

**KINGS NORTON
BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Policy and guidelines on
the protection of children, young people and
vulnerable adults**

Issue 6

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Policy and guidelines on the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults

CONTENTS

1. Policy Statement
2. Good Practice Guidelines for the prevention of abuse
3. Procedures if abuse is suspected or disclosed
4. Good Practice Guidelines on the appointment of Helpers and Leaders

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Advocate(s) Those appointed within the Church to be available to advise Leaders/Helpers in matters of Children's/Young People's welfare and protection.

Child/Children Those below 18 years of age.

Group Leader(s) The Person with overall responsibility for a Children's/Young Peoples Group in The Church.

Helper(s) Those who assist the leadership in Children's/Young People's groups.

Leader(s) Those who have leadership responsibility in Children's/Young People's Groups.

Supervisor(s) Those who are leaders in Children's/Young People's Groups.

Worker(s) All Helpers/Leaders in Children's/Young people's Groups

Young Person/People Those 12 to 18 years of age.

1. Policy statement on children, young people, vulnerable adults and the church

This statement was agreed at the Church Meeting held on 1st July 1996.

It will be reviewed regularly at the Church meeting once a year where progress in carrying it out will be monitored.

- As members of this church we recognise that our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church and we commit ourselves to their nurturing, protection and safekeeping.
- It is the responsibility of each one to ensure that our children, young people and vulnerable adults are not abused in any way as they meet in their groups.
- The Church is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and providing supervision for those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- The Church is committed to taking up references and adequately assessing the suitability of helpers and leaders who apply to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- The Church's safeguarding policy is based upon the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its booklet 'Safe to Grow'. These are based on The Home Office Code of Practice.
- Each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be given a copy of the church guidelines and procedures and will undertake to observe them.
- As part of our commitment to children, young people and vulnerable adults the church has appointed Francis Williamson to be their Advocate. His role will be to offer consultancy and advice to leaders of children's, young people's and vulnerable adults' work in matters of their welfare and protection. He is also available to advise on any specific problems, on behalf of a child, young person, vulnerable adult or leader. If Francis is not available then the regional Minister Neil Le Tissier from the Heart of England Baptist Association is to be contacted as the Advocate.

2. Good practice guidelines for the prevention of abuse.

The guidelines apply to groups at church, on trips and holidays.

Please refer to Urban Saints Know how guide version 5.01

Each child/young person/vulnerable adult should be treated with respect. He/she should not be ridiculed or spoken to in an inappropriate manner. Workers should take care where they put their body and not touch a child/young person/vulnerable adult in any way which could be open to misinterpretation.

You, the worker:

- Should not invade the privacy of children/young people/vulnerable adults when they are washing or showering.
- *If a child/young person/vulnerable adult cannot wash themselves or needs assistance then two workers who are the same sex as the child/young person/vulnerable adult should be with them.*
- *Separate washing and toilet facilities for males/females should be available wherever possible. Doors should be lockable. When changing clothes for outdoor activities boys/girls should have separate areas. Workers should dress appropriately depending on the activity/situation.*
- Should not engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games with children/young people. Nor should you make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child/young person, even in 'fun'.
- Should not scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child/young person/vulnerable adult.
- Should not smack a child/young person/vulnerable adult. Alternative methods of discipline/communication should be agreed by workers.
- Should not allow a child/young person/vulnerable adult to involve them in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Should not develop an exclusive relationship with a child/young person/vulnerable adult.

- In a counselling situation should make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. It would be advisable to be in a public rather than private place..
- Should not invite a child/young person/vulnerable adult to be alone with you in your home. Whether a visit is planned or unplanned you should make sure that the parent(s)/carers know where he/she is.
- When transporting children/young people/vulnerable adults, they should use the back seat to its appropriate capacity before using the front seat. It is advisable that a lone child/young person/vulnerable adult should always sit in the back of the vehicle.
 - *Vehicles used for church work must be fully insured and driven with due care and attention by experienced drivers.*
 - *Seat belts must be worn at all times*
 - *The minibus should normally have at least one worker, apart from the driver when children/young people/vulnerable adults are being transported.*
- Should never be alone in sleeping accommodation with a child/young person/ vulnerable adult except briefly in exceptional and emergency circumstances (e.g. if a child/young person/vulnerable adult becomes suddenly ill) when no other worker is available. *In such circumstances the door must be open and another adult should know that the situation has occurred as soon as possible.*
 - *A worker of the same sex may share sleeping accommodation with a group of children/young people/ vulnerable adults male or female but never share a room with only one or two children/young people/ vulnerable adults.*
 - *Dormitories must be single sex. Each person should have their own bed with no sharing of sleeping bags.*
- If one worker sees another one acting in any way which might be misconstrued he/she should speak to them and to an appropriate leader about their concerns. Agreed disciplinary measures should be available for when they are needed. Workers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows them to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour. Regular workers' meetings and periodic review of the guidelines should enable this.

3. Procedures if abuse is suspected or disclosed

Abuse may fall within four categories:

1. Physical - where children's/young people's/vulnerable adults' bodies are hurt/injured.
2. Sexual - where adults or other children/young people use children/young people/vulnerable adults to satisfy their sexual needs.
3. Neglect - where adults fail to care for children/young people/vulnerable adults to such a degree that their health (and development) are significantly impaired.
4. Emotional-where children/young people/vulnerable adults do not receive love and attention, are rejected, may be frightened by threats or taunts or are given responsibilities beyond their years/capabilities.

All abuse involves some degree of emotional harm.

What to do if you are concerned a child/young person/vulnerable adult is being abused

- If you have concerns it is important to record your observations of the child/young person/vulnerable adult, their behaviour or what they or others have said which gives rise to your concerns.
- Do not question a child/young person/vulnerable adult in depth but indicate to them that you have noticed that they have, for example, a sore on their leg. Make some general remark that indicates to the child/young person/vulnerable adult that you are concerned for them as an individual. You could possibly say that if they need anything, to let you know.
- It is difficult to act on 'suspicions' unless there are frequent matters of real concern or injuries which have unsatisfactory explanations.
- Share your concerns with the Group Leader and discuss with the Children's Advocate/Safeguarding Officer whether the situation should be referred further.
- Pass on your notes, duly dated and signed, to the Children's Advocate/Safeguarding Officer.

What to do if a child/young person/vulnerable adult tells you they are being abused - by a person within the church or outside.

- Thank them for sharing this with you.
- Reassure them that you will get help.
- Listen to the child/young person/vulnerable adult carefully.
- Do not question them.
- Do not make any suggestions to them or ask leading questions e.g. ‘X did it didn't he?’ ‘It was Y wasn't it?’
- Keep the child/young person/vulnerable adult safe if they are in immediate danger.
- Tell the child/young person/vulnerable adult that you must pass this information on to people who can help with such problems.

- Make notes as soon as possible giving details of what the child/young person/vulnerable adult said, what you said, how the child/young person/vulnerable adult looked, was feeling, what the child/young person/vulnerable adult wants, fears, what action you took, note any visible injuries (position, colour, size, shape).

- Tell your Group Leader and refer the matter to The Children's Advocate/Safeguarding Officer for advice as soon as possible. Provide them with your notes (signed and dated) and the child's/young person's/vulnerable adult's name, address, date of birth and any other details known. They will refer the matter to The Social Services or discuss it with them. However if you cannot contact the Advocate/Safeguarding Officer you should not hesitate to speak to Social Services yourself.

Remember:

- Do not delay - seek advice immediately.
- Do not act alone.
- Do not try to investigate.
- Tell your Group Leader or if not available the Children's Advocate/Safeguarding Officer.

- *The allegation must not be reported under any circumstances, to the alleged abuser.*
- *If the child/young person/vulnerable adult is about to return home advice must be taken from The Social Services Department about whether or not anything should be said to the parent(s)/carers.*

BIRMINGHAM CONTACT NUMBER 0121 433 5555

- *The church will provide support for any worker with whom the child/young person/vulnerable adult shares the fact that they have been abused.*

4. GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES ON THE APPOINTMENT OF HELPERS AND LEADERS

- All paid staff and volunteers should have clear roles.
- Time should be taken to get to know people who are potential helpers or leaders, as soon as they come into the church.
- When an application is received for a position as helper/leader references should be asked for and taken up regarding character and previous work with children/young people/vulnerable adults.
- An interview before appointment should explore all the applicant's experience of working or contact with children/young people/ vulnerable adults if this is deemed appropriate.
- A probationary period with a named person, as supervisor, should be expected of new helpers/leaders. This will depend on their past experience of children/young people's/ vulnerable adults' work.
- An annual review involving as many leaders and helpers as possible should take place to assess the need for further training, team building and general policies.
- The following forms and letters are available for use in putting into practice the above guidelines:
 1. Volunteer Helper Form
 2. Letter to referee
 3. Reply Form for Referee
 4. Volunteer Contract

URBAN SAINTS Policy and best practice

Containing:

Supporting safeguarding within Urban Saints

Urban Saints' Safeguarding Statement and Policy

Essential Online Safeguarding Training

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator roles

Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer

Dealing with safeguarding issues in Community Groups

A summary of the main types of abuse

Recognising Abuse

Self-harm and young people

Responding to disclosures of abuse or welfare concerns

Reporting disclosures of abuse or welfare concerns

Safeguarding Reporting Protocol - flowchart for Community Groups

Abuse of Trust guidelines

SUPPORTING SAFEGUARDING WITHIN URBAN SAINTS

Urban Saints' Safeguarding Statement and Policy

Urban Saints' Safeguarding Statement may be viewed [here](#), where you will also find instructions on how to obtain a copy of the full **Safeguarding Policy**.

- As required by law, the *Safeguarding Policy* outlines in detail how Urban Saints will work to protect children and young people through the adoption of a policy on Safer Recruitment and by providing staff and volunteers with effective training, operating procedures and reporting protocols.
- Those aspects of the *Safeguarding Policy* – and the accompanying *Safeguarding Operating Procedure* – that are most relevant for leadership teams are summarised in the rest of this Safeguarding section.

Essential Online Safeguarding Training

Everyone appointed to a role within an Urban Saints' Community Group must complete a short online *Safeguarding Children* training module. The training lasts about an hour and is free of charge.

Main Leaders and Assistant Leaders are permitted to appoint others to various roles within the team and therefore will be required to undergo a short, online training course on *Safer Recruitment* too. This training is also free of charge.

- Team members with validation that they have completed safeguarding training elsewhere to the required level within the previous three years may be exempt from the Urban Saints training.
- Refresher training will be required from time to time and Urban Saints will contact team members when such training is due.

THE SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR AND DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR ROLES

Leadership teams should appoint one member of the team as Safeguarding Co-ordinator and another as their Deputy. For mixed Groups, ideally these roles should be held by team members of both sexes.

- Because of the nature of the roles they should be given to team members aged 18+ who have an appropriate level of maturity, integrity and experience.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and their Deputy must be completely familiar with all of the information and procedures in this section of the *Good Practice Guide* and are responsible for ensuring that the whole team – including others who help as volunteers from time to time – work to these procedures.
- All disclosures of abuse or safeguarding concerns within the Group should be followed up by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or their Deputy according to Urban Saints' *Safeguarding Reporting Protocol* given below.

Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer

Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer is based at the Support Centre in Luton and oversees all aspects of safeguarding within the organisation. They may be contacted by email for advice about any aspect of safeguarding at safeguarding@urbansaints.org.

DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING ISSUES IN COMMUNITY GROUPS

A summary of the main types of abuse

The NSPCC defines child abuse as, '...any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention.' The following is based on the definitions in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018)' – see Appendix 2 of Urban Saints' Safeguarding Policy for full definitions:

Physical abuse: This involves deliberately hurting a child, causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. It can also be when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child causing severe adverse effects on their emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: Where a child is forced or enticed to take part in sexual activities whether or not they are aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities online, for example.

Neglect: The ongoing and persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Recognising abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. Some signs may also indicate a young person is self-harming – see next section.

Physical signs of abuse: Injuries that are unexplained, unusual or not receiving medical attention. Signs of physical neglect. Reluctance to change for, or participate in, sports or swimming.

Emotional signs of abuse: Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, especially withdrawal, depression, aggression or extreme anxiety. Obsessions or phobias. Sudden under-achievement. Attention-seeking.

Indicators of possible sexual abuse: Excessive, inappropriate preoccupation with sexual matters or detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, evident in words, play or drawings. Being sexually provocative with adults. Disturbed sleep or nightmares. Eating disorders.

Self-harm and young people

It is important that Leaders/Helpers are aware that some of the indicators above may suggest that a young person is self-harming.

Common indicators of self-harm: Someone hitting, cutting, scratching or burning themselves deliberately to produce a wound, taking substances that are poisonous or just cause discomfort, and other behaviours such as overdosing or pulling out hair. Wounds are often purposely hidden.

The reasons why someone self-harms: These are usually hard to work out – even for the person themselves – but there are often links to depression, bullying, pressure to achieve, grief, emotional abuse or relationship problems. Self-harm is a coping mechanism that can lead a young person to feel more in control of their lives and it can become addictive.

- Leaders/Helpers who suspect that a young person in their Group may be involved in self-harm should encourage the young person to seek help and guidance, and if there are concerns about their well-being then the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should be consulted.
- Childline (0800 1111) can provide expert help to Leaders/Helpers, parents and the sufferer themselves. They also have a range of self-harm coping techniques and other resources that are highly regarded – click [here](#) for details.

- If Leaders/Helpers discover indicators that may suggest self-harm or abuse, then it is prudent to consider that abuse may have occurred and take the action outlined in the *Responding to disclosures of abuse or welfare concerns* section below – young people may sometimes say injuries are self-inflicted to cover up abuse that is happening.

Responding to disclosures of abuse or welfare concerns

It is important that Leaders and Helpers follow the guidelines and procedures given in the next sections even if they feel a different course of action may be 'better'. The information we provide takes into account factors of which many Leaders and Helpers will be unaware and following any other course of action could seriously endanger a young person, compromise any future Police investigation and create difficulties for the Leader/Helper themselves.

When a child wishes to talk about abuse, it is important for the Leader/Helper to listen carefully to what the child says without interrupting:

- Look at the young person directly and accept what they say without judging them.
- Stay calm and don't appear shocked or angry, for example.
- Never push for information and don't ask leading questions.
- Repeating back what they have said will show that you are listening and also help check you have understood correctly.
- If the child decides not to tell you anything after all, then accept that decision and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Helpful, reassuring things to say include: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you have told me', 'I will help you', 'It's not your fault.'
- Be aware that the young person may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never promise absolute confidentiality – let them know you will need to tell someone else, who it is and why.
- End on a positive note by reassuring the young person they were right to tell you and let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- You should consider finding someone appropriate to support the child straight away – the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will be able to give advice.
- If immediate medical intervention is required, this should be arranged.

Reporting disclosures of abuse or welfare concerns

The following information should be read in conjunction with the Reporting Protocol flowchart below:

As soon as possible after a disclosure or welfare concern, and preferably within an hour, the Leader/Helper receiving the disclosure or having the concern should report

it to the Group's Safeguarding Co-ordinator, or their Deputy if the Co-ordinator is unavailable or implicated.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy may, if they wish, contact *Thirtyone:eight* (formerly CCPAS) for advice on **0303 003 1111**, mentioning that they are calling about an incident at an Urban Saints' Group. The advice provided by *Thirtyone:eight* should be noted down and followed. If appropriate, the Main Leader(s) may be informed that a safeguarding incident is being dealt with, but without going into detail.
- If neither the Safeguarding Co-ordinator nor their Deputy is contactable then the Leader/Helper is advised phone *Thirtyone:eight* themselves for advice, as detailed above.
- As soon as possible, the Leader/Helper should make detailed notes of the conversation during which the disclosure or concern was raised, including exactly what was said and by whom, the time and date of the conversation and what was happening immediately beforehand. The notes should then be signed and kept securely.
- The Leader/Helper should complete a copy of the *Cause for Concern Form* (click [here](#) to download a copy). The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy may assist them, and any handwritten notes will aid the completion of the Form.
- Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer should be telephoned on 01582 589850 during normal Monday to Friday office hours to alert them about the incident – this may be done by the Leader/Helper or Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy. Whilst this phone call is important, other reporting procedures should not be delayed if the call cannot be made straight away.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy should complete a copy of the *Safeguarding Co-ordinator's Follow-up Form* (click [here](#) to download a copy) and email copies of this and the completed *Cause for Concern Form* to Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@urbansaints.org.
- If the Leader/Helper receiving the disclosure or having the concern needs help themselves following the incident, then the Group's Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer will be able to offer advice.

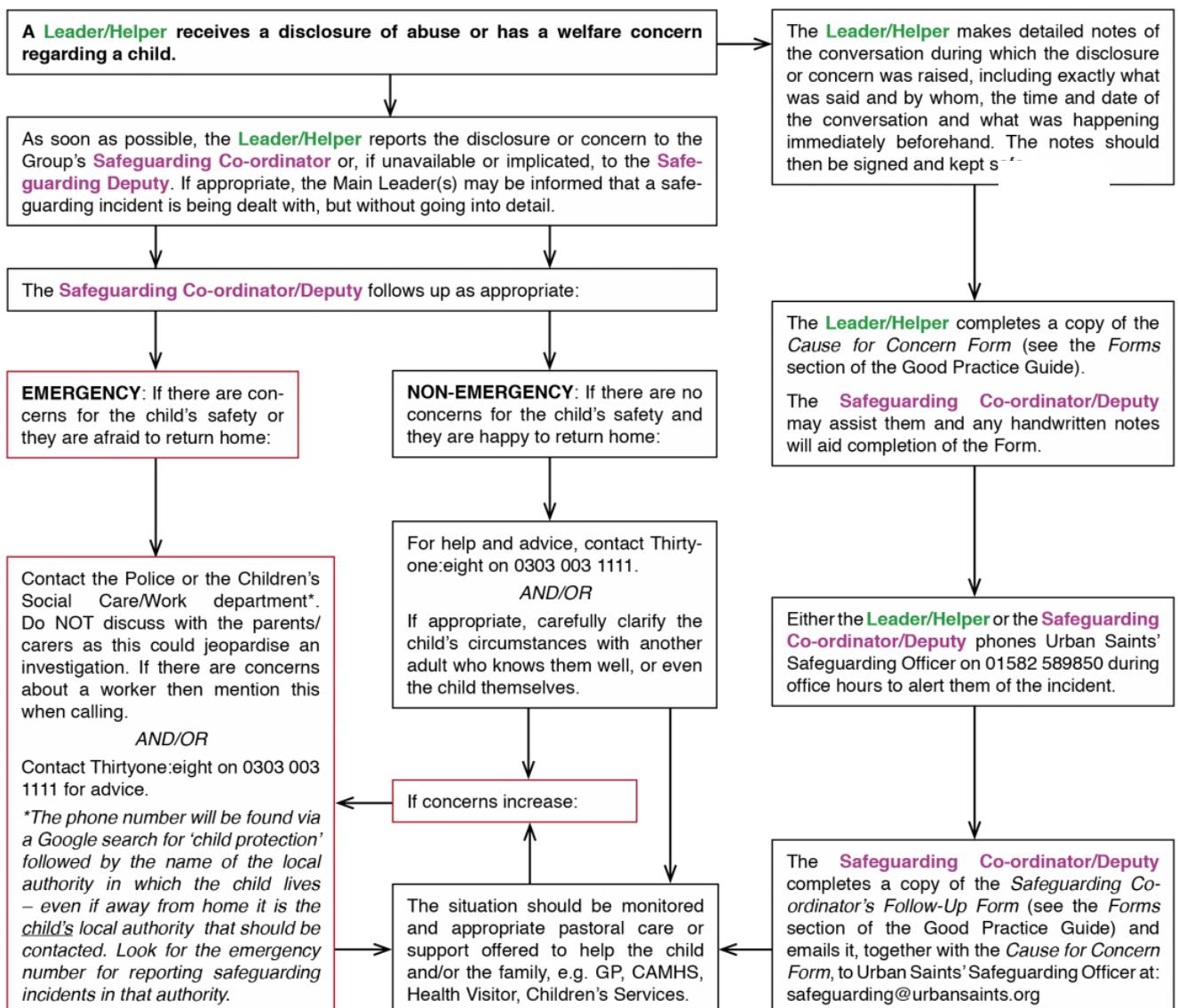
Safeguarding Reporting Protocol - flowchart for Community Groups

This flowchart should be used in conjunction with the information in the previous section.

Safeguarding Reporting Protocol Urban Saints' Community Groups



Note: The use of the word 'child' denotes anyone under the age of 18.



Abuse of Trust guidelines

The government has produced guidelines which contain principles of good practice aimed primarily at protecting young people over the age of consent but under 18 years of age where there is a relationship of trust with an adult looking after them.

The Abuse of Trust guidelines deem it unacceptable for a person in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour that might allow a sexual relationship to develop with a young person in their care who is over the age of consent but under 18 years of age, whilst the relationship of trust continues.

- Within Urban Saints we not only undertake to follow the principles found within the *Abuse of Trust* guidance but, in order to further protect young people, it is deemed unacceptable for a Leader/Helper to date a young person in their care.

General Supervision Guidelines

Leader/child ratios

Guidelines for one-to-one situations, home visits and transporting young people

Guidelines for appropriate conduct with young people

Dealing with difficult or disruptive behaviour

What to do if a young person is likely to cause harm to people or property

What to do if a young person leaves a Group meeting without permission

Avoiding confrontation and managing low-level disruption

Working with under-8s

Use of electronic communication, photos and videos – *information to follow in spring 2019*

GENERAL SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

Leader/child ratios

For voluntary organisations there are no regulations stipulating a particular ratio of adults to children. However, we recommend the following ratios:

- For children aged 4 to 8 years, we recommend two adults for up to eight children, plus an extra adult for each additional eight children. (See [Working with under 8s](#) below.)
- For 8s to 14s, we recommend two adults for up to eight children, plus an extra adult for each additional twelve children.
- For 14s and over, we recommend a minimum of two adults present.
- Additional adults may be needed for some activities – especially if outdoors or where a particular group of young people, or the nature of the activity, requires a greater level of supervision.

There should always be at least one Leader or Helper aged 18+ present who is the same sex as the young people present at an activity. To satisfy this requirement, especially in an emergency, Main Leaders could use an occasional helper of the appropriate sex – see *Using other adults as occasional helpers at Group meetings, on trips and residential* in [Section 2](#) for more details.

It is left to the discretion of the Main Leaders to decide when it is acceptable for young people to be engaged in activities without Leaders/Helpers being physically present all the time – in such cases supervision is aided by the use of clear rules or instructions.

Young people should never be left in the sole charge of Helpers under 18.

Guidelines for one-to-one situations, home visits and transporting young people

Whenever possible an individual Leader/Helper should not be left alone with a young person.

- If this is essential (e.g. when confidentiality is important) then another adult should be nearby, doors should be left open, or they should be visible to others, for example.

Individual young people should not visit the home of a Leader or Helper alone.

- Arrangements should be made for at least one other adult to be present and only groups of young people should be allowed to visit the home.
- Parents should always be aware when their children are visiting the home of a Leader or Helper.

Leaders/Helpers should not visit a young person's home unless at least one parent/carer is present all the time.

Ensure that arrangements for transporting young people are with the knowledge and approval of the parents.

- If transporting a young person alone, it is best if they always sit in the back.
- For more information about using vehicles for Group activities see [Section 11](#).

Guidelines for appropriate conduct with young people

Leaders and Helpers should treat all young people with dignity and respect.

- Any form of game or comment that may appear sexually provocative should be avoided.
- Young people should be managed and disciplined without the use of physical punishment, ridicule or scapegoating.
- Leaders/Helpers should treat all young people equally, without exercising favouritism.
- Young people who become overly attached to a Leader/Helper should be encouraged to form friendships with other adults and peers in the group.

The level of personal care must be appropriate to the age and needs of the young person.

- When giving first aid, applying sun cream etc. the young person should be encouraged to do what they can manage themselves, but appropriate help should be given where necessary bearing in mind their best interests.
- The privacy of young people should be respected, especially when they are using the toilet, showering or getting ready for bed on residential activities, for example.

Physical contact between adults and young people should follow safe procedures, be appropriate to the needs of the young people and not be open to misinterpretation.

- Where physical contact is needed to demonstrate certain skills, help with the use of safety equipment etc. then care should be taken to use physical contact appropriately and to the minimum level required.
- If a young person feels intimidated or uncomfortable with any form of physical contact, then it should be stopped.
- Any form of physical contact that is intrusive or inappropriate should be avoided.
- A young person who is dangerously out of control and not responding to any calming measures may need to be physically restrained in order to protect themselves or others from harm. For further information see the *Dealing with difficult or disruptive behaviour* section further down.

Entrances/access points to the premises where a Group meets should be monitored and only those with permission should be allowed in the areas used by young people.

Sleeping arrangements on residential should be organised so that adults and young people do not share the same rooms/tents. If this would create a potential safety-related risk, or preclude a young person with additional needs from attending a residential, then please contact Urban Saints' Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@urbansaints.org for advice.

If a Leader or Helper sees another member of their team acting with young people in a way that may be misconstrued, they should speak to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator about their concerns.

- Teams should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows everyone to feel comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
- If a Leader/Helper needs help understanding safe practice with young people, then they should ask a more experienced member of the team for advice.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Young people can sometimes become so disruptive that their behaviour endangers themselves and others. This section gives advice on what to do in such a situation but also suggests ways of avoiding them in the first place.

What to do if a young person is likely to cause harm to people or property

In an emergency it is permissible to take the minimum necessary physical action to prevent injury to any person, or even to prevent serious damage to property, but such action should be used as a last resort. If there is serious concern for the safety of people or property and the leadership are unable to 'defuse' a really challenging situation, then it may be prudent to call the Police.

- In all such cases a record of the incident should be made on an *Accident/Near Miss/Incident Form* – click [here](#) to download a copy of the Form.

What to do if a young person leaves a Group meeting without permission

With younger children, the duty of care of Leaders/Helpers may well extend to having agreements that no child should leave the premises before the end of a session without a parent's permission. The younger the child the greater the duty of care.

- If a child under 13 is adamant that they are going to leave a session early then the leadership team should telephone the child's parents and ask them to collect their child or give permission for the child to leave on their own. A full record of the call should be logged. In order to keep the child on the premises, locking the doors is preferable to using physical restraint. If the parents cannot be contacted and the child becomes aggressive or impossible to control the Police may be contacted for advice.
- If a young person aged 13 or over is adamant that they are going to leave a session early, then no attempt should be made to physically restrain them. They should be encouraged to phone their parents to seek permission to leave. If the young person refuses to do this and tries to leave then the leadership team have little choice but to let them go, but they should immediately telephone the parents to advise them of the situation and then make a full record of the call on an Accident/Near Miss/Incident Form – click [here](#) for a copy. The young person's parents are deemed to be responsible for his/her refusal to stay or telephone them.

Avoiding confrontation and managing low-level disruption

Calming techniques and activities used by teachers and others who work with young people professionally are very useful at defusing situations and allowing young people to 'cool off' in a managed way so that they don't become dangerously disruptive. Some youth groups have a 'quiet area' where young people who are feeling stressed may go (under supervision) to allow them time and space to calm down. Having some calming activities there can be really helpful – here are some ideas and links for further reading:

- Create a Calming Toolkit – a large lunchbox is ideal containing things like bubble-wrap, stress balls, cards containing simple breathing exercises, art materials, etc. The websites below give lots more practical ideas.
- Help for dealing with stress in Primary age children: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/helping-kids-keep-calm> and <https://www.weareteachers.com/mind-body-skills/>
- Helpful ideas that could be used/adapted for all ages: <https://gozen.com/>

Volunteer youth and children's leaders often find it helpful to use the techniques adopted in schools for managing young people. This is particularly true when it comes to dealing with low-level disruptive behaviour since managing it well can often stop it leading to confrontational situations.

- If poor behaviour is becoming an issue in an Urban Saints' Group, then good practice is to ask for help from an experienced teacher or other professional before things get out of hand – asking for help is not a sign of weakness.
- Many websites for teachers offer practical advice about building good relations with young people and managing disruptive behaviour effectively, e.g. <https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/>

WORKING WITH UNDER-8S

Generally speaking, groups/clubs across the UK run for under 8s attending without a parent/carer are normally required to register with a government body in the applicable nation and comply with certain regulations.

- Groups/clubs working with under 8s are exempt from registering if those children attend without a parent/carer for less than 2 hours per day – this exemption is permitted in all nations and can apply to Urban Saints' Groups.
- In England and Northern Ireland groups/clubs are also exempt from registering if they provide religious study or activities, which would apply to Urban Saints' Groups.
- The regulations for working with children under five are usually much more stringent and so we recommend taking advice from the local Early Years department of your local authority (or equivalent) if you want to work with under 5s.

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

Information to follow