

Youth House Group Leader Requirements

The Benefice of Allerton Bywater, Kippax and Swillington



Youth Worker requirements Checklist:

1. DBS - updated every 3 years
2. Self Declaration Form
3. Complete the online Basic and Foundation Safeguarding Training
4. Safer Recruitment (including Role Description, interview, references and yearly review)
5. Read and agree to 'Code of Safer Working Practice' (as part of Safer Recruitment - make copy available)
6. Agree to on going regular training (at least yearly)
7. Read Safer Environment and Activities, summary - SEE BELOW (make copy available)
8. Read The Parish Safeguarding Handbook, especially Chapter 11 (make copy available)
9. Have someone on the team who can administer basic First Aid and is trained.
10. Have someone on the team with basic food hygiene.
11. Read the Risk Assessment and any fire safety documents and take note of any actions needed (make copy available)

Safer Environment and Activities (Church of England) National Safeguarding Team v1 September 2019

Summary for Youth Work

10th March 2024

Below is a summary of some key points. For more detail or items not covered in the summary please download the original document.

This document replaces Section 5 of Protecting All God's Children, 2010, including Annex A5 and Guidance Practice 2 and Appendix 3 of Promoting a Safe Church, 2006.

Failure to follow the guidance could lead to disciplinary action. It is therefore important that all decisions are recorded and that any departure from the procedures have a compelling reason.

All church activities should follow the guidance but it cannot cover all eventualities.

p.6 Safeguarding is a core expression of valuing the image of God in each person.

We need to keep safe boundaries, follow good practice and be aware of power dynamics.

We need to be aware of our level of responsibility.

p. 7 We need to be trustworthy and respectful.

Not use our power to abuse, exploit, bully, intimidate, coerce or undermine.

Relationships can become blurred, dependant or exploitative if boundaries are not maintained.

We are in a position of trust. Any sexual activity with someone below the age of 18 is a breach of trust and would lead to a clergy disciplinary action. Under age sex (16 years) is illegal.

p. 8 References to other documents to read. These are listed above.

p. 9 Regular training.

p. 10 Clergy should refer to the Professional Conduct of Clergy.

p. 11 Manage risk through a risk management document. Risk management is about sensible precautions, not seeing mortal danger everywhere.

p. 15 First Aid kit available and up-to-date in every building being used.

When administering first aid, record what led up to the treatment, what treatment was administered, and who was present. Use an accident book to record this. If the activity leader is not present, they should be made aware of what happened as soon as possible, and should countersign the accident log and make any comment that is necessary.

More serious incidents will need separate fuller reports by those involved and the group leader. It is possible that these reports may need to be provided to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, your insurers, or another relevant body. Consult your DSA in these instances.

Inform the parent(s) or carer(s) promptly in the event of an accident to a child or young person or vulnerable adult, including details of any first aid administered. In the case of a slight injury, the parent or carer should be told when the child or vulnerable adult is collected or informed soon after the activity.

Parents of children who require medication will usually make you aware of these needs and expect you to follow the medication plan they set. Details should be included in the registration form. No medicines should be given to children without the permission of parents or carers. Additionally, children over 13 years old need to consent to being given medication. With adults who lack the ability to administer medication themselves, you should follow the plan agreed by their carer(s).

Depending upon the age and understanding of the child or vulnerable adult, they should be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatment. Again, details of this should be discussed with parents and carers.

p. 17 No lone working without exception.

Observe a suggested 5 year age gap between children and leaders.

Adult to children ratio 1adult to:

4-8 yrs, 6 children.

9-12 yrs, 8 children.

13-18 yrs, 10 children.

p. 18 Young people helping should be aged over 14 (recommended) and should be supervised, follow the same rules as for any under 18.

p. 19 There should always be written parental consent for any activities and additional consent from a child aged over 13 years. Follow model consent form.

It is a good idea for the group to set its own standards of behaviour "How to treat each other"

Full contact details for parents and children should be kept by the group leader securely and password protected but available for other leaders in an emergency.

Attendance records should be kept for up to 12 months.

Incidents should be recorded in an Accident Book and a Safeguarding Record and kept securely. Record keeping should be concise, factual, and clear.

p. 21. Ok for small groups to meet in homes.

If the youth group is led by a couple, there should be a third adult leader/helper present. The reason for this is that a primary reason for the 'two adult helper' rule is that adults can keep each other accountable for how they behave around young people. The relationship between a married couple¹⁴ may make such mutual accountability difficult and arrangements to ensure the presence of a third adult are required.

p. 23 No alcohol. Smoking best away from children.

p. 29 No personal social media contact or private messaging.

Ideally have a separate phone for youth work (main leader).

Be aware of your online presence. Do not say anything online that you wouldn't say off-line and make sure you do not link or post offensive material.

Do not post photographs, films or information online without written permission from parents and when older (recommended aged 13) the children themselves.

Consent is not always needed say in a wide shot, public space or where it is not practical or consent is implied but it should be sought wherever possible.

It should be clear who can be contacted to remove images.

p. 30 Follow General Data Protection Regulations GDPR. Data such as photographs only used with permission.

p. 31 It is suggested that children should not be subject to close up photography, have their names or identifying personal details alongside any images, have images where they are not suitably dressed and ideally not taken or stored on personal phones or cameras.

Give parents clear instructions about photography at events especially around posting photographs of children who may be at risk.

Allow the young people themselves to create a set of social media and photograph guidance.

Sexting is 'when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages'. The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults constitutes child sexual abuse and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the Police should be informed immediately.

Responding to sexting incidents involving young people: Refer the incident to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as soon as possible who will assist in managing the response according to best safeguarding practice. These can be difficult situations which need skilled advice to handle properly. An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care will be made if:

- The image(s) of the young person have been shared by an adult.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to learning difficulties);
- What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent;
- The image involves sexual acts and any person in the image is under 16;
- There is reason to believe the young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the image, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

Special and detailed arrangements need to be made if children are to be transported as part of a group activity. This information is from p. 34

Guidance does not apply to children being transported privately to and from meetings or events.

Children should not be transported without the prior consent of parents or carers.