

## Activities with children and young people

- These recommendations apply to all churches' activities with children or young people – for instance, Sunday School, crèches, holiday clubs, youth clubs
- They apply as much to Sunday morning 'in house' activities as to activities which you run in and for the local community
- They are designed to protect the children in your care, as well as your leaders.

### Leadership

- Always have at least two leaders, no matter how small the group. Small groups with single leaders may meet in adjoining rooms with an open door between. If a child or young person is being interviewed alone, have another adult nearby
- Try to ensure the leaders' genders reflect the group, i.e. endeavour to have at least one male leader if there are boys present, and at least one female leader if there are girls present
- At least two leaders (preferably unrelated) need to be present from before the first child arrives until after the last child leaves
- No person under the age of 18 years should be left in charge of a group of children of any age
- Young people aged 16 and 17 years may help with groups but should be supervised by an adult leader, who is responsible for ensuring that good practice and the safeguarding children procedures are followed
- Recruit all regular leaders of activities with children according to the 'Selecting, recruiting and supporting staff' procedures - including taking up references and obtaining a Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure
- Parents or carers who are not regular leaders in the church can assist with occasional activities such as holiday workshops, but should always work in the company of two nominated and known leaders, and be responsible to an appointed leader
- Ensure all leaders are aware of the health and safety issues relating to the activity, including procedures for fire and first aid
- Give regular leaders a copy of the relevant sections of the safeguarding children policy and procedures, and offer them support and training in their role.

See section 5

### Staffing levels

These are the minimum required staffing levels for children's groups. More staff may be required if children are being taken out or undertaking physical activities.

#### **For every age group, always a minimum of two leaders.**

0-2 years	1 person for every 3 children
2-3 years	1 person for every 4 children
3-8 years	1 person for every 8 children
Over 8 years	1 person for the first 8 children and then 1 extra person for every extra 12 children.

### Administration for activities

- The Safeguarding Officer should make and update annually a list of all paid staff and voluntary workers in the church who have regular, direct contact with children, and ensure that full recruitment procedures have been followed for each of them
- Leaders should register every child or young person attending each specific activity with a form which includes their name, address, date of birth, contact

**P**

## **Section 4: Procedure: keeping safe**

See section 10  
(Registration Form)

number for their parent and carer and consent to the activity. Store the forms together in a confidential place, and always have them available for leaders of the activity throughout each session

- Leaders should keep an attendance register for each activity of every child and leader in attendance at each session
- There should always be a phone throughout each activity for emergencies; this may be a mobile phone
- All confidential records about leaders, and confidential records relating to allegations of abuse against members of the congregation, and specific concerns about children or young people, should be stored in a locked filing cabinet, with access limited to the Safeguarding Officer and the Incumbent
- Record all accidents in the Accident Book, which should always be accessible on the premises.

See also section 4  
(Health and safety,  
& Record keeping)

### **Running of activities**

- Ensure children and young people are in sight of an adult leader at all times
- Check areas of the building out of sight, e.g. toilets, regularly during sessions
- Accompany young children to the toilet. Children and young people should have access to toilets without having to be in contact with other users of the premises
- As a general principle, parents or carers of children under 11 are responsible for taking and collecting their children to an activity for which they have registered
- Parents or carers must be clearly informed of the place and time of meeting; and, if the meeting is off-site, when children will return
- For children over 11, it is the parents' or carers' responsibility to make arrangements with their child for collection or travelling home independently
- If a leader has concerns about the collection arrangements for a child over 11, they should address these directly with the parents or carers
- In the event of a child not collected as arranged, the parent or carer should be contacted by phone and asked to collect the child. If contact with the parent is not possible, two leaders should wait with the child until contact with parent or carer has been established. Only in exceptional circumstances should the child be escorted home. If a child appears to have been abandoned, statutory services must be contacted
- Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – from children and young people.

See section 4  
(Acceptable  
Behaviour)

### **Programme of activities**

- Ensure the activities are appropriate and safe for the age range
- Enable children to be consulted in the programme planning if possible
- Consider setting ground rules agreed by the group for participating in activities
- Films shown in a group activity must not be rated higher than the age of the youngest child in the group (e.g. 12 or 12A only to children of 12 or over).

### **Taking children off the premises**

- If children are to be taken off church premises for any reason, obtain written permission from parents or guardians. This permission may be granted for a given period of time, e.g. a term
- A named person at 'home base' for each activity should hold the registration details for all children, young people and leaders who are away from church premises, and be available by phone throughout the period of absence in case of emergencies. This person should have the itinerary and be aware of the plans, including estimated time of arrival at the destination, and estimated time of

**Section 4:****Procedure: keeping safe**

return

- Leaders of the group should carry with them the registration and consent forms for all children in the group
- Leaders should each carry mobile phones, and have readily accessible on their phone the contact details of other leaders of the group, and the named person at 'home base'
- A first aid kit should be carried
- Parents should be informed if their children are to be transported by car or in another vehicle. Persons transporting children by car should be given a copy of section 4, Transport – minibuses, coaches and cars, and ensure they are complying with the requirements
- If youth leaders arrange to meet young people in coffee shops etc., a record should be kept of when the event occurred and in what circumstances
- For residential trips, see section 4, Holidays and residential trips.

See section 4  
(Transport)

**Publicity of activities**

- Keep parents, children and young people fully informed in writing of the programme of activities, including the venue, times and contact details for leaders, and make them aware of the ground rules for belonging
- Advertise the parish Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures in summary on the church premises, and have it available for parents or carers on request
- Publicise the name and contact details of the Parish Safeguarding Officer (this can be through a central contact point), with a clear process for how concerns should be raised.

**Unaccompanied children**

Children may begin attending church services or church activities without their parents' or carers' knowledge. The following procedure is recommended:

- Welcome the child(ren) and try to establish whether their parents are aware of where they are
- Try to discover when they are due home and encourage them to keep to that arrangement
- Depending on the age and competence of the child, ring the parents or ask the young person to ring to gain the parents' consent to the child remaining
- Complete a registration form as far as possible
- Make sure an adult recruited for work with children takes care of the child – this is particularly important during public worship where unknown adults may attend and attempt to befriend the child
- Give the child written information about the church service or activity to take home, including contact details
- If the child comes regularly, endeavour to establish contact with the parents or carers
- Never take the child on outings or transport them without their parents' or carers' permission.

See section 10

See section 5  
(Recruitment)

**Use of home venues**

Generally speaking, it is advisable for activities for children and young people to take place on church premises. In the event of leaders using their own homes for church activities, any activity which includes children under 18 years when their parents are not present is subject to the parish's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.

- Rooms should be checked for physical hazards, and be hygienic
- Bedrooms should not be used in any circumstances
- Two adults (preferably unrelated) should be present from before the first child arrives until after the last one leaves.

## Activities with adults who may be vulnerable

- These recommendations apply to all churches' activities with adults who may be vulnerable – for instance, during worship on Sunday mornings, on outings, in groups and when visiting at home
- They apply as much to church 'in house' activities for regular attendees as to activities which you run in and for the local community
- They are designed to protect the adults who may be vulnerable in your care, as well as your leaders.

### Active membership and inclusion

- Create an environment where all people, including those who are vulnerable, are encouraged to participate in and contribute to all aspects of church life.

### Respect

Always respect the adult who may be vulnerable and all his or her abilities:

- Ask about personal preferences, forms of address, how much help might be needed
- Ensure his or her individuality - e.g. always use their name
- Give the same respect as to others
- Respect differences – e.g. in appearance, ideas, personalities, ability
- Don't assume or withhold physical contact – ask first
- Have a proper conversation using appropriate language – e.g. ask about interests.

### Choices

- Recognise the choices vulnerable adults make, even if they may appear risky
- Give vulnerable adults the highest level of privacy and confidentiality possible in their circumstances
- Consult with the vulnerable adult about who s/he wishes to be included in decisions affecting his or her life
- Offer assistance in such a way as to maximise a person's independence
- Give vulnerable adults a choice about where they sit, and what activities they participate in
- Ensure that there is clear access to all areas which are available to members of the congregation - e.g. where coffee is served, the bookstall, where meetings are held.

### Language and visual resources

- Always use positive language when referring to disability, age and mental health
- Consult with individual vulnerable adults to identify their specific needs
- Use proper sign language for deaf people and those with learning disabilities, as appropriate
- Install a loop system
- Have available service books and sheets in large print
- Use suitable font size and colours on all printed material
- Ensure that everyone has access to presentations etc., by offering a clear 'sight line'
- Make information on notice boards accessible – take into account height, words and images and size

**P**

See section 9  
(Accessible Publicity)

See section 9

## Section 4: Procedure: keeping safe

### **Premises, and administration of activities specifically targeted for vulnerable adults**

- Check the building regularly for accessibility – doors, steps, toilets, sight lines, lighting, acoustics, colours of walls, doors, paintwork
- The Safeguarding Officer should make and update annually a list of all paid staff and voluntary workers in the church who have regular, direct contact with vulnerable adults, and ensure that full recruitment procedures have been followed for each of them
- For specific activities or groups for vulnerable adults, register every person attending each activity with a form which includes their name, address, and contact number for their carer. Store the forms together in a confidential place, and always have them available for leaders of the activity throughout each session
- For vulnerable adults who may have erratic behaviour patterns, be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – during activities, and discuss if appropriate with carers
- Keep an attendance register for each specific activity of every vulnerable adult and leader in attendance
- Always have a phone throughout each activity for emergencies; this may be a mobile phone
- All confidential records about leaders, and confidential records relating to allegations of abuse against members of the congregation, and specific concerns about adults who may be vulnerable, should be stored in a locked filing cabinet, with access limited to the Safeguarding Officer and the Incumbent
- Record all accidents in the Accident Book, which should always be accessible on the premises.

See section 4  
(Acceptable  
Behaviour)

See section 4  
(Health & Safety;  
Record keeping)

### **Leadership of activities**

- For specific activities or groups for vulnerable adults, always ensure that there are at least two people in a leadership role
- All regular leaders of activities with vulnerable adults should be recruited according to section 5: Selecting, recruiting and supporting staff, including taking up references and obtaining a Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure.

See section 5  
(Recruitment)

### **Visiting adults who may be vulnerable in their homes (including residential homes)**

- Always do an assessment of risk before visiting someone in their own home. If there are any concerns or risks known before the visit is undertaken, give careful consideration to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, or whether you should be accompanied by another adult
- Always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that someone knows where you are and when you are expected to return
- Don't take unnecessary risks
- Don't call unannounced – call by arrangement, if appropriate telephoning the person just before you go
- If you are not known to the person you are visiting, carry with you identification, or a note of introduction from your church
- Always knock on the door before entering a room or home, respect the person's home and possessions
- As a general principle, do not give those you visit your home phone number or address. Instead, where possible leave information about a central contact point
- If you don't know or feel out of your depth, seek advice and if appropriate refer the person to another agency – know where you can access information about other relevant services

See section 4  
(Identifying and  
Assessing Risk)

**Section 4:**

**Procedure: keeping safe**

- When referring someone on to another person or agency, talk this through with the vulnerable adult. Ask his/her permission before passing on personal information. Make the link with the new person/agency yourself: if it is more appropriate for the vulnerable adult to do so themselves make sure they have all the information they need and that their contact will be expected
- Be clear about your boundaries – keep to agreed limits on how much time you will spend with someone and how often you come. Don't take on extra responsibilities on a bit by bit basis. Be realistic about the amount of time you have - don't say yes to every request for help
- Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – from the vulnerable adult.

*See section 4  
(Acceptable  
Behaviour)*

**Needs of carers**

- Remember the needs of carers – treat them as individuals, include them if they wish, offer breaks and short times apart and practical assistance if feasible.

*See section 7  
(General standards  
of practice in  
pastoral care)*

## Hirers of church buildings

### 1 Who does this apply to?

This section applies to all activities and events which take place in church buildings or grounds which are not run directly by the PCC, and where the PCC has a formal or informal hiring agreement with the organisers. Regular bookings and one-off bookings are included, as are all kinds of lease, and all kinds of arrangements for payment - commercial rents, subsidised rents, or those who pay no rent at all. Examples of activities included are children's parties, Scouts and Guides, wedding receptions, and sharing agreements with independent churches. Examples of activities not included are Sunday Schools, church-run youth clubs and parish social events.

It applies to all events and activities which may include children and adults who may be vulnerable (for instance parties), as well as those which are specifically set up for children and vulnerable adults.

### 2 Insurance requirements: 'reasonable steps' / best practice

#### For all bookings:

You need to ensure that you are complying with the requirements of your insurance company. Ecclesiastical Insurance's Public Liability (Third Party) insurance protects policy holders, as long as you use 'best practice' procedures in the management of child and adult protection and care.

- The observance of 'reasonable care' is a standard insurance condition
- The hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and carries full liability insurance for this
- You have a duty to adopt 'best practice' based upon current and ongoing guidelines.

You are recommended to follow the Church of England current guidelines for safeguarding, on which the Diocese of Southwark's policies and procedures for safeguarding children and adults who may be vulnerable are based.

In any booking of church premises for which the PCC is responsible - both one-off bookings and regular bookings - you should include a clause which says words to the effect of:

"You are required to ensure that:

- children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring
- you carry full liability insurance for this."

See section 4  
(Insurance)

### **If a private hirer has no insurance cover:**

Ecclesiastical has added an extension to its Parishguard policy on page 53 'Indemnity to private hirers' (downloadable from Ecclesiastical's website, [www.ecclesiastical.com](http://www.ecclesiastical.com)). This provides a contingency insurance, should a private hirer not have their own insurances, when organising a private social event at the church or hall. Parishes should check equivalent provisions with their own insurers if other than EIG.

Normally this public liability insurance would be provided by an individual's own home insurance. With the rise of budget policies, this is not always provided automatically, and in some cases the policies cannot be extended to include it.

It is still a good idea for the church to ask if liability insurance is in force. If not, then the church can make the decision, for one off events, as to whether they would be happy for this to be provided by their own Parishguard policy.

The extension has a number of exclusions, and if the activity is part of a regular group activity then it would normally be sensible for the group to have cover in their own right.

### **Accidents and incidents**

In addition to the provision for making good any loss or damage to the building and contents, the agreement should draw the attention of hirers to the fact that they are primarily liable for any accident or injury which arises out of their activities whilst using the premises. An accident book should be located on the premises, and hirers are required to complete details of any accident or incident occurring during their occupation of the premises which did or could give rise to injury. Details should be completed as soon as possible after the accident or incident, but in any case before the premises are vacated by the hirers after the event.

### **Use of alcohol**

Establish whether or not alcohol is to be sold at the event. If it is, the hirer is responsible for applying for a temporary event notice, which should be seen by a PCC representative before the event. You should consider whether conditions need to be imposed on the involvement of young people in the event, and incorporate appropriate conditions in hire agreements

See section 4 (Drugs and Alcohol Use)

### **For one-off bookings:**

- You should give the responsible person booking the premises sight of your parish's Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults who may be vulnerable Policies and Guidelines for Activities, and ask him/her to sign a statement which confirms that he/she has seen these and agrees to abide by them
- For one-off bookings, you do not need to expect the hirers to obtain Criminal Records Bureau disclosures for leaders
- If it should come to your notice that they have contravened your policy, you then have the right to cancel the booking and/or refuse future bookings by that person.

See section 2

See section 4

### **For regular bookings:**

You need to ensure that your safeguarding policies and procedures are being practised, but the responsibility for implementing them rests with the hiring organisation and not with you. However, you need to take reasonable steps to ensure that this is being done.

**Section 4: Procedure: keeping safe**

**Before you make the booking:**

- Check whether this group intends to care for children under 8 years for 2 hours or more without their parents or carers present. If so, they may need to register under the Children Act 1989 with the Local Authority. No booking with such a group should be formalised until you have seen evidence of its Ofsted registration, if required. It is the hirer’s responsibility to register with Ofsted, but they may need to work with the PCC in order to address any premises requirements raised by Ofsted
- Give them a copy of your Safeguarding Children and Adults who may be vulnerable policies and the procedures relevant to their event or activity, and ensure that they can comply with the guidelines for running activities for children and/or adults who may be vulnerable
- The Diocesan Umbrella Body can only obtain ISA registration and CRB disclosures for voluntary workers or paid workers deployed directly by the PCC for church-run activities. If potential hirers of your premises do not have access to an umbrella body themselves, they may be able to obtain disclosures for their leaders from the Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS), tel 020 7467 5216, email cas@methodistchurch.org.uk, or the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), tel 0845 120 4550, e-mail info@ccpas.co.uk.

See section 4  
(Childcare provision  
and your premises)

See section 2

See section 4

See section 5

**As part of the hiring agreement:**

- Ensure the hirer completes the Form for Regular Hirers of Church Premises, which can be incorporated into your standard lease or agreement. This gives you the right to ask for evidence from the organisation/individual of their implementation of your procedures.

See form - section  
10

**Monitoring the hiring agreement:**

- You must ensure that groups are updating their information at least annually, for instance when you renew your letting, or invoice them for rent
- With groups or individuals who are not part of national organisations (such as Scouts, Guides, Playgroups, who have very well developed procedures of their own, consistent with Diocesan procedures) we recommend that you check from time to time that they are abiding by your policies and procedures in the way they are carrying out their activities
- If you are informed of allegations or concerns in the context of groups or individuals who hire your premises, you must follow the Diocesan procedures for responding, working in partnership with the group’s own procedures.

See section 6

For further guidelines on sharing agreements with independent churches, please contact John Richardson, Ecumenical Project Officer, c/o 1 Secker Street, London SE1 8UF, e-mail john@ctslondon.org.uk.

For health and safety advice regarding church premises, please consult with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group.