

**Diocese of Brentwood**

**Risk assessment template**

To be completed for every Parish activity that involves children and/or Vulnerable Adults

Risk Assessments should be completed by somebody with the requisite knowledge and skills, during the planning stage of an activity or event, and approved by the event leader. A copy of the completed assessment must be kept by the Parish Safeguarding Representative (P.S.R.) and Parish Priest. This list is not exhaustive but a risk assessment should address the:

 Type of activity;

 Venue/premises – health and safety; fire safety;

 Equipment;

 Transport; is it appropriate and safe. Is the insurance valid for the activity?

 Participants; how do we protect them from contact with strangers/people not associated with the activity

 Staffing and ratios; can be found in the creating a safer environment national policy document as well as below. Ensure all volunteers

have current DBS

 Procedures; refer to the Diocesan website, safeguarding section for advice and guidance

 Health and medical needs; questions to ask include:

Are the first aid facilities and training adequate and appropriate for the activity?

Are arrangements in place for those with additional needs?

Are arrangements in place for those with medical needs, including those needing to take regular medication, and those who

have irregular sleep behaviours (such as sleepwalking)?

Are arrangements in place for those with allergies or phobias, and those who suffer from travel sickness?

Are arrangements in place for those with additional dietary needs and requirements?

 Financial risk;

 Contingency and emergency planning. Please ensure that you know how to contact Parent/carers, Police and Medical assistance. Where is the nearest A+E Department.

Environmental factors must be considered throughout the risk assessment such as whether the activity takes place indoors or outdoors, the time of day, the time of year, the weather, and other natural phenomena.

Any activities in or near water need to be particularly risk assessed and consider the competence of group leaders and other responsible adults. Ratios should be higher for these activities and at least one qualified lifesaver should be present during these activities.

Specialist activities (e.g. abseiling, swimming, canoeing etc.) must always take place under the supervision of suitably qualified staff and must be explored in the risk assessment.

The provider (Parish) is responsible for the safe running of an activity whilst the group leader and other activity leaders retain responsibility for the children, young people and adults during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff.

More information on managing risk: [www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk](http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk) and <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>

**What is the activity being assessed:**

**Date/s activity is taking place**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Parish name:** |  | **Assessment carried out by:** |  |
| **Assessor’s role (e.g. P.S.R.)** |  | **Date assessment was carried out:** |  |

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| What are the potential hazards? | Who might be harmed and how? | What are you already doing to control the risks? | What further action do you need to take to control the risks? | Who needs to carry out the action? | When is the action needed by? | Done |
| *Refer to each example listed above as well as any others specific to the activity* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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***Supervision and adult: child ratios***

Supervision should be active and continuous for the duration of the activity, including during periods outside of structured activities as well as during the activities themselves. Participants might not need to be watched always but leaders should consider the types of supervision required according to the activity.

Providing an adequate ratio of adult supervisors to children contributes to the physical and emotional safety and wellbeing of children and young people and is essential to ensuring that appropriate and safe levels of supervision are maintained. Appropriate supervision ratios also serve to support those supervising.

Factors to take into consideration when considering supervision and child: adult ratios include:

The gender, age and ability of the group;

 Additional support or medical needs;

The duration and nature of the activities;

The experience of adults in off-site supervision;

The type of any accommodation;

The competence of staff;

The requirements of the organisation or location to be visited;

The competence and behaviour of participants.

Any meeting with children, young people or adults at risk should take place in an area which is either visually accessible or is frequented by other people and there must always be a minimum of two adults linked to every group for all activities. For specific guidance relating to the Sacrament of Reconciliation see ‘Sacrament of Reconciliation’ in the national safeguarding procedures manual.

A general guide for minimum supervision ratios provided by the Department for Education (DfE) is:

One adult leader for every 3 children aged 0-2 years;

One adult leader for every 4 children aged 2-3 years;

One adult leader for every 6 children aged 4-8 years;

One adult leader for every 8 children aged 9-12 years;

One adult leader for every 10 children aged 13-18 years.

When children and young people are identified as having additional needs that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist care or support, this must be discussed with the child’s parent or carer and the child if appropriate.

Following the discussions and risk assessment, the group leader should consider increasing the levels of supervision to meet the assessed needs.

There must always be enough leaders on duty to supervise the activity and appropriate cover available to supervise children and young people should the leaders on duty be called away in an emergency e.g. to take a child to hospital. Consideration must be given to unforeseen circumstances arising (e.g. an accident) 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 activity.

If a group is left with only one adult supervisor, 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.

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.

Support ratios for adults should be based on the assessment of need. For example, the required level of support with mobility might necessitate a minimum ratio of one to one.

Young people under eighteen should be welcomed and encouraged to assist with activities but their involvement must be monitored so that they do not have the responsibility of a group leader or are used to meet the adult: child ratio requirements.

Depending on the overall size of the group participating, it should be considered as good practice for the main group to split into smaller sections to facilitate better group supervision. These sub groups should always remain near each other, to permit adult leaders being able to support each other while safeguarding the interests of all.