



Pantygwydr Baptist Church
Safeguarding Procedures –
Children and Young People
November 2018

Part 4: Safe Working Practices

Pantygwydr Baptist Church, Ernald Place, Swansea, SA2 0HN

Charity Number: 1126593

4. Safe Working Practices

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working with children and young people that promote their safety and well-being.

Children, Young People and the Church's Health and Safety policy

The Church has adopted a Health and Safety policy. All activities involving Children and Young People should be in line with the Health and Safety policy.

Every worker should know:

- That it is their individual responsibility to uphold the church's Health and Safety Policy;
- How to report incidents and concerns under the church's Health and Safety Policy;
- Where the First Aid equipment is kept and how accidents should be reported;
- What procedures should be followed in the event of a fire.

Recommended minimum ratios

The following table represents recommended **minimum ratios** of adults to children. This should be the starting point in calculating appropriate ratios for your groups and activities. Young leaders (under the age of 18) and workers still awaiting DBS checks should not be counted among your number of adult workers.

Age	Minimum Ratio for Indoor Activities	Minimum Ratio for Outdoor Activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (Minimum 2)	1:3 (Minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (Minimum 2)	1:4 (Minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (Minimum 2)	1:6 (Minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	1:10 (Minimum 2, preferably one adult of each gender)	2:15 (preferably one adult of each gender) plus an extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 + years	1:10 (Minimum 2, preferably one adult of each gender)	1:10 (Minimum 2, preferably one adult of each gender)

The following should also be considered when calculating the number of workers required. If any **special factors** emerge within your risk assessment you should **increase the recommended** ratio in order to ensure the safety of the children and young people.

- **Special needs.** Do any of the children have special needs that will require additional support?
- **Behavioural issues.** Do any of the children or does the group as a whole present challenging behaviour that can be difficult to manage?
- **The venue.**

Gender balance

If you have a mixed group of children and young people you should endeavour to have both male and female workers present. This becomes increasingly important for older age groups.

What happens when ratios fall below the required level?

The ratio of adults to children can fall below the optimum level in two different types of situation.

- In a one-off situation where a member of the leadership team is unavailable for one session and it is not possible to arrange alternative cover.
- On a more permanent basis, where it is not possible to find sufficient volunteers to staff a group at the desired level.

A "One Off" situation

When the first of these scenarios arises the remaining leaders should consider the following three questions

- Is it safe to continue with the planned programme?
- Are there ways of working that would reduce the risks?
- If this is a week when additional staff were required because of the nature of the planned activities should the activities be changed?

If, having considered these questions, it becomes clear that children's and young people's safety is being put at unacceptable risk then the event should be cancelled. The Designated Person for Safeguarding, or the Safeguarding Trustee, should be informed in writing of:

- the circumstances that led to the reduced staffing levels
- the actions that were taken to reduce the risk to the children and young people.

If the reduced staffing will lead to one adult being alone with a child or a group of children or young people then (if there is time) the event should be cancelled. If there is an emergency that leads to this situation, then the worker who is left alone should follow the practice outlined above.

Permanent Basis

Any decision to run a group with staff ratios that are below the recommended level should be taken by the Deacons of the church. The decision should be recorded in their minutes together with

- The reasons why they believe that this decision is justified
- and
- Any measures that have been taken to minimise the risks to children and young people

In no circumstances should the trustees plan to continue running a group where only one adult will be present with children and young people and no one else is present in the building.

Procedures Regarding Use of Toilets during Sessions

- **Ages 0-2 years approx (nappy wearing):** This should be done by the parent/guardian of a child. If they are not available it should be done at the nappy changing station with another member of the Team present.
- **Ages 2-3 years approx (toilet trained):** This should be done by the parent/guardian. If they are not available a member of the team should accompany children into toilet with another team member monitoring from outside. No physical help should be given, except in exceptional circumstances.
- **School years Reception to year 2:** Allow children to go into the toilet on their own but an adult helper should monitor from outside door to ensure they return..
- **School years 3+:** Allow children to go to the toilet unsupervised, but if they do not return go to check.

If a child or young person has additional needs and requires extra assistance with the toilet, this should be agreed with the parent or carer.

Procedures for transporting children and young people

When children are transported in cars:

- Written permission from the parent/carer should be obtained. (This is ordinarily contained on the standard Church consent forms. It is not necessary to gain written consent for each specific journey, although the parents / guardians should be informed prior to any journeys);
- The driver should understand and agree to the Safeguarding Procedures when transporting children or young people;
- The driver should have fully comprehensive insurance which covers voluntary work (or in the case of a paid youth worker or children's worker insurance that covers them for transporting others in the course of their employment);
- Seat belts should always be worn and the proper child seats and child restraints complying with current law should be used for young children;
- If a volunteer driver who has not been appointed as a children's or young people's worker is used to transport children and young people on church activities, the driver should be appointed following the procedures outlined under the church's Safeguarding Children Policy.

The Church will not use people as drivers for children and young people when their criminal record shows a record of driving offences that suggests that the person may not be a safe driver.

When a mini-bus or coach is used to transport children or young people:

- Ensure that the person driving the minibus is licensed to do so;
- Ensure that the mini-bus or coach is fitted with seat-belts on all of the seats and that seat-belts are always worn;
- Ensure that the number of children and adults does not exceed the capacity of the coach or mini-bus so that all can have an allocated seat with a seat-belt.

Outings and overnight events

For all events when children and young people are taken off the church premises:

- A special risk assessment should be carried out, including an assessment of the appropriate ratio of adults to children;
- Each adult should be allocated a written list of those children or young people for whom they have responsibility, even if the whole group is to remain together;
- If travelling in several small groups, it is good practice to insist that the same group of children travel with the same adult on both the outgoing and return journeys. This minimizes the possibility of children going astray because of false assumptions that someone else has taken them.

Overnight events

Particular care should be taken with overnight events, especially when arranging sleeping accommodation. It is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all situations. However, sensible precautions will minimize the risks for both workers and children or young people.

All of the above bullet-points should apply. In addition, the following best practice should be adhered to:

- A risk assessment, including a fire safety assessment, should be undertaken;
- Parents / Guardians should be informed in writing of the arrangements for overnight events;
- Particular note should be taken regarding the proposed venue and its suitability for providing sufficient rooms for children and adults to sleep, as well as arrangements for toilets and washing etc;
- Are there sufficient fire exits from the sleeping accommodation in the event of a fire?
- Are all of the workers conversant with the procedures in the event of a fire?

- Ascertain prior to the event the local telephone numbers and other information that would be needed in the event of an emergency (caretaker or other contact for property if not on site, local doctor, the location of the nearest Accident and Emergency Hospital etc).

Parental consent:

- Separate parental consent should be obtained for each event where the child or young person will be cared for overnight. The Overnight Consent form should be used (available in the Church Office or on the Website) Copies of the standard church consent form should also be taken;
- Parents/carers should be given the address of the overnight venue, together with a phone number for making contact in the event of an emergency. It is good practice to provide parents / carers with at least two phone numbers, including a landline in case mobile phone reception is poor;
- Consideration should be given to having a meeting with parents/carers prior to the event.

Sleeping arrangements

- Males and females should sleep separately
- If it is a mixed group of both boys and girls, there must be a mix of male and female adult workers

Ordinarily, adults and children should not share a bedroom. However, there may be circumstances which require this. This may be due to the ages of the children, their need for support, the likelihood of older children bullying younger children, and the nature of the venue. Workers should come to a measured judgement, in consultation with the child's parents, on whether it is wise for adults to share sleeping accommodation with children or young people. If adults share sleeping accommodation with children and young people, children and young people should always be able to dress and undress separately from adults. There should never be a situation where one adult shares a room with one child, or where adults and children of the opposite sex share a room.

DBS Checks

All workers who stay overnight with children and young people **MUST** have a valid DBS check, even if it is only for one night and other adults will be present.

Residential events

The following checklist will help to identify a number of important issues that should be considered for the safety and well-being of the children and young people when planning residential events:

- At least one of the workers/leaders should be responsible for First Aid and should hold an appropriate, valid certificate.
- The person responsible for catering should hold a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate
- Check the insurance cover of any building in which you will be sleeping. There may be a limit on the numbers accommodated. If you exceed these, insurance can be invalid.
- Check the building and know where water, electricity and gas can be turned off.

Fire safety

- Know the fire drill for the building, and make sure everyone is aware of what to do in the event of a fire.
- Know where the fire extinguishers are.
- A Location Specific Plan should be displayed alongside the Fire Notice in each room.
- Church halls and rooms used for sleeping larger numbers of people **MUST** have **TWO** means of exit.
- Know where the nearest hospital and doctor are.
- If you are sleeping in a building not normally used for overnight stays, it is also a good idea to notify local police and fire brigade, even if it is your own church.

Safety

- Residential activities must have safety rules: e.g. letting adults know where you are.
- Make sure the children have correct clothing for whatever activity they are taking part in. It is useful to issue a 'kit list' for residential activities.
- Where outdoor activities are concerned, either leaders should have the appropriate qualification, or, if the activity is being provided by an outside organisation, then the leaders should check that this organisation is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority and have appropriate insurance. Activity leaders should hold a relevant National Governing Body Award.

Parental Consent Forms

All children and young people should be registered and parents/carers should be asked to complete the Parental Consent Form (available from the Church Office or on the Website), which should be updated, checked and signed every 12 months. Whilst children and young people attending Sunday Club are still the responsibility of their parents, it is good practice to get a consent form for each child so that group leaders are aware of any medical / dietary needs for each child.

It is the responsibility of the group leader for each group to ensure there is a consent form for each child in that group.

The details on the consent form should be available to the leader of the group or activity each time the group or activity meets, so that the contact information and medical information etc is readily available in the event of an emergency. Copies of parental consent forms should be stored in a folder for each group. Where necessary these should be copied and a copy placed in the folder for each group the child attends. When the form is updated and re-signed, new copies should be made and old copies shredded. The folders should be stored securely.

Parents/carers should be given the following information:

- Name and contact telephone number for the leader of the group/activity attended by the child or young person;
- Outline details of the group/activity the child or young person is attending, including the starting time and the time the event ends;
- Name and contact details for the Designated Person for Safeguarding;
- That the church has a Safeguarding Children Policy and that in the event of the parent/carer having any concerns about the welfare of their child in relation to the church, they should contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Welcoming children into an all-age community

There will be a number of occasions, when children and young people will be present on church premises as part of the all-age community of the church, where attention will need to be given to the Safeguarding implications:

- Before and after church services;
- Family or all age services;
- Social events that are open to the whole church family;
- Rehearsals for productions that might include children, young people and adults.

The greatest difficulty is in defining who is responsible for the children and young people in these situations, and to what extent it is the responsibility of the church to be proactive in taking precautionary measures.

Before and after church services

Sunday services are a time for fellowship. Before the service, members of the congregation greet one another and catch up on the week's news and after the morning service and some evening services people are encouraged to linger over refreshments. During these times children often mingle with the rest of the congregation or take themselves off to play with friends. It is important that due consideration is given to ensure the safety and well-being of children during these times.

Workers in Sunday Club take responsibility for children from when they arrive in the room and hand responsibility back to the parent(s) at the end of the service.

For children up to the age of 7 it is not good practice to allow children to leave their group or class unaccompanied. Once the children have been collected from their group or returned to their parents the responsibility for each child reverts from the group leaders to the parents or adult who is in charge of collecting them.

If children attend unaccompanied by any adults:

Either:

- Their parents should be informed of the level of care that the church is able to take for their welfare (i.e. when they will be in the formal care of workers).

Or:

- The workers in their groups should take responsibility for them from the time they arrive at church to the time they leave. A meeting point and time should be agreed before the service. After the group finishes the worker will be responsible for the child until the child leaves the church premises.

The church should be aware of any particular hazards to children during these periods:

- Are children congregating in rooms in the church with no adult supervision?
- Are there any hazards associated with the serving or preparing of hot drinks?
- Is it possible for young children to wander from the church premises unsupervised onto the road?
- Are there any areas of the church building that should be out of bounds for children or where children should be closely supervised?
- The kitchen should normally be out of bounds to children;
- Is the Baptistry open or covered?
- If there are any adults in the congregation who pose a risk to children their behaviour should be closely monitored during these times;
- If the church has a known offender attending it is important that the conditions of the offender's contract are fully enforced and adhered to;
- The person responsible for locking the church should carefully check that the church building is empty and that all children and young people have left the church premises before the building is locked.

Family or all-age services

The particular challenge of family or all age services is that no one may understand themselves to be responsible for the formal care of the children and young people who attend.

It is imperative that the parents or carers of children and young people understand the basis on which their children are attending the service.

- Any parents who are present should know that they are not entrusting their children into the care of others but remain responsible themselves for the welfare of their children;
- Any parents who send their children unaccompanied should understand the level of care and supervision that their children will be given.

Even if it is clear that children and young people are in the care of their parents for a family service, the church

will continue to have a duty of care with regard to the wider welfare issues for the members of the congregation, including children and young people as highlighted in the previous section.

Photography

It is not illegal to take photographs of children, however, when taking photographs or video footage we must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016. Fear of breaching this Act should not be wrongly used to stop people taking photographs or videos of all activities involving children and young people. It is possible to be responsible without being over-restrictive.

The following guidelines are advisable:

- Permission should be obtained from parents for photographs to be taken at church activities. The permission form should clarify where those photographs are likely to be used (display board, website, press etc);
- Photographing children should be conducted with sensitivity and courtesy. Children generally like having their picture taken, but there may be moments when they would rather not. Consent of the child is just as important as parental permission;
- When photographs are displayed, posted online, or sent to the press, children should not be identified by name, and nor should it be possible to infer the identity of individual children from the photograph, or any accompanying captions or stories;
- Photographic material should be stored safely in a place that has been agreed and minuted by the trustees/deacons;
- Leaders should not store images of children and young people on their mobile phones;
- Copies must not be distributed to other individuals without parental permission.

Other user groups

Not all of the groups using the church may be organised and run by church members, and buildings are often hired by others (Scouts, Guides, nurseries, dance classes etc).

If outside hirers use the building on a regular basis with children or young people, they must have a safeguarding children policy and procedures in place, based on the Home Office recommendations 'Safe from Harm'. A clause to cover this must be included in the official hiring agreement, and details of the policy, and the contact details for the Designated Person for Safeguarding for that group should be requested and stored with a copy of the hire agreement.

It is not our responsibility to ensure that the policy is being properly implemented. This responsibility lies with the group themselves and their trustees. However, if it came to light that a group using our premises were not following appropriate safeguarding procedures and that children were being placed at risk, consideration should be given to terminating the rental agreement.

Some groups using church premises may need to be registered with ESTYN. If this is the case their ESTYN registration certificate should be checked.

If a group regularly hires the church and does not have a Safeguarding Policy, they should agree to adhere to the Pantygwydr Baptist Church Policy and Procedures.

Ad Hoc hires, for example children's birthday parties, are not required to have Safeguarding Policies.