

APPENDIX 3 CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Version 1



Minimise the situations where there is potential for abuse, or allegations of abuse, to occur.

All of our work with children and young people needs to be open, honest and accountable. Activities should not be kept secret.

(i) Keep to staff ratios

- The following staff ratios are advised for all children's and youth work:

0 – 2's	1 adult to 3 children
2 – 3's	1 adult to 4 children
3 – 8's	1 adult to 8 children
8+	1 adult to 10 children

- It is recommended, wherever possible, that an adult should have at least a helper (aged 16 or above) when working with a group.

(ii) Maintain good communication and, if necessary, use consent forms.

- Parents and other leaders should be kept aware of any activities involving children and young people. There should be good communication between leaders and between leaders and parent/carers.
- In certain circumstances consent forms should be given to parents to allow them time to decide whether they want their son/daughter to take part in an activity. Consent forms should be used for activities that:
 - (a) take place in a different place than usual. (See Forms 9 & 10)
 - (b) are potentially hazardous
 - (c) may be controversial
- A range of sample consent forms is listed on the New Day Church website under SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN / FORMS. They can be amended to suit particular circumstances.

(iii) Keep a register

- A register of all activities should be kept. This should include a record of children/young people and adults present. A record should be made of the time of arrival and departure of any child not attending the whole session. In case of fire, if possible, this register should be used to ensure that everybody is safely accounted for.

(iv) Keep a log of situations causing concern

- Should you encounter any situation involving a child which gives you cause for concern; make a written note of the conversation, observation, dates, times, names etc. Pass on this information immediately to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy.

- A record should also be kept of children who display challenging behaviour including the date of the incident and any action that was taken.
- A young person who constantly makes throw-away comments about a leader/helper may later make an allegation of actual abuse. Records of previous examples of this behaviour will enable any allegation to be seen in context.
- Where several children/young people make similar comments about someone, this should warn the leadership that they might have a problem with that person.
- Logbooks can protect both children and adults. Accusations of abuse may be made many years later, so records should be kept for as long as possible.

(v) Minimise one-to-one situations with children and young people

- Wherever possible avoid being alone with a child/young person. In rare situations where this may be necessary, other people should be made aware of the situation. We strongly recommend that the door is left open. Prayer for children should take place in an open area with other children and leaders around. (See Appendix 6 for more details.)
- Any home visit or one to one activity should be with parental agreement and with the knowledge of the other leaders.
- Where children/young people are transported by leaders to or from an event or home, agreement should have been sought from their parents. Ask the children to travel in the rear seat of the car.

(vi) Be aware of the appropriate boundaries of physical contact

- All leaders and carers should be aware of what is considered to be appropriate 'physical contact' when working with children/young people. i.e. personal care of children, comfort
- The level of personal care, e.g. toileting, must be appropriate and related to the age and the sex of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- Guidance on touch – e.g. physical contact between adults and children. This can be quite healthy and acceptable in public places but discouraged in circumstances where an adult/child is on his/her own.
- Adults should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- Respect the privacy of children and avoid questionable activities. e.g. rough and/or sexual provocative games and comments.
- Make sure that the only people allowed into a children's activity are the adults assigned to that group.

(vii) Make sure that the location is safe

- Keep an eye open for any faults or damage to internal and external parts of the building, fixtures, fittings and equipment and notify the site supervisor of any problems with the premises.
- Ensure that potentially dangerous activities are properly supervised.
- Ensure that the activity area is as safe and clear as possible, especially for games and activities involving movement. Ensure that children/young people are not expected to run towards protruding objects and that there is no equipment left around which is likely to cause injury.
- All workers should be aware of where to find First Aid equipment and the name of a First Aider.
- All workers should be familiar with the Fire procedures as displayed.
- Make sure that when food is being prepared hygiene requirements are observed.
- Have an annual safety review to consider all aspects of safety for children and young people. It is desirable that at least one member of the team holds a current First Aid certificate.

(viii) Take additional care on external visits

- Check that all drivers carry a full driving licence and valid insurance and that seat belt rules, requirements for minibuses etc. are complied with.
[Further details and information be found from the following, government website:
<https://www.gov.uk/driving-a-minibus>]
- Leaders should act wisely and use their own discretion when transporting young people. It is preferable to have another adult in the vehicle. If this is not possible then the group should travel in convoy so that assistance is close at hand.
- Adult/Child ratios may need to be increased for external activities.
- Be especially vigilant and aware when using unfamiliar buildings and outdoor spaces. A careful assessment of the location should be made, preferably with an advance visit.
- Consider carefully arrangements for residential holidays and whether adults should share sleeping accommodation with children. Workers should not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people of the opposite gender.

(ix) Let children talk

- Children and young people should be made aware that they can talk with church leaders about concerns they have.