



**NATIONAL POLICIES  
FOR  
CREATING  
A  
SAFE  
ENVIRONMENT  
FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
IN THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN  
ENGLAND & WALES**

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## INTRODUCTION

The following policies and procedures for clergy, religious, paid and volunteer workers in the Church Community in England and Wales are issued with the intention of ensuring that we take all reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people can participate fully in the wide range of pastoral, social and other general activities in an environment in which they will be safe from harm and abuse. This is the responsibility of the whole church community and is in accordance with the National Policy Statement on Child Protection (see Child Protection Policy Document).

These Policies and Procedures have been written to coincide with and complement the thirteen principles recommended in "Safe from Harm"\* and endorsed in "A Programme for Action"\*\* (Recommendation 21). The sections of the document derive from these principles, some of which are addressed in other National Child Protection Policy documents.

For the first time the contents pull together in one document existing best practice in creating a safe environment. In many cases, therefore, the contents will already be familiar to those working with children and young people in church settings.

This policy does not undermine loving and affectionate relationships between adults and children within the Church. On the contrary, it is produced in order to give confidence to adults and children alike that the Church is a safe environment and that knowing what is expected, as defined in the Code of Conduct, will allow healthy loving relationships to flourish without fear. 'Loved and safe' can rightly be the expectation of all who provide and receive care in our church today.

\* Safe From Harm: A Code of Practice for Safeguarding the Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales, Home Office, 1993.

\*\* A Programme for Action: Final Report of the Independent Review on Child Protection in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. September 2001.

## **SECTION A            POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFEGUARDING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

### **1            POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFEGUARDING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

- 1.1** The Catholic Church in England and Wales has adopted the national policy statement on child protection that is recommended by Lord Nolan – ‘*A Programme for Action*’. It appears at the beginning of the National Child Protection Policy document.

### **2            DEFINITION: CHILD/YOUNG PERSON**

- 2.1** In law in England and Wales, and in accordance with the Children Act 1989, a child or young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 years.  
All children and young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse.

### **3            NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT**

- 3.1** Parishes/Activities/Organisations may wish to display a more informal version of the policy statement, which appears on page 7.
- 3.2** Parishes/Activities/Organisations will also display contact details of individuals with specific responsibility for child protection e.g. Local Child Protection Representative, Child Protection Officer, Child Protection Co-ordinator and contact arrangements for Pastoral Care. It is found on page 8.
- 3.3** Dioceses and Religious Congregations will ensure that parents and carers of children and young people involved in Church activities are advised that there is a policy statement on safeguarding children and young people and that this can be made available by the Local Child Protection Representative. It is found on page 7.
- 3.4** In accordance with their age and understanding children and young people participating in Church activities will be informed that there is a child-friendly policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. It is found on page 8.
- 3.5** Strategies to share the policy statement with children and young people will be devised, taking into account any specific needs i.e. language, culture, physical impairment and/or learning disability.

**(Name of parish/organisation) is committed to the child protection policies of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, to protect children and young people from neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse and to promote a safe environment for them.**

**This commitment flows from the fact that we are all made in the image of God and the Church's common belief in the dignity and uniqueness of every human life.**

**We start from the principle that each child has a right to expect the highest level of care and protection, love, encouragement and respect that we can give.**

**We will liaise closely with statutory agencies to ensure that any allegations of abuse that may occur are promptly reported and properly dealt with, victims supported and perpetrators held to account.**

Every child or young person who comes to Church (name activity) is important. All the adults must make sure

- You are treated well and with respect
- You are listened to
- You are safe

If you are unhappy, muddled, confused, worried, hurt or frightened about anything that happens at Church (name activity), where you live or anywhere else you go, we want to help.

The people you can tell are:-

- Somebody in your family or where you live.
- A leader who you feel listens to you in the Church (name activity).
- Your Local Child Protection Representative (insert name, contact details and location).
- Your Child Protection Officer/Child Protection Co-ordinator (insert name, contact details and location).
- Somebody at school.
- An independent person (where appropriate, insert name and details).
- Child Line /NSPCC.
- Children's Commissioner for Wales (insert details - applicable to Welsh Dioceses only).

You will not get into trouble at Church (in the youth group etc) for telling about something that is making you unhappy, muddled, confused, worried, hurt or frightened. It sometimes takes a lot of courage to tell.

Local Child Protection Representative (insert contact details)

Child Protection Co-Ordinator/Officer (insert contact details)

NSPCC – 0800 800 500 or 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH

NSPCC – Welsh language Helpline – 0808 1002524

NSPCC – Bengali/Sylehti – 0800 096 7714

NSPCC – Gujarati Helpline – 0800 096 7715

NSPCC – Hindi Helpline – 0800 096 7716

NSPCC – Punjabi Helpline – 0800 096 7717

NSPCC – Urdu Helpline – 0800 096 7718

NSPCC – Asian Helpline service in English – 0800 096 7719

NSPCC – Textphone service (for deaf people) – 0800 056 0566

Website Address: [www.There4me.com](http://www.There4me.com) – computer based service run by NSPCC by which young people can “speak” to a counsellor on-line or [www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk](http://www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk) – computer based service run by NSPCC by which young people can access advice.

Child Line – Free phone 0800 11 11 or Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR

Children's Commissioner for Wales (Applicable to Welsh Dioceses only) —

Oystermouth House, Charter Court, Phoenix Way, Llansamlet, Swansea SA7 9FS.

01792 765600 or

Penrhos Manor, Oak Drive, Colwyn Bay, Conwy LL29 7YW. 01492 523333

Other local and specialist resources i.e. local helpline or Church Action on Disability

**Code of conduct for adults involved in contact with children and young people.**

**You must:**

- operate within the Church's principles and guidance and any particular procedures of the Diocese, Religious Congregation, Parish or Club.
- treat all children and young people equally and with respect.
- engage and interact appropriately with children and young people.
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow – an environment which allows bullying, inappropriate shouting or any form of discrimination is unacceptable.
- respect a child or young person's right to personal privacy.
- recognise that particular care is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children and young people e.g. maintain appropriate boundaries.
- avoid situations that compromise your relationship with children and young people, and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust. This rule should apply to all such behaviours including those which would not constitute an illegal act.

**You must not:**

- discuss topics or use vocabulary with children and young people which could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents or another adult.
- arrange an overnight trip with a child or young person without ensuring that another approved person will be present.
- take a chance when common sense suggests another more prudent approach.
- Physically, emotionally or sexually abuse or exploit any child.

## **SECTION B CHOOSING EMPLOYEES & VOLUNTEERS**

- 1 TREAT ALL WOULD-BE PAID STAFF & VOLUNTEERS AS JOB APPLICANTS, FOR ANY POSITION INVOLVING CONTACT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**
- 1.1.1 It is not easy to identify those who are likely to abuse children and young people. Any procedure that helps to clarify details of a person's background and experience can help with identification and can raise awareness levels in the organisation generally. Those who have engaged in abuse of children are often very skilled in the arts of deception and can be very plausible. The same should be applied regardless of the level of responsibility or the duration of appointment of a role involving contact with children and young people.**
- 1.1.2** All staff and volunteers working with children and young people will be selected in accordance with the National Criminal Record Bureau Policies and Procedures Documents and in line with the Guidelines on Equality and Diversity (CBCEW, 2004).
- 1.1.3** Appointments will be made on the basis of a person's experience and ability to perform the role rather than on the urgency of the need or the availability of the applicant.
- 1.1.4** Safe from Harm recommends:
  - a. treating all would-be employees and volunteers as job applicants for any role involving contact with children and young people.
  - b. taking up references.
  - c. exploring all applicants' suitable experience of/contact with children and young people in an interview before appointment.
  - d. finding out whether an applicant has any convictions for criminal offences against children and young people.
  - e. making paid and volunteer applicants' appointment conditional on the completion of a probationary period.
- 1.1.5** The National Policy and Procedure on CRB Disclosures issued in 2003 deals in detail with the way these recommendations are carried out in the Church, by:
  - a. the completion of a standard application form.
  - b. the provision of 2 written references from suitable sources.
  - c. the recorded verification of the applicant's identity.
  - d. an interview with a minimum of 2 people.
  - e. the completion of a Confidential Declaration Form by the chosen applicant.
  - f. application for a CRB Disclosure.
  - g. the recording and storage of the applicant's details on the national database.
- 1.1.6** The use of standard national forms ensures that all necessary precautions for the obtaining, storage and retention of information about applicants meets the requirements of The Data Protection Act 1998 and the Criminal Record Bureau's (CRB) legal requirements.
- 1.1.7** It is essential to treat all documentation relating to these application processes in strict confidence.
- 1.1.8** "A Users Guide to CRB Disclosure" is available from all Child Protection Co-ordinators' offices for local guidance on the CRB Disclosure Procedure.
- 1.1.9** Training and advice is provided by Child Protection Co-ordinators and Child Protection Officers in all Dioceses. For Religious Congregations, CRB Disclosures are completed by the Conference of Religious Counter-Signatory's Office.
- 1.1.10 No-one should have unsupervised contact with children or young people until references and a clear CRB Disclosure have been received.**

## 2 REFERENCES

The use of a standard national reference form ensures that all necessary questions are asked. References from relatives, the current parish priest or the leader of the group applied for, are not acceptable. All references should be sought directly from the referee; generic references or those addressed "To whom it may concern" are not acceptable. Those appointing are responsible for satisfying themselves that references are authentic. Negative or ambiguous statements in references must be followed up by the appointer, and recorded.

## 3 INTERVIEWS

- 3.1.1** Interviews for volunteer roles will be informal and conducted in a relaxed and inclusive manner. They will cover the following topics:
- relevant knowledge and experience.
  - attitude and aptitude.
  - sensitivity and behaviour towards others.
  - awareness and understanding of safeguards in working with children and young people.
  - gaps or patterns in work history and reasons for moving between posts.
  - verification of identity.
  - receipt of Confidential Declaration Form.
- 3.1.2** A brief record of the date and content of the interview should be kept confidentially with the Application Form (**see CRB policies section 5 and Appendix 14**). Child Protection Co-ordinators and Child Protection Officers can give guidance on appropriate storage and retention of these documents. In order to minimise any risk to children and young people, where doubts exist about the suitability of a volunteer, the appointment should not be made.

## 4 CRIMINAL RECORD BUREAU DISCLOSURES

- 4.1.1** Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from working in a paid or unpaid capacity within the Catholic community. (**See CRB policies Section 3**).
- 4.1.2** We are committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity for all with the right skills, experience and potential and we welcome applications from a wide range of people, including those with a criminal record.
- 4.1.3** However, there are a number of roles, notably those involving work with children and young people, where it is imperative to have knowledge of any offences or behaviour that may indicate the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.
- 4.1.4** Each applicant and existing paid staff, clergy, religious and volunteer must complete a Confidential Declaration Form in respect of any previous criminal offences.

**Guidance on these can be obtained from the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer. (See Appendix 3A and 3B CRB policies).**

- 4.1.5** Every successful applicant for any role in relation to significant contact with children and young people must undergo a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure **and must not commence in post until receipt of satisfactory Disclosure.**

**Guidance on this process can be obtained from the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer. (See Section 5 CRB policies).**

- 4.1.6 Failure on the part of the applicant to supply information requested or to agree to undertake a CRB Disclosure must result in the individual not being employed or not involved in work with children or young people.
- 4.1.7 When an individual changes role within the Church and moves into a position of contact with children and young people, policies about choosing suitable staff and volunteers should be applied, including conducting a CRB Disclosure, in line with National CRB policies and procedures. **This principle must also be applied when a young person reaches the age of 18 and takes on a leadership role or is in a position to have significant or unsupervised contact with children and young people.**

## 5 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- 5.1 A probationary period for all people appointed to work with children and young people contributes to vigilance. It also gives an opportunity for leaders to ensure the person's capability of undertaking the role and of understanding and working in accordance with the guidelines and principles for the protection of children and young people.
- 5.2 A suitable probationary period would be a minimum of 3 months and maximum of 12 months or for the duration of the activity. The length should be dependent on the nature and duration of the post and individuals should be advised of this in writing upon appointment.
- 5.3 More frequent supervision should take place during a probationary period.
- 5.4 Initial induction, including training in the National Child Protection Policies and Procedures, must take place during the probationary period.

## SECTION C TRAINING

### 1 TRAIN EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS, THEIR LINE MANAGERS OR SUPERVISORS, AND POLICY MAKERS IN THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

1.1 The Catholic Church is committed to best practice in child protection. An important aspect of ensuring children's safety and well-being is the prevention of child abuse. The role of training and raising awareness of child protection issues, policies and procedures is fundamental to the development and maintenance of a safe environment.

Training should be a facilitative and enabling process. It is also a mechanism for the Church to actively demonstrate its responsibility and commitment to both children and young people and those who serve them

Training or awareness-raising should be available to all those involved in working with children and young people. This will provide individuals with knowledge and skills and so increase their confidence to perform their role. Training also provides a forum for individuals to seek clarification about their role and national policies.

1.2 Appropriate induction and training in child-protection awareness, best practice, policy and procedures must be made available to all those working with children, their line managers or supervisors, policy makers, church leaders and those in key roles whether clergy/religious, lay, full or part-time, paid or volunteers.

This list should not be regarded as exhaustive and should be amended as necessary.

1.3 Training should be adequate, sufficient and commensurate to the role that is being performed and the level of responsibility of the individual. The church undertakes to facilitate training that is appropriate to the role and to ensure the provision of adequate material, resources and support mechanisms.

1.4 Training should not be regarded as a 'once only' activity. Skills and awareness need on-going development and the relevant Child Protection Commission must ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to track and record the delivery and updating of skills and awareness training.

1.5 Appropriate training should cover policies, procedures, awareness and skills.

The following topics should be considered as guidelines and are not exhaustive:-

- a. The Nolan Report, child protection procedures and other relevant policies.
- b. Creating a safe environment.
- c. Safe recruitment.
- d. Recognising and responding to child abuse.

Practical 'scenario based' training will be essential for practitioners at local level in order to develop confidence in the procedures and policies and the ability of volunteers in particular to manage activities involving children.

1.6 **Individuals must not engage in work with children and young people until they have received basic awareness training on child protection procedures.**

1.7 Arrangements should be in place to ensure parents and parishioners are given information to enhance their ability to safeguard children's welfare e.g. local seminars on child protection.

1.8 Arrangements should be in place to ensure children and young people are given information about their rights and responsibilities (see page 8).

## **SECTION D      MANAGING EMPLOYEES, OFFICE HOLDERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

### **PART ONE**

#### **1      CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF PROTECTION POLICIES TO ALL EMPLOYEES, OFFICE HOLDERS AND VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**

All National Child Protection Policies and Procedures, and CRB Policies and Procedures apply equally to all employees, office holders (clergy and religious) and volunteers working with children and young people in the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

Recruitment and selection policies and procedures are detailed in the CRB Policy and Procedures Document.

The selection of candidates for the priesthood and for religious life is undertaken through rigorous national procedures agreed by the Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious.

Roles, responsibilities, lines of accountability and training requirements for those with Child Protection responsibilities are described in the Organisational Structures Section of the National Child Protection Policy Document.

### **PART TWO**

#### **2      CLEAR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

##### **2.1      A lack of clarity about the role of an individual, and about accountability to ensure people are operating according to their role, allows those who are abusive to create the conditions where abuse can occur without others becoming aware that something is wrong. **IN THIS CONTEXT, IT IS NOT RELEVANT WHETHER SOMEONE IS AN EMPLOYEE OR A VOLUNTEER.****

The Catholic Church in England and Wales is committed to the good practice of giving all employees and volunteers a clear description of their specific roles in their contact with children and young people.

##### **2.2      Every employee or volunteer who works with children or young people will have a job description.**

##### **2.3      As a minimum a job description should include:-**

- a. a description of their work.
- b. a list of responsibilities, including responsibility to familiarise themselves with National Child Protection Policies and Procedures.
- c. their duty to minimise the risk of abuse and maximise vigilance.

##### **2.4      For voluntary workers, job descriptions do not have to be very formal or lengthy.**

##### **2.5      More formal and extensive job descriptions will need to be drawn up for paid appointments by the employing body.**

##### **2.6      Employees and volunteers should sign a document to indicate that they have received and understood the job description and agree to adhere to the National Child Protection policies and procedures. This should be retained by the Local Child Protection Representative.**

**A sample document can be found at Appendix A.**

**2.7** Any contact that an individual has with a child/young person in a particular role must be within the confines of that role and responsibility and in accordance with the Code of Conduct, **(Section E, Part Two: 2.6)**.

**2.8** Every job description should be reviewed annually by the person or the body that made the original appointment to ensure it still adequately represents the role.

### **3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS**

Where clergy or religious have a specific ministry with children or young people a job description will be created (e.g. School Chaplain).

## **PART THREE**

### **4 MONITORING AND SUPPORT IN CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

**4.1** The Catholic Church is committed to providing support to all those involved in working with children and young people and to having a clear structure of accountability. In the context of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, this section provides guidance about using structure and so creating accountability in order to safeguard children and young people.

Having systems of support and accountability in place allows the Church to actively demonstrate its responsibility and commitment to both children and young people and those who serve them.

**4.2** There are three main elements of monitoring and support essential to the effective protection of children and young people, and each of these should be covered in the arrangements, although there may be varying emphases according to the needs of particular groups. These are:

- a. information about policies and procedures.
- b. opportunities to review practice and receive feedback/validation.
- c. training and development.

**4.3** It is the responsibility of the Bishop/Congregation Leaders to ensure that suitable, development and oversight is made available to clergy and religious.

It is good practice that clergy and religious with responsibilities for children and young people are given written information about arrangements for advice and support in child protection matters. This may include individual sessions, group meetings or training events.

As a minimum it should contain:

- a. the name of the person(s) from whom information, advice and support can be sought, whether on a routine or particular basis.
- b. the arrangements for seeking advice in an emergency.
- c. the arrangements for giving and receiving information.
- d. the arrangements for monitoring and review and appraisal.
- e. the arrangements for individual or group support.

**4.4** It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Commission to ensure that all employees and volunteers involved in specific children's activities have a clear structure for support/supervision with appropriate proportions of the three elements identified in 4.2. This may be provided by the Commission itself, the relevant employer, or by local arrangement for parish workers.

For those subject to an annual appraisal, the worker's knowledge of child protection should be assessed including:

- a. awareness and application of procedures.
  - b. ability to relate to children and young people.
  - c. strengths and achievements.
  - d. identifying any training or development needs.
- 4.5** The support, development and monitoring arrangements for Child Protection Co-ordinators and Officers are described in the Organisational Structures Policy and the Child Protection Commission is responsible for its provision.
- 4.6** Responsibility for employees' support, development and monitoring rests with the employer, who will seek advice where necessary from the Child Protection Co-ordinator or Officer where additional or specialist support is needed.

## **5 LOCAL CHILD PROTECTION REPRESENTATIVES**

- 5.1** The support of Local Child Protection Representatives is the responsibility of the Child Protection Co-ordinators/Child Protection Officers.
- 5.2** The Local Child Protection Representatives should have written information about the arrangements for advice and support for reviewing and monitoring their work and for training. This can be a simple document and could form part of a letter of appointment.

### **A sample document can be found at Appendix A.**

As a minimum it should contain:

- a. the name of the person(s) from whom information, advice and support can be sought, whether on a routine or particular basis.
  - b. the arrangements for seeking advice in an emergency.
  - c. the arrangements for giving and receiving information.
  - d. the arrangements for monitoring and review and appraisal.
  - e. the arrangements for individual or group support.
- 5.3** Owing to the numbers involved, individual support sessions may not be practical except in special circumstances. Any alternative arrangements should be clearly stated and may include:
- a. meetings facilitated by the Child Protection Co-ordinators/ Child Protection Officers.
  - b. telephone meetings.
  - c. support meetings arranged by the representatives.
  - d. training events that also provide opportunities for support and sharing experience.
  - e. newsletters/mail shots.
- 5.4** At least once a year the Child Protection Commission should review the support available to Local Child Protection Representatives and the most appropriate form of evaluation of individual performance in the Local Child Protection Representative role.

## **6 VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES**

- 6.1** For volunteer workers it is clear that the Local Child Protection Representative does not have responsibility for their line management but is responsible for ensuring that children's activities are run safely and allegations responded to appropriately.
- 6.2** It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Commission to ensure that arrangements are in place for the child protection support of volunteers involved in children's activities. They may delegate responsibility for the supervision of volunteers to the event leader.
- 6.3** Effective supervision in this context includes:
- a. making sure that policies and practice are understood and adhered to.
  - b. that the people involved understand their child protection roles and responsibilities.
  - c. giving information and advice and identifying any training needs.
  - d. giving support to the volunteer workers, especially in dealing with any anxieties and stresses involved.

## **7 EVENT LEADERS & OTHER VOLUNTEERS**

- 7.1** All event leaders and other volunteers should be given written information about the arrangements for their support development and monitoring their work. This can be a simple document and should form part of a letter of appointment.

### **A sample letter document can be found at Appendix A.**

As a minimum it should contain:

- a. the name of the person(s) from whom information, advice and support can be sought, whether on a routine or particular basis.
  - b. the arrangements for seeking advice in an emergency.
  - c. the arrangements for giving and receiving information.
  - d. the arrangements for monitoring and review and appraisal.
  - e. the arrangements for individual or group support
- 7.2** Support for an event may include:
- a. meetings facilitated e.g. by the Local Child Protection Representative/Diocesan Youth Leader/Diocesan RE Team/Directors of Youth Choirs.
  - b. support meetings arranged by the event leaders.
  - c. newsletters/mailshots.
  - d. training events which also provide opportunity for support and sharing experience
- 7.3** Local Child Protection Representatives and clergy/religious have a particular responsibility for identifying and reporting any concerns about event leaders and other volunteers to the Child Protection Co-ordinator or Officer.

## SECTION E      MANAGING THE ORGANISATION

### PART ONE      MINIMISE SITUATIONS WHERE THE ABUSE OF CHILDREN MAY OCCUR BY PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

#### 1      DEFINITIONS

*The following procedures apply whenever children and young people under-18 take part in Church-organised events or activities. These will be referred to as 'events' throughout but are divided into 4 categories so they are relevant and user-friendly in respect of each event/activity.*

##### **Category A              Parish      Events/Activities**

This category includes one-off events and regular meetings specifically for children and young people **in the parish** and which are usually **indoors**.

Examples include:

- **Catechetics, including communion and confirmation classes**
- **Children's liturgy**
- **Youth groups**
- **Prayer meetings**
- **Charity fund-raising events**

##### **Category B              Miscellaneous**

This category refers to unplanned/informal contact with Children and Young People and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

##### **Category C              Day Trips and Outings**

This category refers to groups belonging to a parish or a Church organisation undertaking a **day trip** or **outing**. These events are non-residential

##### **Category D              Residential Events**

This category includes parish groups and Church organisations that take part in **residential** events.

Examples include:

- **Youth residentials and holidays**
- **Children's camps**
- **Retreats**
- **Pilgrimages**

It is expected that each Diocese/Religious Congregation/Organisation has its own Health and Safety policy that has been approved by its insurance company and that the requirements of this policy are met in full.

The Health and Safety procedures contained in this document are to be viewed as an extension of the existing Health and Safety Policy of the Diocese/Religious Congregation. Each Diocese/Religious Congregation/Organisation agrees to adopt these policies and procedures, and inform their Insurance Company.

This should be made explicit and it is therefore recommended that relevant Trustees complete the following statement at local level:-

“By resolution (insert reference) dated (insert date) the Trustees of (insert Diocese/Religious Congregation) adopted the following policies and procedures for application within such Diocese/Religious Congregation.”

A list of useful resources and contact numbers is contained in **Appendix P** at the end of this policy.

## SECTION E MANAGING THE ORGANISATION

### PART TWO

#### 2 CATEGORY A - Parish Events

This category includes one-off events and regular meetings specifically for children and young people **in the parish** and which are usually **indoors**.

Examples include:

- **Catechetics, including communion and confirmation classes**
- **Children's liturgy**
- **Youth groups**
- **Prayer meetings**
- **Charity fund-raising events**

It also includes unplanned/informal contact with Children and Young People and the Sacrament of Reconciliation

#### 2.1 PREPARING FOR AN EVENT

One person, the event leader, should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event. In particular, he or she should:

- a. ensure that appropriate approval is obtained and as necessary complete Approval for Events and Activities form (**Appendix B**) with the Parish Priest or Leader of the Organisation. This form should be completed prior to the event.
- b. ensure an initial risk assessment appropriate to the planned event/activity is carried out prior to the event taking place. First aid provision should be part of the risk assessment.

**Appendix C contains a risk assessment pro-forma and guidelines on risk assessment.**

- c. ensure that the existing insurance arrangements are adequate for the intended activity.
- d. ensure that the leaders are appointed in accordance with the recruitment procedures and are properly prepared for the event.
- e. keep a register of meetings, the children/young people and adults present and a brief record of the activities undertaken.

**Sample recording sheet can be found at Appendix D.**

- f. keep a record with up-to-date relevant information on the children and young people attending the event e.g. health needs.
- g. ensure that those with parental responsibility understand any arrangements for collecting the children/young people at the end of the event.
- h. evaluate the event as appropriate to aid learning and development and refer any issues to the appropriate individual/body.

#### 2.2 CONSENT

- 2.2.1 For activities where parents and carers are in the vicinity, e.g. children's liturgy, no written consent form is required. The parent or carer exercises parental responsibility by virtue of their close proximity to the event.

- 2.2.2** For activities where parents or carers are not in the vicinity, e.g. youth groups, the person with parental responsibility for each child or young person under 18 will be required to complete and sign forms containing the following:
- a. a general consent form which details the planned event.
  - b. consent to group/activity photos.
  - c. any relevant medical information.
  - d. an emergency contact telephone number.
  - e. acknowledgement of the co-responsibility of those with parental responsibility to ensure reasonable behaviour during the event.

**Appendix E contains a consent form.**

## **2.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 2.3.1** The event leader must ensure that:
- a. the premises are appropriate for the intended activity and monitor risks throughout the activity and take appropriate action as necessary.
  - b. a first aid kit is available.
  - c. the children/young people are briefed at the start of the event/activity and wherever possible involve them in setting any general behavioural guidelines or establishing a Code of Conduct for their behaviour.
  - d. fire evacuation procedures need to be explained.
  - e. an incident report form is completed within 24 hours of an accident or incident.

**an accident is defined as** "An unplanned, unforeseen, unexpected and unintended event, which results in injury to people or damage to property."  
**an incident** is more general and is an event that has an undesirable consequence be it involving physical impact or a "near miss."

**Appendix F contains an incident form and this must be forwarded to the person who approved the event.**

- 2.3.2** During the event, the leaders should:
- a. ensure that no unauthorised person can gain access to the event.
  - b. introduce themselves to the children and young people present.
  - c. ensure that transport arrangements as agreed with parents and detailed on the consent form are adhered to.
  - d. allow no child/young person to leave with someone unknown to the leaders.

## **2.4 SUPERVISION**

- 2.4.1** It is important to have an appropriate ratio of adult supervisors to children/young people. The factors to consider are:
- a. age and gender of group members.
  - b. children with special needs.
  - c. first aid cover.
  - d. nature of the activity.
- 2.4.2** There must always be a **minimum of two adults** linked to every group for all activities and events. **A general guide** for minimum supervision ratios provided by the DfES is:
- a. 1 adult leader for every 3 children under 5.
  - b. 1 adult leader for every 6 children under 8.
  - c. 1 adult leader for every 10-15 children aged 8-11.

- d. 1 adult leader for every 15-20 children aged over 11.

Consideration must be given to increase supervision ratios as appropriate to the needs of the children and young people or the nature of the activity.

Where the group activity involves **planned** separation into smaller groups, the sub-groups should remain in close proximity to each other to allow for an adult leader to summon the help of another adult. This also enables the leaders in the sub-group to monitor each other so as to safeguard the interests of both the children and adults involved.

- 2.4.3** Young people under eighteen are welcome and encouraged to assist with events/activities. Their involvement must be monitored so that they do not have the responsibilities of a group leader or are used to meet the supervision criteria above. The more responsibilities entrusted to them the more prepared they must be for their role.

## **2.5 LOCATION**

- 2.5.1** Any meeting with children and young people must always be held in a public place and with a minimum of two adults present.

A **public place** for the purposes of this policy is defined as an area which is:  
visually accessible (e.g. through a window) and not behind a closed door  
or  
frequented by other people (e.g. staff room / kitchen, sports hall).

- 2.5.2** It is accepted that unforeseen circumstances (e.g. an accident) may arise whereby it is not possible to maintain the presence of two adults. For this reason care needs to be taken in the planning stage when selecting an adequate number of leaders and the venue for the event/activity.

If this does occur, the situation must be reported to another leader (where applicable the group leader) and be recorded to safeguard the interests of both the children and adults concerned.

## **2.6 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct as set out on page 9 is not exhaustive and cannot cover every eventuality. It is intended to provide a minimum framework for good practice when providing activities and events specifically for children and young people. The Code of Conduct must be displayed in all church premises where activities involving children take place.

## **2.7 DISCIPLINE**

Discipline should be viewed as a way of helping children achieve self-control and not as a punishment. Group leaders should agree consistent approaches to discipline. Under no circumstances is physical chastisement acceptable.

**Guidance on managing children's behaviour can be found in Appendix G**

## 2.8 PHYSICAL CONTACT

- 2.8.1 Physical contact between an adult and a child should reflect the child's needs and not the adult's. Guidance on appropriate physical contact can be found below.
- 2.8.2 Although generally speaking physical contact between adults and the children or young people with whom they are working will not be appropriate, there are occasions when it may be entirely appropriate and proper. It is crucial, however, that they only do so in ways appropriate to their role.

A 'no touch' approach is both inappropriate and impractical.

There should therefore be a culture of 'limited touch'.

This means that when physical contact is made with children or young people this should be in response to:

- a. their needs at the time.
  - b. of limited duration.
  - c. appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, and their cultural and religious background.
- 2.8.3 Appropriate physical contact will occur most often with younger children and with children or young people who have additional needs.
  - 2.8.4 Those working with children and young people must **always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny**.
  - 2.8.5 All groups should have a system for recording any physical contact with a child that may be different in some way from the normal or may be considered to be open to criticism, and adults involved will ensure that they record any such physical contact.

### 2.8.6 Guidance on Physical Contact Between Children and Adults

- a. Any physical contact should take place in public except in a situation where this would be undignified or insensitive, for example, a young child attending a Children's Liturgy Group who urgently needs to use the toilet and there may not be time to seek the assistance of the parent. It will be necessary in that situation to act immediately and in as dignified a manner as possible.
- b. Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others (except in exceptional circumstances when they need urgent medical attention).
- c. Physical contact should never be secretive, nor for the gratification of the adult. It should always reflect the child's needs and not the adult's.
- d. Even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. This is especially so where a child has experienced previous abuse or neglect. The child may associate physical contact with these past experiences and may wrongly interpret otherwise appropriate physical contact.
- e. Never touch a child in a way that may be considered indecent.
- f. Avoid any physical contact that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or child.
- g. Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.
- h. If it is necessary for physical contact to occur regularly with an individual child or young person, for instance a very young child or a child with additional needs, this should be agreed with the parent and the group leader. Otherwise there is a danger that this regular contact may be misinterpreted.

- i. When physical contact is considered appropriate, seek the child's permission, where feasible, before initiating contact. Listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact that is appropriate to the situation and acceptable to the child, for the minimum time necessary.
- j. If you are helping, comforting or reassuring a child who is in distress and this requires physical contact, remain self aware at all times and ensure that the contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Discreetly inform your co-worker or group leader and do not isolate yourself from your co-worker or group leader. Record any situation that may give rise to concern.
- k. A child may sometimes seek physical contact from an adult inappropriately. This may happen, for instance, where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. The adult must deal sensitively and appropriately with this, helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries, and inform the group or activity leader.
- l. Try to avoid being cornered by a child or young person who is inappropriately seeking physical contact. The adult must deal with the situation gently and sensitively, reinforcing the importance of personal boundaries, and informing event leaders.
- m. Some children who have learning difficulties or learning disabilities are very affectionate, even to strangers. The adult must deal with the situation gently and sensitively and inform event leaders.
- n. In a group, team members, as part of good practice, should monitor one another in relation to physical contact. They should feel able to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misunderstood or uncomfortable for a child/young person.
- o. If an adult engages in inappropriate touch with a child/young person this must be challenged. If there are concerns about an adult's contact with a child or young person, advice must be sought through the Local Child Protection Representative from the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer.

## **2.9 USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS/IMAGES OF CHILDREN**

**Full guidance on the use and display of images of children and young people can be found in Appendix H**

- 2.9.1** This guidance builds on existing Policy Guidance on the Display of Photographs of Children and Young People in Churches and Church Buildings in England and Wales.
- 2.9.2** When photographs/images of children and young people are taken/recorded during an activity or event, care is required to ensure that the images appropriately represent the Catholic Church and do not put children at risk.
- 2.9.3** The most important factor to consider is the improper/illegal use of images of children and young people.
- 2.9.4** It is necessary to obtain the consent of the person with parental responsibility and that of the child or young person (where s/he is of an age to give "informed consent").
  - a. This will be done prior to making or displaying images of children and young people.
  - b. Parents should be advised that images of their children may be made and their consent sought before they can be displayed.

**The written consent of the parent/carer is included in the general parental consent form (Appendix E).**

## 2.10 ANTI-BULLYING

With a view to the prevention of bullying, each group/organisation must adopt an anti-bullying policy and ensure that it is adhered to and made available.

**A sample anti-bullying policy can be found at Appendix J**

## 2.11 COMPUTERS

**2.11.1** Where children and young people have access to computers as part of Church activities, the event leader has a duty to ensure that;

- a. measures are in place to ensure that the likelihood of children and young people accessing inappropriate materials is reduced e.g. parental controls and software to filter out internet material.
- b. children and young people are aware that their personal details e.g. last name, address, school, passwords, email address and telephone numbers are private and should not be disclosed unless approval is given by the event leader.
- c. children and young people know that they should never send photographs and should be wary of chat rooms.
- d. children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader about any e-mails or anything on line that makes them feel uncomfortable or bothers them.
- e. children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader and their parent/carer of a request to meet up with someone they have met on line and not to make plans to do so without alerting an adult and never go alone to such planned meetings.
- f. children and young people are advised of a code of conduct for using chatrooms.

A sample code is CHAT

C = Careful	People online might not always be who they say they are.
H = Hang	Hang on to your personal information. Never give out your home address or other information.
A = Arranging	Arranging to meet can be dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure who they are.
T = Tell	Tell your friends or an adult if you find something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

More detailed guidance is available from NCH at:

NCH  
85 Highbury Park  
London  
N5 1UD  
0207 704 7106  
[www.nch.org.uk](http://www.nch.org.uk)

or alternatively a code of conduct can be found at [www.bt.com/education/funstuff](http://www.bt.com/education/funstuff)

**2.11.2** Where use of a computer uncovers unsuitable and/or illegal information, the event leader must contact the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer as soon as possible. They will assess whether the matter should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation at [www.internetwatch.org.uk](http://www.internetwatch.org.uk). The Internet Watch Foundation has been set up to combat illegal use of the internet.

## **2.12 DRUGS-RELATED INCIDENTS**

Prior to the event, each group /organisation must devise guidelines to manage situations where it is discovered that children or young people are involved in drugs-related incidents.

**Guidance on managing drugs-related incidents can be found at Appendix K**

## **2.13 ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY**

For all accident and emergency procedures, see sections **5.17–5.17.4** contained in **CATEGORY D**

## **SECTION E      MANAGING THE ORGANISATION**

### **PART TWO**

#### **3      CATEGORY B      MISCELLANEOUS**

##### **3.1      UNPLANNED/INFORMAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CHURCH SETTINGS**

###### **3.1.1      Definition of Church Setting**

Church settings include buildings or properties such as church, parish halls, presbyteries, religious houses, convents, monasteries, pastoral centres, retreat houses and the like.

**N.B This policy does not cover school premises, which have their own policies.**

- 3.1.2** The very nature of church buildings, religious houses and those who work in them should give a sense of safety and security. For this reason, even when church premises are being used by individuals and groups not normally associated with them, the church authorities have a responsibility for ensuring a safe and secure environment.

When this is unavoidable, any significant contact should be reported as soon as possible.

##### **3.2      VISITING CLERGY**

This policy applies to all who live/work whether temporarily or permanently in church settings. Temporary roles include visiting clergy and religious. The Supply Priest Policy (Policies of Supply Priest and Testimonial of Suitability) must be followed where appropriate in this case.

This requires that a Testimonial of Suitability is taken up by the Bishop or the Head of the Religious Congregation. A copy of this policy is available from your Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer and the Vicar General's Office.

Visiting clergy and religious and all other temporary visitors must adhere to the child protection policies and the Code of Conduct for contact with children and young people (see page 9).

Temporary or permanent roles may also include part-time housekeepers, lodgers/tenants, house-minders (when the priest is on holiday), volunteers who for whatever reason spend a good deal of time on church premises.

Those in charge of individuals of groups and clubs who are not part of the organisational structure of the church but who use the premises on a regular basis or one off basis. Adults who may be involved on a casual basis as individuals or with such groups e.g. disc jockey, outside speaker, cleaners, gardeners, handy-men.

### **3.3 VISITORS TO THE PRESBYTERY**

- 3.3.1** The Presbytery has a dual function, as a private residence and for public functions e.g. pastoral work. These functions should be kept separate.
- 3.3.2** Those whose roles involve them in work within the presbytery, such as housekeepers, secretarial/parish staff etc. and with whom parishioners may come in contact, should have job descriptions and be recruited in accordance with Church policies.
- 3.3.3** Lodgers/tenants, house-minders and visitors staying for a substantial period of time must have suitable references. The Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer should be consulted as to whether a CRB check is required in some circumstances. A written agreement should be drawn up as to the expectations of their conduct.
- 3.3.4** This does not apply to short or occasional visits by friends or family members where there would be no question of them being regarded as having any role of responsibility for the presbytery or parish.
- 3.3.5** Visitors to the presbytery must adhere to the Code of Conduct with children (see page 9).

### **3.4 VISITORS TO THE PARISH CENTRE/GROUNDS**

- 3.4.1** The Local Child Protection Representative will either be a member of the parish team that runs the Parish Centre and grounds, or have an agreement with them that whenever there are non-parish activities involving children and young people, the team will inform the Local Child Protection Representative so that he/she can act accordingly.
- 3.4.2** Where a non-parish based group uses Church premises on a regular basis, the Local Child Protection Representatives must ascertain that they have a child protection policy in place for their organisation, including proper recruitment procedures for their leaders/helpers, and that references and CRB checks have been obtained. Evidence of this must be provided and continued use of the premises must be subject to this condition. Any group that does not have its own procedures will be required to follow those of the Church.
- 3.4.3** A written agreement should be devised with non-parish based groups using church premises detailing that they have Child Protection measures in place and their agreement to adhere to these measures.

#### **Appendix L contains an agreement to be used.**

- 3.4.4** When an adult has contact with children/young people during any single event organised by the parish (e.g. children's entertainer), the Local Child Protection Representative will ensure that the individual responsible for the event manages the situation so that the individual in question does not have unsupervised contact with children/young people or vulnerable adults. The individual must also adhere to the Code of Conduct (see page 9).
- 3.4.5** Occasionally, church premises are used by non-parish-based groups that include children and young people who use the hall on a casual basis e.g. children's parties. In these circumstances, written agreement is required pointing out that this is a private booking, and that the adults organising the event or those with parental responsibility for the children or young people present will exercise a supervisory function and are responsible for ensuring that the children and young people are safeguarded.

### **3.5 VISITORS TO RELIGIOUS PREMISES (RELIGIOUS HOUSES AND OR THEIR CENTRES OF APOSTOLIC WORK)**

Religious premises have a dual function as a community residence and for public functions e.g. pastoral work these functions should be kept separate. Those whose roles involve them in work within the religious premises such as housekeepers, secretarial/other staff etc. and with whom members of the public may come into contact should have job descriptions and be recruited in accordance with Church policies.

Lodgers/tenants, house minders and visitors staying for substantial periods of time must have suitable references. The Child Protection Link person should be consulted as to whether a CRB is required in some circumstances. A written agreement should be drawn up as to the expectations as to their conduct.

This does not apply to short or occasional visits by friends or family members or other members of the Religious Congregation where there will be no question of them being regarded as having any role of responsibility for the house or apostolic work. Visitors to the premises must adhere to the Code of Conduct with Children (see page 9).

The Local Superior or Director of Apostolic Work must ensure that whenever an external group or individual uses the religious premises for their activities that the group or individual have adequate child protection policies in place. Any group or individual that does not have its own procedures and policies will be required to follow those of the Church. Where an external group uses religious premises on a regular basis the Local Superior or Director of Apostolic Work must ascertain that they have a Child Protection Policy in place for their organisation, including proper recruitment procedures for their leaders/helpers, and references and CRB checks have been obtained. Evidence of this must be provided and continued use of the premises must be subject to this condition. Any group that does not have its own procedures will be required to follow those of the Church.

A written agreement should be devised with external groups using religious premises detailing that they have Child Protection measures in place and their agreement to adhere to these measures.

#### **Appendix L contains an agreement to be used.**

When an adult has contact with children/young people during any single event organised by the Religious Congregation (Children Entertainer) the Local Superior or Director of Apostolic Work will ensure that the individual responsible for the event manages the situation so that individual in question does not have unsupervised contact with children/young people or vulnerable adults. The individual must also adhere to the Code of Conduct (see page 9).

Occasionally religious premises are used by external groups that include children/young people who use the hall on a casual e.g. children's parties. In these circumstances, written agreement is required pointing out that this is a private booking and the adults organising the event, or those with parental responsibility for the children or young people present, will exercise a supervisory function and are responsible for ensuring that the children and young people are safeguarded.

### **3.6 KNOWN OR ALLEGED ABUSERS IN THE PARISH OR LOCAL COMMUNITY**

- 3.6.1** When information is received that an such individual is worshipping or wishes to worship in a particular parish or religious house the matter must be referred immediately to the Local Child Protection Representative, Religious Superior or Director of Apostolic Work, who will refer to the Child Protection Officer or link person as appropriate. Contact with children and young people must be avoided until directed by the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Child Protection Officer.

**Further guidance on managing this situation can be found in the Pastoral Care Policy.**

### **3.7 SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

- 3.8** Children and young people should be able to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a way that is both in accordance with the nature of sacramental confession and offers protection to both themselves and the confessor.

A variety of means can be adopted to achieve this goal. These are:

- a. public penitential services.
- b. use of the traditional confessional box where there is a fixed grill or a separate entrance for the priest and penitent.
- c. an area where either the penitent or the priest is within sight, although not within hearing of others.
- d. behind a "frosted" screen. It should be in a location where other adults are present although these adults should not be behind the screen with the penitent and the priest. This will be required when a deaf child is celebrating the Sacrament so that their conversation cannot be observed.

When deciding which approach is adopted, consideration should be given to the child's needs, wishes and feelings; e.g. older children may wish to use a traditional confessional box as opposed to celebrating the sacrament face-to-face. The confessor is free to exercise his personal choice in accordance with 3.7. Whatever the choice, it must be in accordance with the principle of creating a safe environment.

The Code of Conduct (see page 9) applies to priests celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation with children and young people.

- 3.9** A priest hearing a confession must take care that he does not confirm a mistaken sense of responsibility in an individual who has experienced abuse. He should also be aware that the disclosure of child abuse during the Sacrament of Reconciliation raises child protection issues.

**The relevant extract from the Responding to Allegations policy is set out below for information:**

#### **DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE AND THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

The following guidance is issued in accordance with current sacramental practice.

1. The Sacrament of Reconciliation offers the penitent the seal of absolute confidentiality; in this context alone is the Priest bound to keep secret what is disclosed. Knowledge of the information is for the Priest, the penitent and God. Where there is involvement of an interpreter, e.g. during the confession of a deaf person, a duty of complete confidentiality is extended to this person. Information gained in the context of the sacramental confession may not be used in any other forum. Disclosure of an incident of sexual abuse in the context of the sacramental confession is very rare but a Priest must know what to do in these circumstances.
2. Be aware of the guidance offered in Section 1 in respect of disclosure of abuse by a child or by an adult. Always reassure the person that he or she has acted properly in seeking help from you.
3. A Priest must be clear with the penitent about the status of a conversation. Make sure there is no misunderstanding about whether the Seal of Confession applies.

4. An abused person is a victim or survivor of abuse and as such is not guilty of any sin in respect of the abuse suffered. In part, their healing relies on the recognition of this fact. Abusers will often tell their victims that they are to blame and that they will be punished if they tell of the abuse. The Priest should help the victim/survivor to place the responsibility where it belongs, i.e. with the offender.
5. Survivors and victims of abuse will usually need help. From within the context of the sacramental confession the Priest can encourage the penitent to seek such help outside the sacrament. They should also be given encouragement to pass on the information to an appropriate person. It is not the Priest's role to engage in counselling in the context of the sacramental confession, even if he is appropriately professionally qualified to do so, since this leads to a confusion of roles and might give rise to conflicts of interest for himself and the penitent.
6. If an abuser discloses his or her activities to a Priest in the confessional, the Priest must inform the penitent that the addictive nature of abusive behaviour will demand external intervention and that he or she must seek help and advice outside of the context of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
7. The person disclosing abuse should always be advised that they should bring this matter to the attention of the Statutory Authorities and that the diocesan CPC can help in making any necessary contacts.
8. The Priest should ask for action consistent with a firm purpose of amendment as a constituent of a penance. He should direct the penitent to make contact with an appropriate person outside of the Seal of the Confessional, so that matters may be properly addressed.
9. If the Priest is subsequently contacted by the penitent, outside of the Seal of the Confessional, the Priest must make it clear to the penitent that the Seal of Confession no longer applies. If the information is repeated (he should not assume knowledge gained in the confessional), the Priest must explain that he has a duty of care to children who may be at risk of abuse and he must take all necessary steps to ensure their safety.
10. If an abuser discloses his or her abuse outside of the sacramental confession, the procedures described in Section 1 must be followed, including informing the CPC or
11. CPO and ensuring referral to the Police and Social Services immediately.

**3.10** In the preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, children will learn about the "Sacramental seal", by which a confessor is bound to keep secret all that is said to him. The priest cannot insist that such secrecy binds the penitent, who has the right to speak outside the confessional, especially if the penitent considers what was said has gone beyond the requirement of sacramental practice.

## SECTION E      MANAGING THE ORGANISATION

### PART TWO

#### 4      CATEGORY C      DAY TRIPS AND OUTINGS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This category includes groups belonging to a parish or a Church organisation undertaking a **day trip** or **outing**. These events are non-residential.

##### 4.1      PREPARING FOR THE EVENT

One person, the event leader, should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event. The event leader is responsible for ensuring that all reasonable preparation has been made for the event, and must:

- a. ensure that appropriate approval is obtained and complete the Approval for Events or Activities Form (**Appendix B**) with the Parish Priest or leader of organisation.
- b. prepare the programme and as appropriate conduct research or visit the venue in advance to check for suitability and potential problems.
- c. choose the day and time of the event carefully.
- d. check on the event venue's own policies to ensure they can be adhered to.
- e. check that the event and transport arrangements are covered by insurance. Insurance should include public liability.
- f. ensure that all leaders are appointed in accordance with the recruitment policies and procedures.
- g. ensure that the leaders and helpers are properly prepared for the event and their responsibilities.
- h. ensure that the leaders are aware of the Child Protection and Health and Safety procedures relevant to the event.
- i. draw up rotas to ensure that sufficient leaders are available so that children are adequately supervised at all times.
- j. ensure that any instructors or workshop leaders within the group or at the event venue are suitably qualified for specialised activities.
- k. ensure that the person with parental responsibility understands and complies with the transport arrangements for the children/young people upon return from the event.
- l. ensure that the children's appropriate details are available in case of emergency.
- m. establish a system of liaison between the day trip and parents.
- n. ensure that the person with parental responsibility is informed of the date and time of the event and is given a contact number and address of the event venue.
- o. brief the children/young people at the start of the event and wherever possible, involve them in setting any general behavioural guidelines or establishing a code of conduct for their behaviour.
- p. evaluate the event soon afterwards to aid learning and development.
- q. be aware that although mobile phones are a useful means of communication the signal cannot always be relied upon. This should be taken into account when conducting a risk assessment.

##### 4.2      CONSENT

- 4.2.1** A person with parental responsibility for each child/young person under 18 will be required to complete and sign forms containing the following:

- a. a general consent form for the planned event. Certain higher risk events, as identified in the risk assessment, will require a specific consent form – if in doubt seek advice from your insurance company/provider.
- b. consent to group/activity photos.
- c. medical information – particularly that relevant to the planned activities.
- d. emergency contact telephone numbers.
- e. acknowledgement of the co-responsibility of those with parental responsibility to ensure reasonable behaviour during the event.

**Appendix E contains a consent form.**

The event leader must ensure that consent forms are taken with the group to the event.

The event leader must ensure that each child/young person under 18 attending the event receives a list of items they will need to bring and must not bring.

**4.3 HEALTH & SAFETY**

- 4.3.1** There must be a designated leader who will oversee health and safety issues. He or she must ensure a risk assessment appropriate to the planned event is carried out prior to the event taking place. Where appropriate, this should include obtaining a copy of the event venue's own risk assessment. First Aid provision should form part of the risk assessment.

**Appendix C contains a risk assessment pro-forma and guidelines on risk assessment.**

The event leader must:

- a. ensure all children and young people are aware of where to contact an adult in an emergency at any time.
- b. liaise with the other leaders regarding health and safety issues or concerns.
- c. complete head counts throughout the duration of the day.
- d. in the event of an accident or incident, ensure that an incident report form is completed by the relevant person(s), whether that be the medical officer, a 'first-aider' or the person present at the time of the incident.

**an accident is defined as** "An unplanned, unforeseen, unexpected and unintended event, which results in injury to people or damage to property."  
**an incident** is more general and is an event that has an undesirable consequence be it involving physical impact or a "near miss."

**Appendix F contains an incident report form and this must be forwarded to the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer.**

- e. in the event of an injury or other incident, ensure that all relevant staff based at the event venue are informed and their incident forms are completed.
- 4.3.2** The event must have a designated leader who will oversee medical issues. A first aid kit and medical details should be accessible to the leaders at all times. All leaders should have access to a full list of children/young people and leaders attending the event in case a roll call is required.

The Health and Safety Executive recommends the following minimum contents for a

first-aid box where no special risk has been identified:

- a. a leaflet giving general advice on first aid.
- b. six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings.
- c. one large sterile unmedicated wound dressing approximately 18cm x 18cm.
- d. two triangular bandages.
- e. two safety pins.
- f. individually wrapped moist cleaning wipes.
- g. one pair of disposable gloves.
- h. a resuscitator (for hygienic mouth to mouth resuscitation) would also be useful.

#### **4.4 SUPERVISION**

**4.4.1** It is important to have an appropriate ratio of adult supervisors to children/young people. The factors to consider are:

- a. age and gender of group members.
- b. children with special needs.
- c. first aid cover.
- d. nature of the activity.

**4.4.2** There must always be a **minimum of two adults** linked to every group for all activities and events. **A general guide** for minimum supervision ratios provided by the DfES is:

- a. 1 adult leader for every 3 children under 5
- b. 1 adult leader for every 6 children under 8
- c. 1 adult leader for every 10-15 children aged 8-11
- d. 1 adult leader for every 15-20 children aged over 11

Consideration must be given to increasing supervision ratios as appropriate to the needs of the children and young people or the nature of the activity.

Where the group activity involves **planned** separation into smaller groups, the sub-groups should remain in close proximity to each other to allow for an adult leader to summon the help of another adult. This also enables the leaders in the sub-group to monitor each other so as to safeguard the interests of both the children and adults involved.

**4.4.3** Young people under eighteen are welcome and encouraged to assist with events/activities. Their involvement must be monitored so that they do not have the responsibilities of a group leader or are used to meet the supervision criteria above.

#### **4.5 SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES**

Specialist activities (e.g. abseiling, swimming, canoeing etc.) must always take place under the supervision of suitably qualified staff and explored in the risk assessment. The activity provider is responsible for the safe running of an activity whilst the event leader and other leaders retain responsibility for children and young people at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff.

#### **4.6 LOCATION**

**4.6.1** Any meeting with children and young people should always be held in a public place, with a minimum of two adults present.

A **public place** for the purposes of this policy is defined as an area which is: visually accessible (e.g. through a window) and not behind a closed door or frequented by other people (e.g. staff room/kitchen, sports hall).

- 4.6.2 It is accepted that unforeseen circumstances (e.g. an accident) may arise whereby it is not possible to maintain the presence of two adults. For this reason care needs to be taken in the planning stage when selecting an adequate number of leaders and the venue for the event/activity.

If this does occur, the situation must be reported to another leader (where applicable the group leader) and be recorded to safeguard the interests of both the children and adults concerned.

#### 4.7 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct (see page 9) is not exhaustive and cannot cover every eventuality. It is intended to provide a minimum framework for good practice when providing activities and events specifically for children and young people. The Code of Conduct must be displayed in all church premises where activities involving children take place.

#### 4.8 DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be viewed as a way of helping children achieve self-control and not as a punishment. Group leaders should agree consistent approaches to discipline. Under no circumstances is physical chastisement acceptable.

**Guidance on managing children's behaviour can be found at Appendix G.**

#### 4.9 PHYSICAL CONTACT

- 4.9.1 Physical contact between an adult and a child should reflect the child's needs and not the adult's. Guidance on appropriate physical contact can be found below.
- 4.9.2 Although generally speaking physical contact between adults and the children or young people with whom they are working will not be appropriate, there are occasions when it may be entirely appropriate and proper. It is crucial, however, that they only do so in ways appropriate to their role.

A 'no touch' approach is both inappropriate and impractical.

There should therefore be a culture of 'limited touch'.

This means that when physical contact is made with children or young people this should be in response to:

- a. their needs at the time.
  - b. of limited duration.
  - c. appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, and their cultural and religious background.
- 4.9.3 Appropriate physical contact will occur most often with younger children and with children or young people who have additional needs.
- 4.9.4 Those working with children and young people must **always be prepared to explain in actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.**

**4.9.5** All groups should have a system for recording any physical contact with a child that may be different in some way from the normal or may be considered to be open to criticism, and adults involved will ensure that they record any such physical contact.

#### **4.9.6 Guidance on Physical Contact Between Children and Adults**

- a. Any physical contact should take place in public except in a situation where this would be undignified or insensitive, for example, a young child attending a Children's Liturgy Group who urgently needs to use the toilet and there may not be time to seek the assistance of the parent. It will be necessary in that situation to act immediately and in as dignified a manner as possible.
- b. Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others (except in exceptional circumstances when they need urgent medical attention).
- c. Physical contact should never be secretive, nor for the gratification of the adult. It should always reflect the child's needs and not the adult's.
- d. Even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. This is especially so where a child has experienced previous abuse or neglect. The child may associate physical contact with these past experiences and may wrongly interpret otherwise appropriate physical contact.
- e. Never touch a child in a way that may be considered indecent.
- f. Avoid any physical contact that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or child.
- g. Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.
- h. If it is necessary for physical contact to occur regularly with an individual child or young person, for instance a very young child or a child with additional needs, this should be agreed with the parent and the group leader. Otherwise there is a danger that this regular contact may be misinterpreted.
- i. When physical contact is considered appropriate, seek the child's permission, where feasible, before initiating contact. Listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact that is appropriate to the situation and acceptable to the child, for the minimum time necessary.
- j. If you are helping, comforting or re-assuring a child who is in distress and this requires physical contact, remain self aware at all times and ensure that the contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Discreetly inform your co-worker or group leader and do not isolate yourself from your co-worker or group leader. Record any situation that may give rise to concern.
- k. A child may sometimes seek physical contact from an adult inappropriately. This may happen, for instance, where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. The adult must deal sensitively and appropriately with this, helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries, and inform the group or activity leader.
- l. Try to avoid being cornered by a child or young person who is inappropriately seeking physical contact. The adult must deal with the situation gently and sensitively, reinforcing the importance of personal boundaries, and informing event leaders.
- m. Some children who have learning difficulties or learning disabilities are very affectionate, even to strangers. The adult must deal with the situation gently and sensitively with this and inform event leaders.
- n. In a group, team members, as part of good practice, should monitor one another in relation to physical contact. They should feel able to help each other by

- pointing out anything that could be misunderstood or uncomfortable for a child/young person.
- o. If an adult engages in inappropriate touch with a child/young person this must be challenged. If there are concerns about an adult's contact with a child or young person, advice must be sought through the Local Child Protection Representative from the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer.

#### **4.10 USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS/IMAGES OF CHILDREN**

**Full guidance on the use and display of images of children and young people can be found in Appendix H.**

- 4.10.1 This guidance builds on existing Policy Guidance on the Display of Photographs of Children and Young People in Churches and Church Buildings in England and Wales.
- 4.10.2 When photographs/images of children and young people are taken/recorded during an activity or event, care is required to ensure that the images appropriately represent the Catholic Church and do not put children at risk.
- 4.10.3 The most important factor to consider is the improper/illegal use of images of children and young people.
- 4.10.4 It is necessary to obtain the consent of the person with parental responsibility and that of the child or young person (where s/he is of an age to give "informed consent").
  - a. This will be done prior to making or displaying images of children and young people.
  - b. Parents should be advised that images of their children may be made and their consent sought before they can be displayed.

**The written consent of the parent/carer is included in the general parental consent form (Appendix E).**

#### **4.11 ANTI-BULLYING**

With a view to the prevention of bullying, each group/organisation must adopt an anti-bullying policy and ensure that this is adhered to.

**A sample anti-bullying policy can be found at Appendix J.**

#### **4.12 COMPUTERS**

- 4.12.1 Where children and young people have access to computers as part of Church activities, the event leader has a duty to ensure that;
  - a. measures are in place to ensure that the likelihood of children and young people accessing inappropriate materials is reduced e.g. parental controls and software to filter out internet material.
  - b. children and young people are aware that their personal details e.g. last name, address, school, passwords, email address and telephone numbers are private and should not be disclosed unless approval is given by the event leader.
  - c. children and young people know that they should never send photographs and should be wary of chat rooms.
  - d. children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader about any e-mails or anything on line that makes them feel uncomfortable or bothers them.

- e. children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader and their parent/carer of a request to meet up with someone they have met on line and not to make plans to do so without alerting an adult and never go alone to such planned meetings.
- f. children and young people are advised of a code of conduct for using chatrooms.

A sample code is CHAT

- C = Careful      People online might not always be who they say they are.
- H = Hang        Hang on to your personal information. Never give out your home address or other information.
- A = Arranging   Arranging to meet can be dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure who they are.
- T = Tell         Tell your friends or an adult if you find something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

More detailed guidance is available from NCH at:

NCH

85 Highbury Park

London

N5 1UD

0207 704 7106

[www.nch.org.uk](http://www.nch.org.uk)

or alternatively a code of conduct can be found at [www.bt.com/education/funstuff](http://www.bt.com/education/funstuff)

- 4.12.2** Where use of a computer uncovers unsuitable and/or illegal information, the event leader must contact the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer as soon as possible. They will assess whether the matter should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation at [www.internetwatch.org.uk](http://www.internetwatch.org.uk). The Internet Watch Foundation has been set up to combat illegal use of the internet.

#### **4.13 DRUGS-RELATED INCIDENTS**

Prior to the event, each group /organisation must devise guidelines to manage situations where it is discovered that children or young people are involved in drugs related incidents.

**Guidance on managing drugs-related incidents can be found at Appendix K.**

#### **4.14 TRANSPORT**

##### **4.14.1 Supervision**

The following procedures apply whenever the children are on minibuses, coaches or other forms of transport:

- a. whatever vehicle is being used, the driver must not be responsible for the supervision of the children and young people in the vehicle.
- b. the group leader is responsible for ensuring his or her group is properly supervised while they are travelling on the vehicle.
- c. any other leaders should distribute themselves to ensure all children can be supervised.
- d. drivers should ensure that all passengers are wearing seat belts before setting off.
- e. after the driver has set off, all the leaders must ensure that all seatbelts are worn throughout the journey.

- f. if the driver considers the behaviour of any passenger dangerous, he or she should stop as soon as practicable.

#### **4.14.2 Hiring Vehicles**

- 4.14.2.1 The event leader is responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Professional operators of buses and coaches are legally required to be licensed. The event leaders must ensure that the operators have the appropriate public service vehicle (PSV) operators' licence.
- 4.14.2.2 When booking transport, the group leader should ensure that seat belts are available for pupils. All minibuses and coaches which carry groups of 3 or more children aged between 3 and 16 years inclusive must be fitted with a seat belt for each child. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)  
Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DR

- 4.14.3 Seat belts are not legally required on buses. Buses, where seat belts are not fitted, are not normally appropriate for visits involving long journeys.

#### **4.14.4 Accessibility**

If any of the group uses a wheelchair, the event leader must ensure that transport used has appropriate access and securing facilities. It may be appropriate to use portable ramps.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)  
See 4.14.2.2 for contact details.

#### **4.14.5 Licences and Permits**

The event leader must ensure that the driver of any vehicle has the correct entitlement on their licence. For drivers of minibuses, entitlement can be checked by referring to the DVLA website at: - [www.dvla.gov.uk/drivers/drvmibus](http://www.dvla.gov.uk/drivers/drvmibus) or by referring to the booklet "Passenger Transport Provided by Voluntary Groups" available from Traffic Area Offices or from the DVLA website. The event leader should also ensure that appropriate motor insurance is in force for any vehicle being used, and that the drivers conform to the motor insurers' requirements.

The Local Traffic Commissioners can provide advice about licences.

#### **4.14.6 Use of own minibus**

Some organisations use their own minibuses for short frequent journeys and sometimes for longer trips. Minibuses have a maximum capacity of 16 seated passengers plus the driver. They must comply with the various regulations about construction and fittings. A forward facing seat belt must be provided for each child.

The relevant regulations are the Minibus (Conditions of Fitness Equipment and Use)

Regulations 1977 and the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1996.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)  
See 4.14.2.2 for contact details.

#### **4.14.7 Private Cars**

- 4.14.7.1 Event leaders and other leaders who drive children and young people in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy and that they have the appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying children and young people.
- 4.14.7.2 The driver is responsible for making sure that children and young people have a seat belt and use it at all times. Vehicles without seatbelts should not be used.
- 4.14.7.3 Event leaders who wish to use parents/volunteers to help transport children and young people in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of children and young people in their cars.
- 4.14.7.4 Parents' agreement should be sought (on the consent form) for their children to be carried in other parents'/volunteers' cars. This is to ensure the welfare of children and young people and also in recognition of the potential vulnerability of an adult being alone with a child.
- 4.14.7.5 It is advisable that parents/volunteers driving children and young people are not put in a position where they are alone with a child or young person. The event leader should arrange a central dropping point for all children and young people rather than individual home drops.
- 4.14.7.6 If a situation arises in which an adult is unavoidably transporting a single child or young person (e.g. in a medical emergency), the child or young person should be seated in the back seat and the event should be reported to the Leader and recorded.

#### **4.14.8 Transport Abroad**

Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) can provide information on the legal requirements for travel abroad.  
See 4.14.2.2 for contact details.

#### **4.15 RECORDING**

- 4.15.1 A register of those present at each activity should be kept and stored.
- 4.15.2 A record of the event to include those present, the activities undertaken, evaluation and any other significant happenings during the event, should be kept on file.

**A sample recording sheet can be found at Appendix D.**

#### **4.16 ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY**

For all accident and emergency procedures, see sections **5.17 – 5.17.4** contained in **CATEGORY D**.

## SECTION E      MANAGING THE ORGANISATION

### PART TWO

#### 5      CATEGORY D      RESIDENTIAL EVENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This category includes parish groups and Church organisations that take part in **residential** events. Examples include:

- **Youth residentials and holidays**
- **Children's camps**
- **Retreats**
- **Pilgrimages**

##### 5.1    PREPARING FOR RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

One person, the event leader, should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event. After due discussion and consultation with other team members, the event leader is responsible for ensuring that all reasonable preparation has been made for the event, and must

- a. ensure that appropriate approval is obtained and complete Approval for Events and Activities Form with the Parish Priest or leader of Organisation (**Appendix B**).
- b. prepare the programme of activities and as appropriate conduct research or visit the venue in advance to check for suitability and potential problems.
- c. ensure that the residential venue has a current building certificate and fire certificate.
- d. check on the event venue's own policies to ensure that they can be adhered to.
- e. choose the day and time of each activity carefully.
- f. organise transport and insurance, and check that they are suitable. Insurance should include public liability and personal accident/injury. (See 5.14 for policies on transport).
- g. ensure that all leaders are appointed in accordance with the recruitment policies and procedures.
- h. all adults wishing to be involved in the residential event must have a specific role and be accountable to the event leader.
- i. appoint an event co-leader of the opposite sex for co-educational trips.
- j. ensure that any instructors or workshop leaders within the group or at the event venue are suitably qualified for specialised activities.
- k. ensure that all leaders are properly prepared for the event and their responsibilities.
- l. ensure that the leaders are aware of the Child Protection and Health and Safety procedures relevant to the event.
- m. ensure that one leader is trained in First Aid.
- n. ensure regular and ongoing discussion and consultation takes place with other team leaders.
- o. draw up rotas to ensure that sufficient leaders are available so that children are adequately supervised at all times.
- p. obtain appropriate consents (see below).
- q. ensure that all children's appropriate details are available in case of emergency.
- r. ensure that the person with parental responsibility is informed of the date and time of the event and is given a contact number and address of the event venue.
- s. ensure a system of liaison between the event and parents.

- t. ensure that the person with parental responsibility understands the arrangements for collecting the children at the end of the event.
- u. brief the children/young people at the start of the event and wherever possible involve them in setting any general behavioural guidelines.
- v. be aware that although mobile phones are useful means of communication, the signal cannot always be relied upon. This should be taken into account when conducting a risk assessment.
- w. call a post-event evaluation meeting within two months of the event, compile a report on the event and make recommendations to aid learning and development.

## **5.2 CONSENT**

- 5.2.1** A person with parental responsibility for each child/young person under 18 will be required to complete and sign forms containing the following:
- a. a general consent form for the various planned activities during the event. Certain higher risk events, as identified in the risk assessment, will require a specific consent form – if in doubt seek advice from your insurance company/provider.
  - b. consent to group/activity photos.
  - c. medical information – particularly that relevant to the planned activities.
  - d. emergency contact telephone numbers.
  - e. acknowledgement of the co-responsibility of those with parental responsibility to ensure reasonable behaviour during the event including acknowledgement of the Code of Conduct for the behaviour of children and young people.

### **Appendix E contains a consent form.**

The event leaders must ensure that consent forms are taken with the group to the event.

- 5.2.2** The event leader should ensure that each child or young person attending the event receives the following information:
- a. a list of items they will need to bring and must not bring.
  - b. the type of activities planned for the residential trip.
  - c. Code of Conduct.

## **5.3 HEALTH & SAFETY**

- 5.3.1** There should be a designated leader who will oversee health and safety issues. He or she must ensure the following:
- a. read and be familiar with all the event's health and safety documents.
  - b. ensure that all leaders have a briefing prior to the event, covering the Health and Safety policy, supervision, child protection and transport policies. Consideration should be given to the provision of first aid training.
  - c. carry out a risk assessment for all activities connected with the event prior to the event taking place and monitor for on-going health and safety issues during the event. First Aid provision should form part of the risk assessment. For residential trips a summary of the risk assessment should be forwarded to the Finance Secretary.

### **Appendix C contains a risk assessment pro-forma and guidelines on risk assessment.**

- d. ensure all children and young people are aware of where to contact an adult in an

- emergency at any time.
- e. on the first day ensure that all children and young people are briefed as to what to do in the event of a fire including assembly point.
- f. all signs are in place and that children and young people are told how to follow them.
- g. in the event of an accident or incident, ensure that an incident report form is completed by the relevant person(s), whether that be the medical officer, a 'first-aider' or the person present at the time of the incident.

**an accident is defined** as "An unplanned, unforeseen, unexpected and unintended event, which results in injury to people or damage to property."  
**An incident is** more general and is an event that has an undesirable consequence be it involving physical impact or a "near miss."

**Appendix F contains an incident report form and this must be forwarded to the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer.**

- h. in the event of an accident or incident, ensure that all relevant staff based at the event venue are informed and their incident form completed.
- 5.3.2** The event must have a designated leader who will oversee medical issues. A first aid kit and medical details should be accessible to the leaders at all times. All leaders should have access to a full list of children/young people and leaders attending the event in case a roll call is required.

The Health and Safety Executive recommends the following minimum contents for a first-aid box where no special risk has been identified:

- a. a leaflet giving general advice on first aid.
- b. six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings.
- c. one large sterile unmedicated wound dressing approximately 18cm x 18cm.
- d. two triangular bandages.
- e. two safety pins.
- f. individually wrapped moist cleaning wipes.
- g. one pair of disposable gloves.
- h. a resuscitator (for hygienic mouth to mouth resuscitation) would also be useful.

## **5.4 SUPERVISION**

- 5.4.1** It is important to have an appropriate ratio of adult supervisors to children/young people. The factors to consider are:
- a. age and gender of group members
  - b. children with special needs.
  - c. first aid cover.
  - d. nature of the activity.
  - e. accommodation arrangements.
- 5.4.2** There must always be a **minimum of two adults** linked to every group for all activities or events. **A general guide** for minimum supervision ratios provided by the DfES is 1 adult leader for every 10 children or young people. For certain activities during the residential event, the supervision ratios indicated at **(Category C, 4.4.2)** could be applied.

This should be considered in the risk assessment and be approved by the event leader.

Arrangements must be made to increase supervision ratios as appropriate to the needs of the children and young people or the nature of the activity.

Where the group activity involves **planned** separation into smaller groups, the sub-groups should remain in close proximity to each other to allow for an adult leader to summon the help of another adult. This also enables the leaders in the sub-group to monitor each other so as to safeguard the interests of both the children and adults involved.

- 5.4.3** Young People under eighteen are welcome and encouraged to assist with events/activities. Their involvement must be monitored so that they do not have the responsibilities of a group leader or are used to meet the supervision criteria above.

## **5.5 SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES**

Specialist activities (e.g. abseiling, swimming, canoeing etc.) must always take place under the supervision of suitably qualified staff and explored in the risk assessment. The provider is responsible for the safe running of an activity whilst the event leader and other activity leaders retain responsibility for children and young people at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff.

## **5.6 LOCATION**

- 5.6.1** Any meeting with children or young people must always be held in a public place with a minimum of two adults present.

A <b>public place</b> for the purposes of this policy is defined as an area which is: visually accessible (e.g. through a window) and not behind a closed door or frequented by other people (e.g. staff room / kitchen, sports hall).
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- 5.6.2** It is accepted that unforeseen circumstances (e.g. an accident) may arise whereby it is not always possible to maintain the presence of two adults. For this reason care needs to be taken in the planning stage when selecting an adequate number of leaders and the venue for event/activity.

If this does occur, the situation must be reported to another leader (where applicable the group leader) and be recorded to safeguard the interests of both the children and adults concerned.

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The Code of Conduct (as set out on page 9) is not exhaustive and cannot cover every eventuality. It is intended to provide a minimum framework for good practice when providing activities and events specifically for children and young people. The Code of Conduct must be displayed in all church premises where activities involving children take place.

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Discipline should be viewed as a way of helping children achieve self-control and not as a punishment. Group leaders should agree consistent approaches to discipline. Under no circumstances is physical chastisement acceptable.

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There should therefore be a culture of 'limited touch'.

This means that when physical contact is made with children or young people this should be in response to:

- a. their needs at the time.
- b. of limited duration.
- c. appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, and their cultural and religious background.

**5.9.3** Appropriate physical contact will occur most often with younger children and with children or young people who have additional needs.

**5.9.4** Those working with children and young people must **always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny**.

**5.9.5** All groups should have a system for recording any physical contact with a child that may be different in some way from the normal or may be considered to be open to criticism, and adults involved will ensure that they record any such physical contact.

### 5.9.6 Guidance on Physical Contact Between Children and Adults

- a. Any physical contact should take place in public except in a situation where this would be undignified or insensitive, for example, a young child attending a Children's Liturgy Group who urgently needs to use the toilet and there may not be time to seek the assistance of the parent. It will be necessary in that situation to act immediately and in as dignified a manner as possible.
- b. Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others (except in exceptional circumstances when they need urgent medical attention).
- c. Physical contact should never be secretive, nor for the gratification of the adult. It should always reflect the child's needs and not the adult's.
- d. Even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. This is especially so where a child has experienced previous abuse or neglect. The child may associate physical contact with these past experiences and may wrongly interpret otherwise appropriate physical contact
- e. Never touch a child in a way that may be considered indecent.
- f. Avoid any physical contact that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or child.
- g. Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.

- h. If it is necessary for physical contact to occur regularly with an individual child or young person, for instance a very young child or a child with additional needs, this should be agreed with the parent and the group leader. Otherwise there is a danger that this regular contact may be misinterpreted.
- i. When physical contact is considered appropriate, seek the child's permission, where feasible, before initiating contact. Listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact that is appropriate to the situation and acceptable to the child, for the minimum time necessary.
- j. If you are helping, comforting or re-assuring a child who is in distress and this requires physical contact, remain self aware at all times and ensure that the contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Discreetly inform your co-worker or group leader and do not isolate yourself from your co-worker or group leader. Record any situation that may give rise to concern.
- k. A child may sometimes seek physical contact from an adult inappropriately. This may happen, for instance, where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. The adult must deal sensitively and appropriately with this, helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries, and inform the group or activity leader.
- l. Try to avoid being cornered by a child or young person who is inappropriately seeking physical contact. The adult must deal with the situation gently and sensitively, reinforcing the importance of personal boundaries, and informing event leaders
- m. Some children who have learning difficulties or learning disabilities are very affectionate, even to strangers. The adult must deal with the situation gently and sensitively with this and inform event leaders.
- n. In a group, team members, as part of good practice, should monitor one another in relation to physical contact. They should feel able to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misunderstood or uncomfortable for a child/young person.
- o. If an adult engages in inappropriate touch with a child/young person this must be challenged. If there are concerns about an adult's contact with a child or young person, advice must be sought through the Local Child Protection Representative from the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer.

## **5.10 USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS/IMAGES OF CHILDREN**

**Full guidance on the use and display of images of children and young people can be found in Appendix H.**

- 5.10.1** This guidance builds on existing Policy Guidance on the Display of Photographs of Children and Young People in Churches and Church Buildings in England and Wales
- 5.10.2** When photographs/images of children and young people are taken/recorded during an activity or event, care is required to ensure that the images appropriately represent the Catholic Church and do not put children at risk.
- 5.10.3** The most important factor to consider is the improper/illegal use of images of children and young people.
- 5.10.4** It is necessary to obtain the consent of the person with parental responsibility and that of the child or young person (where s/he is of an age to give "informed consent").
  - a. This will be done prior to making or displaying images of children and young people.

- b. Parents should be advised that images of their children may be made and their consent sought before they can be displayed.

**The written consent of the parent/carer is included in the general parental consent form (Appendix E).**

## **5.11 ANTI-BULLYING**

With a view to the prevention of bullying, each group/organisation must adopt an anti-bullying policy and ensure that this is adhered to.

**A sample anti-bullying policy can be found at Appendix J.**

## **5.12 COMPUTERS**

**5.12.1** Where children and young people have access to computers as part of Church activities, the event leader has a duty to ensure that;

- a. measures are in place to ensure that the likelihood of children and young people accessing inappropriate materials is reduced e.g. parental controls and software to filter out internet material.
- b. children and young people are aware that their personal details e.g. last name, address, school, passwords, email address and telephone numbers are private and should not be disclosed unless approval is given by the event leader.
- c. children and young people know that they should never send photographs and should be wary of chat rooms.
- d. children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader about any e-mails or anything on line that makes them feel uncomfortable or bothers them.
- e. children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader and their parent/carer of a request to meet up with someone they have met on line and not to make plans to do so without alerting an adult and never go alone to such planned meetings.
- f. children and young people are advised of a code of conduct for using chatrooms.

A sample code is CHAT

C = Careful	People online might not always be who they say they are.
H = Hang	Hang on to your personal information. Never give out your home address or other information.
A = Arranging	Arranging to meet can be dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure who they are.
T = Tell	Tell your friends or an adult if you find something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

More detailed guidance is available from NCH at:

NCH  
85 Highbury Park  
London  
N5 1UD  
0207 704 7106  
[www.nch.org.uk](http://www.nch.org.uk)

or alternatively a code of conduct can be found at [www.bt.com/education/funstuff](http://www.bt.com/education/funstuff)

**5.12.2** Where use of a computer uncovers unsuitable and/or illegal information, the event leader must contact the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer as soon as possible. They will assess whether the matter should be reported to the Internet Watch

Foundation at [www.internetwatch.org.uk](http://www.internetwatch.org.uk). The Internet Watch Foundation has been set up to combat illegal use of the internet.

### **5.13 DRUGS-RELATED INCIDENTS**

Prior to the event, each group /organisation must devise guidelines to manage situations where it is discovered that children or young people are involved in drugs related incidents.

**Guidance on managing drugs-related incidents can be found at Appendix K**

### **5.14 TRANSPORT**

#### **5.14.1 Supervision**

5.14.1.1 The following procedures apply whenever the children are on minibuses, coaches or other forms of transport:

- a. whatever vehicle is being used, the driver must not be responsible for the supervision of the children/young people in the vehicle.
- b. the group leader is responsible for ensuring his or her group is properly supervised while they are travelling on the vehicle.
- c. any other leaders should distribute themselves to ensure all children can be supervised.
- d. drivers must ensure that all passengers are wearing seat belts before setting off.
- e. after the driver has set off, all the leaders must ensure that all seatbelts are worn throughout the journey.
- f. if the driver considers the behaviour of any passenger dangerous, he or she should stop as soon as practicable.

#### **5.14.2 Hiring Vehicles**

5.14.2.1 The event leader is responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Professional operators of buses and coaches are legally required to be licensed. The event leaders must ensure that the operators have the appropriate public service vehicle (PSV) operators' licence.

5.14.2.2 When booking transport, the group leader should ensure that seat belts are available for pupils. All minibuses and coaches which carry groups of 3 or more children aged between 3 and 16 years inclusive must be fitted with a seat belt for each child. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)  
Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DR

5.14.2.3 Seat belts are not legally required on buses. Buses, where seat belts are not fitted, are not normally appropriate for visits involving long journeys.

#### **5.14.3 Accessibility**

If any of the group uses a wheelchair, the event leader must ensure that transport

used has appropriate access and securing facilities. It may be appropriate to use portable ramps.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)  
See 4.14.2.2 for contact details.

#### **5.14.4 Licences and Permits**

The event leader must ensure that the driver of any vehicle has the correct entitlement on their licence. For drivers of minibuses, entitlement can be checked by referring to the DVLA website at: - [www.dvla.gov.uk/drivers/drmbus](http://www.dvla.gov.uk/drivers/drmbus) or by referring to the booklet "Passenger Transport Provided by Voluntary Groups" available from Traffic Area Offices or from the DVLA website. The event leader should also ensure that appropriate motor insurance is in force for any vehicle being used, and that the drivers conform to the motor insurers' requirements.

The Local Traffic Commissioners can provide advice about licences.

#### **5.14.5 Use of own minibus.**

Some organisations use their own minibuses for short frequent journeys and sometimes for longer trips. Minibuses have a maximum capacity of 16 seated passengers plus the driver. They must comply with the various regulations about construction and fittings. A forward facing seat belt must be provided for each child. The relevant regulations are the Minibus (Conditions of Fitness Equipment and Use) Regulations 1977 and the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1996.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)  
See 4.14.2.2 for contact details.

#### **5.14.6 Private Cars**

- 5.14.6.1 Event leaders who wish to use parents/volunteers to help transport children and young people in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of children and young people in their cars. Parents' agreement should be sought (on the consent form) for their children to be carried in other parents'/volunteers' cars.
- 5.14.6.2 Event leaders and other leaders who drive children and young people in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy and that they have appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying children and young people.
- 5.14.6.3 The driver is responsible for making sure that children and young people have a seat belt and use it at all times. Vehicles without seatbelts should not be used.
- 5.14.6.4 It is advisable that parents/volunteers driving children and young people are not put in a position where they are alone with a child or young person. The event leader should arrange a central dropping point for all children and young people rather than individual home drops.
- 5.14.6.5 If a situation arises in which an adult is unavoidably transporting a single child or young person (e.g. in a medical emergency), the child or young person should be seated in the back seat and the event should be reported to the Leader and recorded.

### 5.14.7 Transport Abroad

Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) can provide information on the legal requirements for travel abroad.

See 4.14.2.2 for contact details.

## 5.15 OVERNIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

**5.15.1** The following guidelines apply in residential events at night-time, once the children and young people have gone to bed:

- a. accommodation must be gender specific and careful consideration should be given when allocating.
- b. the adults supervising the children/young people must reflect the gender of the children/young people making up the group.
- c. principles of good practice apply to evening and night time supervision. For this reason, any monitoring arrangement **must** always involve 2 adults and no adult should plan to be alone with a child or young person.
- d. it is unacceptable that one leader shares a bedroom with children/young people. Children and young people may be allocated bedrooms together. This includes year 13 pupils who have passed their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, in the case of child with a profound disability or a specific medical condition, whose parents think that it is necessary for one leader to share with the child in a twin room, special care must be taken. Those with parental responsibility must give specific and detailed permission for this arrangement. In addition, the matter should be referred to the Activity Leader and the Local Child Protection Representative. In cases of any doubt the Child Protection Representative should refer the matter to the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Child Protection Officer for advice.
- e. additional leaders should be assigned to assist with supervision on the first and last night and at other times as identified in the risk assessment.
- f. leaders must ensure that they have access to children's and young person's medical records and parental consent form.
- g. there must always be a sufficient number of leaders on duty to supervise the event and appropriate cover available to supervise the children and young people should the leaders on duty be called away in an emergency e.g. to take a child to hospital.
- h. alcohol can only be available to leaders off duty and only in an area designated by the leader. Only social drinking is acceptable and that in moderation
- i. leaders must only smoke in smoking areas designated by the event leader and not in the presence of children/young people.

## 5.16 RECORDING

A record of the event to include those present, the activities undertaken, outcomes and any other significant happenings during the event, should be kept on file.

**A sample recording sheet can be found at Appendix D.**

## 5.17 ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY

### 5.17.1 MISSING CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

When there is a concern that a child or young person may be missing, the event

leader must arrange an initial search to establish if the child is in the vicinity – this should only be conducted if it is safe to do so and be dependent upon the circumstances.

If an initial search is not the appropriate action or the concern remains the event leader must:

- a. ensure the wellbeing of the remaining children; make sure that all are accounted for and properly/adequately supervised.
- b. be mindful of the circumstances - the time of year; location; weather conditions; time of day (dusk etc); age and vulnerability of the child. It is important to take prompt action and avoid panic.
- c. contact the Police without delay.
- d. the responsibility for conducting enquiries and a proper search rests with the Police - they have the experience, knowledge and resources. Their involvement should be considered at the earliest opportunity as the first hour can be vitally important and a rapid response essential.
- e. when the Police are contacted ensure that the parent/carers contact details are readily available as it is their responsibility to make contact with the parent/carer. Be prepared to assist with information that will help with the enquiries: -
- f. Name, age, description of the child/children.
- g. When and where last seen and by whom?
- h. Any known reason for their absence? Is the absence out of character?
- i. Any known places to be searched, people to be contacted?
- j. Any known medical conditions or medication required?
- k. further assistance should only be offered to the Police **after** the remaining children's welfare has been secured.

#### **5.17.2 ACCIDENT AND ILLNESS**

In order to respond to accident or illness the designated leader responsible for overseeing medical issues must ensure:

- a. all relevant emergency telephone numbers are clearly displayed around the event venue.
- b. prompt assessment of the illness/injury and appropriate action is taken. First Aid should be given, by qualified personnel if available.
- c. relevant staff at the event venue should be informed as soon as possible.
- d. the relevant medical form(s) must be taken with the child/young person to the GP or hospital.
- e. parents/carers must be contacted as soon as possible following the incident unless the circumstances require the intervention of the Police, in which case see 'Procedures for Major Incidents'.
- f. any Health and Safety issues must be recorded and any remedial action taken as appropriate.

**An incident report form can be found at Appendix F and a copy of this must be forwarded to the Child Protection Co-ordinator/Officer.**

#### **5.17.3 MAJOR INCIDENTS**

Procedures for Major Incidents.

- a. The designated leader's responsibilities are primarily to supervise and manage the children and young people. If safe to do so move the children and adults from the scene to a place of safety.

- b. As soon as it is safe to do so, contact the appropriate emergency service i.e. Police, Fire or Ambulance by calling 999. Follow the directions of any emergency service personnel.
- c. Be prepared to give as much detail as possible of the location; nature of the incident; an estimate of the number of casualties (if known); any potential hazards. Be prepared to remain on the phone – you may be a useful link until the emergency service crews arrive.
- d. Ensure emergency first aid treatment is given by qualified personnel present.
- e. Take a roll call of all children/young people and leaders present at the time of the incident. Try to locate them only if it is safe to do so. If not, inform the emergency services, when they arrive, of how many people are missing, their descriptions and likely location.
- f. Depending on the nature and scale of the incident the Police may set up a Casualty Bureau to handle information on casualties and to filter/manage calls from concerned relatives and friends. Be ready to provide any necessary details to the Casualty Bureau.
- g. It is the responsibility of the Police to inform the parents/carers of any victims. Initially, they will not contact parents /carers of those uninjured or safe. If it is safe to do so and there is access to a telephone, contact parents via the system of liaison between the event and the parents established in the planning of the event. It will be important to take the advice of the emergency services regarding arrangements for collection. Parents may not be able to get to the scene.
- h. If it is safe and practicable to do so the designated leader or another leader should make efforts to monitor the location of children and young people if they are moved from the scene.
- i. Notify the relevant church authorities who will notify the relevant Communication Officer at an appropriate time.

#### **5.17.4 FIRE SAFETY**

Procedures for fire safety

- a. All leaders must be familiar with the fire regulations and fire-fighting equipment for the event venue.
- b. Leaders will ensure that all children/young people know where the appropriate fire exits, alarms and assembly points are and are given instructions on what to do if the alarm sounds.
- c. All leaders must know the whereabouts of the nearest telephone.
- d. Children/young people must not use fire-fighting equipment.
- e. In the event of a fire alarm being raised, evacuate the building(s), move to the appropriate assembly points and take a roll call of those present.
- f. Contact the Fire Brigade or activate any automatic fire alarms if available. Be prepared to give details of the location; the nature of the incident; number of buildings/people involved and any potential hazards.
- g. Consider undertaking regular fire drills to ensure that leaders and children become familiar with the procedures, the location of the assembly points and any action to be taken.

## SECTION E            MANAGING THE ORGANISATION

### PART THREE

#### **6            ACCESS TO AN INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

- 6.1**    The development and promotion of an ethos where children and young people are listened to and valued, and adults are encouraged and supported to respond to allegations or concerns of child abuse is imperative in safeguarding children's welfare.
- 6.2**    All children and young people should be encouraged to talk to parents or leaders if there is anything worrying them. Leaders need to make it clear that this is not disloyal, but helpful, and should respond positively when this happens.
- 6.3**    Groups and organisations must have in place procedures for dealing with complaints from children and young people who are involved in church activities.

**A sample Compliments, Comments and Complaints procedure can be found at Appendix M.**

- 6.4**    Written information should be displayed (see page 8 for an example) encouraging children to share any worries or concerns they may have. This includes details of appropriate independent contacts who listen to children and young people.
- 6.5**    This important message to children and young people will be communicated to them based upon their specific needs i.e. language, culture, physical impairment and/or learning disability.
- 6.6**    All adults working with children and young people should know the name of an individual or organisation with whom they could put a child/young person in contact to discuss important matters.

## SECTION F DEALING WITH ABUSE

### 1 ISSUE GUIDELINES ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE DISCLOSURE OR DISCOVERY OF ABUSE.

- 1.1 The Catholic Church in England and Wales is committed to responding to allegations of child abuse properly and promptly. This means that allegations will be reported to the statutory authorities.

**Definitions of abuse and the procedures for responding to allegations can be found in the 'Responding to Allegations' policy including managing an allegation that is received whilst celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.**

- 1.2 Each person with a role in relation to children and young people signs a declaration that they have received and understood the procedures on how to deal with allegations or suspicions of abuse and will comply with the Church's Child Protection Policies and Procedures. The amount of information provided about the procedures should be sufficient to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded as well as being commensurate with the individual's role and responsibility in the Church.

**See Appendix N for sample document.**

- 1.3 All office holders, employees and volunteers must follow the procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

