, whether an adult or another child, or if signs of abuse are observed, you must:

18.1. Never speak directly to the person against whom allegations have been made.

18.2. Never attempt to investigate the situation yourself.

18.3. Inform the Parish Child Protection Officer (see 17.3.)

18.4. Make a referral to the Social Services Department (see 17.3.) seeking advice about who else should be told, for example the parents. Social Services have a duty officer on call at all times of the day and night.

18.5. Continue to support the child and seek support for yourself.

18.6. Make a record of what actions you have taken and keep it in a secure place.

18.7. Any issue of possible child abuse concerning the church community must be reported to the diocesan Child Protection Co-Ordinator (0844 892 0104) as soon as it becomes known.

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