

Safeguarding Local Practices for St Aidan's & St. Leonard's

This is to be used in conjunction with the Parish Safeguarding Handbook last updated in November 2018 from the Church of England.

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Roles & Responsibilities

Responsible for Safeguarding at St Aidan's & St Leonard's	Rev'd Stephen Johnson E mail revstevejohnson@btinternet.com Tel: 01772335310
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)	St.Aidan: Mary Martin E mail mary.martin05@hotmail.com St.Leonard: Christine Hart Tel: 07908230524

Current Safeguarding Team commissioned to act on behalf of and report to the PCC includes:

Rev'd Stephen Johnson	Responsible for Safeguarding at St Aidan's & St Leonard's
Mary Martin	Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) St Aidan
Christine Hart	Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) St Leonard
Rev'd Nick Procter	Associate Priest

The Basics

If anyone has a concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult in the first instance they should speak to the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Vicar. In the second instance they should speak to the Church Wardens. Should a concern be of such significance that you feel someone is at immediate risk and you are unable to contact any of the above then you must contact Social Services or the Police.

Ratios

There must always be a minimum of two leaders who are unrelated, even if the group size is smaller than indicated in the table below.

Ages	Ratio	
0 - 2 years	1 adult to 3 children	1:3
2 - 3 years	1 adult to 4 children	1:4
4 - 8 years	1 adult to 6 children	1:6
9 -12 years	1 adult to 8 children	1:8
13 - 18 years	1 adult to 10 children	1:10

If groups are mixed gender, try to have both male and female leaders.

Please note that these ratios apply to activities in the church halls i.e. Sunday school, crèche, youth groups etc. Higher ratios are recommended for activities taking place offsite when travel is involved. If this is not practicable this needs to be considered in the risk assessment for the activity to look at how this risk can be managed.

If the required ratios are not able to be achieved the leader of the group should contact a member of the leadership team to make them aware of the situation and seek to find cover before the activity commences.

If this is not able to be achieved the activity will have to be cancelled.

Registers

A registration form must be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities which should include up to date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (e.g. allergies) and any special needs. These should be stored securely to comply with GDPR legislation.

An attendance register must be kept and be available at all group meetings.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

All groups must have robust practices for the arrival and collection of children to specific groups, including ensuring that doors are not opened until enough volunteers are present for the expected number of children and ensuring that at least two adults are present before any children are allowed in.

All children must be registered according to register procedures.

Generally children under the age of 11 years should always be taken to and collected from an activity for which they have been registered by their parents/carers. If a child is over 11 years of age, it is the responsibility of their parent/carer to make arrangements with their child for arriving at and leaving an activity. The adult leaders should always be aware of any children making their own way home and have written consent for this to happen. Any concerns about these arrangements should be discussed with the child's parents/carers.

St Aidan's

It is recommended that registration happens either in the foyer of the hall or close to the doors so that comings and goings through the external doors can be monitored. As soon as all children have arrived then the doors should be closed to ensure that no one can access the premises without an adult seeing who is at the door.

At the end of the session no children must be dismissed until an adult has collected them and again there should be at least one leader in the foyer to monitor the leaving of all children.

St Leonard's

It is recommended that registration takes place in the tower with a table in the foyer for these purposes. However, it is also acceptable for parents to be invited into the building to collect their children. No children should be allowed out of the building without an adult.

Reporting A Concern

If you have a concern that a child or adult is or may be being abused, or that a church officer is or may be abusing a child or adult:

1. Respond well to the victim/survivor, if it is a direct disclosure, to ensure they feel listened to and taken seriously. Explain what will happen next and check out support requirements. They should be informed that their identity and the identity of the respondent will be shared with key church officers, and may be shared with the statutory agencies, if there is any current risk to children or adults. The concern or allegation should not be shared with anyone other than those who need to know (e.g. the statutory agencies and appropriate church officers).
2. **EMERGENCY:** If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the emergency services on 999.
3. **NON-EMERGENCY:** Contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer or, Vicar, in the first instance. They must then contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA). If neither are available, contact the DSA directly. If the concern arises in an activity, discuss with the group/activity leader, who will contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Vicar.

4. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSA within 24hours.
5. If the PSO/Vicar or the DSA are not available within 24hours, contact Children's Social Care or Adult Social Care and/or the police directly, if the concern is that a child or adult is being abused. Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or police if the concern is that a church officer may be abusing a child or adult. Advise the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Vicar as soon as possible that you have made a referral, they will advise the DSA. If in doubt don't delay, seek advice from statutory agencies.
6. Do not contact the respondent or anyone who may be implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure, until advice has been sought from the DSA or statutory agencies.
7. Record the details of the concern or allegation. Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time (usually it will not be), make a written record as soon as possible afterwards or before the end of the day. Record the time, date, location, persons present and how the concern or allegation was received, e.g. by telephone, face to face conversation, letter, etc. The record should include details of information provided to that person as well as the information received. Always sign and date the record. Keep it factual. Pass on a copy to the DSA (and/or the PSO/Vicar).

The records should be kept secure and confidential.

A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and adults and respecting the rights of the person against whom an allegation is made. In such circumstances the welfare of the child, young person or adult must come first. The rights of the person against whom the allegation is made are important and must be given due weight, once the immediate safety and protection of the child, young person or adult has been assured.

Parental Consent

Consent forms will be used in the following circumstances:

- When the group is meeting outside its normal meeting time and/or place.
- When the group may be involved in a potentially hazardous activity.
- When the topic for the meeting could be deemed to be controversial or outside the normal remit of the group's programme.

Parental consent will be required for any events and activities where children and young people unaccompanied by their parent/carer may be present. Adults willing and able to act in loco parentis will need to be identified and agreed with the parents/carers in writing. 16-18 year olds do not require a consent form for a regular church activity, however if they are going on a trip/attending an event outside of usual church activity a consent form must be completed and signed by their parent/carer. In some circumstances, e.g. group visits to a Theme Park, attendance at Diocesan/Deanery celebrations or events, being part of a Festival; it will not always be practical or possible to maintain constant supervision. For such events parent/carers will be informed of the arrangements and understand the level of supervision that can be provided. Parental/carer consent forms will be used for each appropriate activity.

Please note: Parents/carers will be asked to complete a new registration form at the beginning of each academic year for the groups with which their child/children is/are involved.

Risk Assessments & Off-Site Trips When taking children offsite:

- The church leadership must be informed and agree to the activity.
- Staff ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if the activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved.
- Details of the activity and any itinerary must be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
- Details of the activity and a list of contacts must be left with someone in the church. This persons details should be provided to parents on any documentation.
- Details of the activity and arrangements must be given to the Vicar and/or PSO.
- A risk assessment must be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by PCC insurance.
- A leader must be designated to take responsibility for First Aid and an accident book should be taken alongside a first aid kit.

Many of these items are equally applicable to groups involving vulnerable adults

Transport

Leaders must not transport children in their own vehicles on their own and parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car and before any photography or images are taken.

Volunteers should also check that they have the correct insurance on their vehicle to transport children if the situation arises.

All employed members of the Church must be insured on their car for business purposes if they are transporting children. If using a hired coach we would work to their own hiring procedures.

When a mini-bus is used it is important to ensure that seat belts are fitted and in use. At all times another adult must travel in the vehicle with the driver. It is good practice to be over 21 and driving for a minimum of 2 years. We recommend that volunteer drivers use the Blackburn Diocese Volunteer Driver Information Form.

Role of parents/carers whose own child is involved in a trip

If a parent/carer brings their own child, then that parent/carer cannot be counted as one of the supervising adults. In such cases, parents/carers whose own child is on the visit must be fully aware of their role with regard to all children.

Lifts

It is not generally encouraged to give children lifts home as this is the responsibility of the parent/carer. Leaders must not give lifts to children and young people, alone, unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity. The leader will be of the same sex of the young person where possible.

First Aid

There will be First Aid kits for use by all groups positioned in a) the choir vestry at St Aidan's b) the Foyer at St Leonard's. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that these are checked and restocked as necessary at regular intervals. All leaders will be informed as to the location of the First Aid kits.

It is not a legal requirement to have a trained First Aider during our activities, however where possible we will aim to provide this as a matter of good practice. In the event of

an accident within a group at the time of a church service; assistance from other members of the congregation with the particular expertise can be sought.

Particular care will be taken about the storage and administration of any drugs or medication to children and young people. If it is necessary to administer drugs or medication to any child or young person, permission and instructions in writing will be asked for from the parent/carer, as will agreement to 'no liability' of the leaders. In no circumstances will drugs or medication be administered otherwise.

Any accidents will be recorded on an Accident Form including details of those involved and treatment/action taken. Entries must be signed and dated. An accident book should also be taken on any off-site activities.

Insurance

The Parish Insurance Policy will cover the PCC for the "normal" church activities on church premises. In the event of any "extraordinary" events or activity within the programme, e.g. outings, trips, parties, details will be submitted to the PCC for approval in advance. The PCC will record its approval in the minutes of its meeting. This will be agreed subject to a risk assessment being completed by the key leader and approved by the PCC. It will be in order for the PCC to give approval for a programmed activity and its decision must be minuted. The PCC recognises that some activities with our children and young people's groups may be deemed 'extraordinary' and necessary advice and guidance would be sought from Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education before any decision was made.

Text Messages and Emails

In most cases, these must be used sparingly and for information only, such as arrangements for youth groups, and must not be used for prolonged conversations of a personal nature. There is a big difference between a text message/email that wishes a young person doing exams all the best and one that engages with, for example, boyfriend/girlfriend relationship issues. If a young person initiates a personal issue via these means the leader must suggest a suitable face to face meeting and share this with the Vicar.

Leaders must also be aware of and refrain from using any 'text language' that can be misinterpreted, e.g. using 'luv from' to end a message. As a general principle, if the young person's parents/carers were to read the message, would they understand it and find it appropriate? If in doubt, don't send it. Leaders should not give out their personal email or telephone number to children under the age of 11 or contact them via these means.

Social Media

Social media is a positive form of communication and this works well. The national policy advises leaders should not have contact with young people on their personal site. It does not appear to be workable not to be involved in social media as this is a regular and recognised method of communication for young people.

Our Parish recognises that leaders and volunteers may be “friends” with people on social networks in order to exercise their role as long as this is completed with diligence and good example. This will promote legal appropriateness e.g. only those aged 13 on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, musical.ly, Skype etc or aged over 16 on WhatsApp. This is only on public sites and not personal communication e.g. messenger. Leaders and volunteers will only be ‘friends’ with young people if they are asked by them. They will ensure their privacy settings are secure and there is no inappropriate content on their social media for a young person to view.

Discipline

It is reasonable for leaders to expect children and young people to show respect in the way they speak to and treat each other and the leaders, in sitting still and listening where appropriate, and in following instructions and joining in with activities. We need to take into account the age of the children and young people we are working with. Expecting a child to sit still and listen quietly for more than a couple of minutes may be reasonable if the child is ten. It is not reasonable if they are two years old. Bored children are much more likely to misbehave - think about the programme and make sure it is suitable and appealing for your group.

Our discipline must aim to encourage and build up our children and young people. At the same time, we must remember that the children and young people themselves will have a better experience if they participate appropriately. This will sometimes mean being firm in requiring children or young people to follow the rules of the group.

It is unacceptable to physically reprimand a child for example in smacking.

Further guidelines for those working with teenagers

Discipline issues with this age group are often based around respect - for buildings, other group members and leaders - and safety issues. Young people are generally able to understand these issues, and hence discipline becomes about explaining and calling them to account for not upholding these values.

Group leaders are responsible for deciding, with the Vicar, what these values are and what is and isn't acceptable behaviour in their group context. Including teenagers themselves in value-setting and rule-making can bring a greater ownership of these values and make calling them to account easier. Any discipline consequences need to be acted upon if they are to carry weight, so be sensible about what you promise.

Often, a firm and quiet ‘word’ with a young person that appeals to their understanding of the group values and safety risks will do, but occasionally other measures may be necessary. Removal of privileges for the young person or group as a whole can help quell general rowdiness.

At certain times, it may be necessary to warn young people further that the continued behaviour may result in a word with their parents/carers, and there may be cases where young people need to be removed from the group for the rest of the session and parents/carers called to collect the young people early. In extreme cases, young people

can be banned from a group for a session, but such a decision should be made by the Vicar.

For more information and advice, please speak to the Vicar.

Mentoring/Face-to-face meeting

If you are in a mentoring relationship with a young person, any personal contact must be established as a pattern and this must be agreed by the parents/carers. It is advisable that meetings take place in a public setting which ensures privacy, however this also provides safety as a leader and young person are not alone. Any mentoring relationship must be formalised with the leadership team and where possible the parents/carers. All mentoring will be same sex.

Radicalisation

The Prevent duty is the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 under section 26 that we are to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. We should be able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. This should be seen as part of our safeguarding duties and should inform our risk assessing. If you have a concern about this, please talk to the safeguarding adviser and if needed the Local Authority who will have a Prevent lead who can offer specific advice. The British Values the government have asked us to promote are set out in the 'Prevent' strategy 2011.

Diocesan Safeguarding Team

Name	Contact details
Sharon Hassall <i>Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser</i>	M 07711 485170 E sharon.hassall@blackburn.anglican.org
Rachael Campion <i>Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser</i>	M 07817 550224 E rachael.campion@blackburn.anglican.org

Useful Numbers

Agency	Contact number
Childline	0800 1111
ParentPlus	07799 602858
South Ribble Children's Social Care	01772 532930
South Ribble Adult Care Services	0300 123 6721 Emergency out of hours 0300 123 6722
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Action on Elder Abuse	0808 808 8141
24-hour National Domestic Violence	0808 2000 247
Samaritans	116123

If you have immediate concerns call the Police (either as an emergency 999 or non emergency 101)