

Guidance for Youth and Children's Leaders



St Andrew's and All Saints
Partnering with God
in the flourishing of our communities



Thank you for volunteering to help with the children's and young people's work at St Andrew's and All Saints.

Every child is precious to God and part of our role is to demonstrate the love of God by protecting them from harm. You are precious to God too and part of Safeguarding is making sure you are equipped and protected. That is why Safeguarding is so important.

If you are 16 or over you will be expected to complete a DBS check every three years. After completion of your initial check through the Diocese, you will be asked to complete online Basic Awareness and Foundation Level safeguarding training. You are then required to renew the Foundation Level Training every three years.

Whistleblowing: Safeguarding involves the whole of church life. If you have any concerns about anything, don't keep quiet. Talk to someone in leadership. Neither silence nor gossiping are acceptable alternatives.

The welfare of the child or young person is at all times paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.

Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in our parish churches.

With regard to Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines a child is anyone aged under 18.

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ABUSE AND DISCLOSURE

Responsibility

If you are concerned or suspect abuse, speak up.

The church and all its appointed children's and youth workers are committed to the protection of children from any form of abuse.

Remember:

Recognise

Respond

Record

Report



ABUSE AND DISCLOSURE

If you have any safeguarding concerns about a child or young person, share them with the Youth Leader, the Rector or the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

What is abuse?

The abuse of children can take many forms. They have the same right to protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning difficulties) are especially vulnerable and need special care and protection.

Forms of abuse include:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic Abuse
- Sexual Exploitation
- Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Online Abuse
- Electronic Images
- Spiritual abuse



WORKING SAFELY

- Privacy
- Photos & Videos
- Supervision
- Communication
- 1 to 1 meetings
- Actions
- Teamwork

Privacy

Toilets

Respect a child's right to personal privacy. Where possible when taking children to the toilet, wait outside and remain visible to others.

Inform another adult if it is necessary to go in.

Photos & Videos

Photos and videos including children and young people under 18 years of age should only be taken by the Youth Ministry Leader, the Children and Families Worker, the incumbent or curate, or someone designated by them to take photos on their behalf.

A personal mobile phone should not be used.

The photographer must take account of permissions given or withheld on parental consent forms.

Photos and videos should be stored securely.

Accountability: Supervision

You should never be alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. Never leave anyone else in that situation either.

Adults visiting the groups should always be supervised by an identified leader.

There should be a sufficient number of adults present at all times to ensure the safety and welfare of the children with a minimum of 2 adults at all times. (See table overleaf for recommended ratios.)

Remember that helpers under 16 count as children too.



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Recommended Ratios

0-2 yrs	1 adult for every 3 children
2-3 yrs	1 adult for every 4 children
4-8 yrs	1 adult for every 6 children
9-12 yrs	1 adult for every 8 children
13-17 yrs	1 adult for every 10 children

Communication

Any one-to-one communication with a young person should preferably be conducted via parents or through a messaging service eg text message or email, so that there is a clear audit trail of the conversation. Avoid detailed telephone conversations with a young person.

One-to-one Meetings

Pastoral conversations are best held in a public environment, but we recognise that there are times when an electronic or telephone conversation is necessary.

One-to-one meetings between team members and youth should be agreed by the Youth Ministry Leader and require parental approval.

A record that the conversation took place should be kept e.g. electronically, along with any notes of concern.

Do not have pastoral conversations via a phone call, because there is no record of the conversation.

If regular one-to-one meetings are to be held, eg in a mentoring capacity, then this arrangement should be discussed with the Youth Ministry Leader and agreement obtained from the parents of the young person.

Be careful that your advice and guidance to young people cannot be construed as spiritual abuse (defined as coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context).



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Integrity

Would I do or say this if the parent was watching?

Actions

Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

Make sure that physical contact is appropriate.

Be mindful of your body language.

Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.

Don't:

- make suggestive remarks or gestures
- use physical punishment
- scapegoat, ridicule or reject
- show favouritism
- give or receive presents other than small tokens of appreciation or ones given through official channels

Teamwork

We are working as a team together. Encourage and support each other. If you see a member of staff or volunteer acting in a way that is inappropriate or might be misconstrued, speak to them or to the Youth Leader or Children and Families Worker. Allow others to speak to you in the same way.

Use of Mobile Phones, Email, Social Media and Video Conferencing

These guidelines relate to internet, email, mobile phone, video conferencing and electronic social networking.

For many young people this is their preferred means of communication and it can be an extremely effective tool within youth work. However while it brings great opportunities there are also significant risks and it is important that guidelines are followed.

Remember that most social media services have an age restriction (eg Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years).

This must be done safely to avoid the risk of:

- forming inappropriate relationships.
- saying things you should not, such as offensive, sexual or suggestive comments.
- blurring the boundaries between public work/ ministry and your private life.
- grooming and impersonation.
- bullying and harassment.

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Mobile Phones:

The Youth Ministry Leader will be provided with, and use a dedicated mobile phone number.

Volunteers may use their own phone and social media profiles in accordance with this guidance and guidance on the Safeguarding Guidelines issued to all people working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Texts that raise concerns should be saved and passed on to a line manager/ supervisor or approved third party within the organisation. Such conversations should be discussed as soon as possible.

Email and Instant Messenger:

Be aware of who has access to computers, or other devices, used for communication between workers/ leaders and young people or vulnerable adults.

There should be a 'curfew' on instant messenger communication and this should only take place during normal working hours, and in any event no later than 9pm.

Workers/leaders need to log and save all conversations and regularly review these with their line manager/ supervisor.

Make sure that young people and vulnerable adults know that line managers/supervisors have access to the conversations.

Voice messenger conversations should be conducted in public so that other people are aware of what the worker/leader is doing and to whom they are speaking.

Video Conferencing with children or young people

Use of video conferencing with children or young people requires explicit consent of the PCC.

Use a video conferencing platform such as Zoom or Teams. (Avoid use of platforms such as Facetime or Skype which share phone numbers publicly.)

Remember that most video conferencing systems have some age restrictions.

Video conversations with children or young people should be conducted in public so that other people are aware of what the worker/leader is doing and to whom they are speaking. If it is not appropriate to have two adults on the call (eg mentoring session), normally another adult should be in the vicinity.

Parents must give written consent (email response is fine) for the video conferencing session (or series of sessions). For children under 11 years of age, an adult must be present in the room with the children at all times. The leader must see them at the start of the meeting. Then they can be out of view but must remain within sight and sound of the children.

All participants should be located in a daytime family room and dressed in daytime clothes.

Video conferencing should not normally be used for one-to-one conversations with children, young people or vulnerable adults. If this happens inadvertently (eg a second child or adult leaves the meeting), the remainder of the meeting should be recorded and saved for three months. Ensure that the parent is notified that this has taken place.



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Facebook & Social Networking Sites

- The Youth Worker will be provided with, and use a dedicated social media profile.
- The social networking profiles provided by the church should be used for communication wherever possible
- Line managers/supervisors will be aware of the account name and password so that they can at any time log onto the account to monitor the communications.
- Young people and vulnerable adults will be made aware that information is shared in this way.
- Any photos used should be in an official/work setting.
- Any communication or content that raises concerns should be saved or printed, shared and discussed with line managers/supervisors. Workers/leaders should only accept friend requests for this profile from young people known to them who they have met offline, i.e. in person.
- Communication should normally be in the public domain wherever possible (by using group mailings or public wall posts).



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Facebook & Social Networking Sites continued

- Where groups are set up, they should be closed, and not open to the general public. Anyone with administrative rights should regularly moderate the group, only sharing those rights with their line manager/supervisor and other trusted workers/leaders.
- Workers/leaders with personal social networking accounts should customise their privacy settings in order to maintain the boundaries between their personal and professional lives. They should avoid uploading inappropriate personal information.
- Do not seek to add (Facebook) or follow (Instagram) a young person under 18 on social media.
- If a young person chooses to add (Facebook) or follow (Instagram) your personal profile it is your choice to accept this request. Please consider your boundaries, the vulnerability of that person, and the content of your profile carefully – remember you are a role model and leader who represents St Andrew's and All Saints.
- Never “stalk” a young person on social media (i.e. dig through their personal pages for information).

Please see our ‘Use of Social Media with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy’ for further details.



Safety

Registers

Accurate registers must always be taken of everyone attending (children, leaders and visitors).

A registration form must be completed by parents/guardians for every child who attends groups or activities.

Registers and registration forms must be kept securely in line with the church Data Protection notice.

Restraint

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming themselves or others. Use least possible force, inform the parents, record any incidents and give the information to the Children and Families Worker or the Youth Worker, who will pass the information to the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Potential Danger

Leaders should be familiar with the premises risk assessment concerning safe use and security of the buildings and any event-specific risk assessments.

Leaders need to be aware of potential dangers (e.g. poor storage, loose carpets) and take appropriate action.

Faulty equipment should be taken out of use, labelled as faulty and removed from use.

Any accidents, incidents or near misses should be reported using an accident report form.

Leaders must make themselves aware of fire exits, fire equipment and fire exiting procedures.

Leaders should ensure that helpers are aware of the fire evacuation plan.

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- First Aid
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Transport

Parental permission must always be sought for youth or children to be given a lift.

As far as possible have more than one adult in the vehicle.

The young person should sit in the back of the car.

Those transporting young people must have a clean licence.

Paid staff must have car insurance for Business use and be over 21.

Additional Needs

At St Andrew's and All Saints we welcome everyone. Reasonable adjustments should be made where necessary to ensure that everyone can participate as fully as they desire. In some cases this may require extra risk assessments and support. If you believe that a child or young person needs one-to-one support to participate effectively, discuss the situation with your team leader.

First Aid

Leaders must know where First Aid kits are.

If possible, First Aid should only be administered by approved trained First Aiders and in a visible place.

A record of any first aid administered should be kept using an accident report form.

Parents should be notified if a head injury occurs and if any first aid has been administered.



Safety continued

Off-site and overnight activities (excluding local use of the common on foot)

When working off-site you should be aware of the site's own Safeguarding, Health and Safety and First Aid policies (e.g. in Schools or at Festivals).

Leaders must follow all relevant Safeguarding and Health & Safety guidance and follow the Trip Approval process, including a risk assessment.

If the group contains members of both sexes, there must be a leader from both sexes.

For overnight events, appropriate segregation of the sexes for sleeping must be maintained.

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Contact Information

Church Contacts

Children and Families Ministry Leader: Helen Attree, Tel: 07775 735668

Youth Ministry Leader: Nathan Shipton, Tel: 07493 091456

Team Rector: Dave Bruce, Tel 01684 565490

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Val Fane, Tel: 01684 566601

Worcester Diocese

Diocesan Safeguarding Team, email:

safeguardingadvice@cofe-worcester.org.uk

In emergency

simplifying IT

Worcestershire Social Care – Children: 01905 822666,
Out of Hours: 01905 768020

All relevant policies are available on our church website. www.chaseteam.org/safeguarding/ .

