

F. WORKING SAFELY

1. GOOD WORKING PRACTICES

To safeguard keep our church family, we need to adopt working practices that lessen the opportunity for harm to our children and adults. This involves:

- Planning the work of the department to prevent abuse.
- Using supervision to prevent abuse.
- Teaching children to be appropriately aware of how to remain safe and who to approach to report abuse or concerns.
- Recognising and responding to concerns or disclosures of abuse.
- Undertaking risk assessments and implementing risk mitigation measures for all church activities.

The Church also promotes best practice in the taking of photographs and filming and the use of digital technology and social media across all its activities. (See [Appendix 12: Online and Digital Safety](#), and [Appendix 13\(a\): Photographs and Filming](#))

2. CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Creating safe environments for our church family is a matter of applying good working practices across all our activities. The means we should:

- (a) Arrange, as far as possible, that no adult is left alone with a child or young person without the activity being observed by others. This may mean that doors will have to be left open or that small groups work simultaneously in the same room.
- (b) Organise and monitor activities so as not to allow individuals to create relationships or arrangements that exploit or abuse a worker's position of trust in relation to an individual, e.g., an elderly person feeling obliged to pay the debts held by someone helping them.
- (c) In a one-to-one situation with a child or adult at risk, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible, another adult should be in the building, and the child or adult at risk should know they are there.
- (d) As far as possible, ensure that there are always at least two adults working with a group of children or vulnerable persons, especially when it is the only activity taking place on the premises. Consideration must be given to matching the gender of the workers with that of the group. The two-adult provision applies in changing areas and toilets, even if only one or two children are present.
- (e) Never do anything of a personal nature for children or adults that they can do for themselves. Be mindful of how and where one touches minors and adults at risk. Always seek consent before any physical touching.
- (f) Arrange when transporting children or young people by car or minibus to have more than one passenger in the vehicle. Vehicles must have appropriate seating for children (to keep them physically safe), drivers must be fully insured and age-appropriately authorised to drive the vehicle. Require leaders/workers to keep others informed if they have to drive a minor home on his/her own.
- (g) Provide an adequate number/ratio of adults to supervise events for children/young people according to the activity and especially where overnight activities are involved. There should always be more than one adult for any group and they should reflect the gender of the group. Helpers under 18 years old count as children and not adults in the ratios below. For further guidance see the OFSTED Guidelines www.ofsted.gov.uk or its equivalent within your country. An example of a minimum ratio is provided below.

For 0 to 2 years – one adult to every three children (1:3)

For 2 to 3 years – one adult to every four children (1:4) (1:5 in Scotland)

For 3 to 8 years – one adult to every eight children (1:8)

For over-8s – one adult for the first eight children, then one for every additional ten children.

- (h) Any activities involving children or vulnerable adults outside of church, or taking place online should be risk assessed and accordingly managed (see [Appendix 10\(a\) & \(b\): Risk Assessment documents](#)).
- (i) In the event of any injury to a person, accidental or otherwise, ensure that it is recorded on an Accident Form and that the record is witnessed by another adult. Ensure that any necessary health and safety actions are undertaken. For more information on see the British Union Conference [Health and Safety Policy Statement, Organisation & Arrangements](#).

3. INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDING – ADRA-UK

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the international humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church serving in 118 countries. ADRA-UK organises initiatives both at home and abroad. Its work empowers communities and changes lives by providing sustainable community development and disaster relief.

ADRA-UK's disaster response work includes services to children and adults often in urgent need. In meeting these needs, their welfare and protection are prioritised in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or regional equivalent, along with the UN's Declaration of Human Rights. ADRA-UK is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use our services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. The Safeguarding policy and procedures should be followed in conjunction with ADRA-UK's Code of Conduct and suite of safeguarding policies, specifically the Safeguarding, Child Safeguarding and PSHEA policies.

Where church activities involve work in another country, ADRA-UK must ensure that the Safeguarding policy requirements are met by all those who work for the church and that partner organisations have proper procedures in place to protect children and adults at risk. This includes completing safeguarding checks on personnel working on behalf of the church; a risk assessment, and following the Safeguarding code of conduct and all safe working practices throughout all our activities in that country. The Safeguarding requires clear and established reporting mechanisms being in place to address concerns and allegations of abuse. Additionally, ADRA-UK's work in those countries will be fully compliant with the safeguarding legislation, policies and standards of those countries as well as ADRA-UK's safeguarding policies.

Support for Volunteers and Staff

The psychological wellbeing as well as the physical safety of volunteers and staff who provide support to vulnerable groups, must also be protected. Those providing support may often be exposed to disturbing situations which are potentially traumatising. The reporting of concerns of abuse may create potential dangers due to the emotional reactions of those involved. ADRA-UK has a duty of care not only to those in need of support, but also to those who support them, and must be intentional about providing such assistance where it is required. Help may take the form of support from work colleagues or support through counselling provided by an outside agency.

Suspicion of Abuse by a Volunteer or Member of Staff

Where volunteers or staff are the subject of an allegation of abuse, appropriate support will be offered by ADRA-UK while fully complying with The Safeguarding protocols, ADRA-UK's safeguarding policies and cooperating with the statutory services during any investigation. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken where safeguarding violations have occurred.

Where a volunteer or staff member is suspected of abuse, ADRA-UK's complaints procedure will be followed.

4. THIRD PARTY HIRE OF CHURCH PREMISES

Where external organisations are using church premises, safeguarding responsibilities rests with that organization. Hire arrangements must make it clear and agreed that the organisations are to abide by the Safeguarding policy.

A summary of the policy to be used should be attached to the hire agreement. Hirers should be asked to sign a commitment to abide by our safeguarding policy, even when the organisation has its own, to acknowledge that this has been seen and will be adhered to. The church has a responsibility to ensure that health and safety obligations pertaining to the building are maintained (See [Hire of Church Premises Safeguarding Agreement](#) and [Safeguarding Policy Executive Summary](#)).

5. SAFER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Churches have a duty of care to make sure that all children who attend events and activities are kept safe, whether they are regular or one-off. When undertaking events that involve larger numbers than usual, different venues, overnight stays, or working with other groups, churches need to think about the extra measures necessary to put in place to keep children and young people safe.

Guidance for Event Organisers:

- Identify who has overall responsibility for child protection at the event or activity and how to contact them on the day.
- If you're using a venue belonging to another organisation, arrange a meeting in advance to discuss how things will run on the day and make sure your child protection and safeguarding plans are aligned.
- Anyone who is taking part in regulated activity or regulated work must have undergone a vetting and barring check.
- Get written confirmation that everyone working with children and young people has been recruited safely and has undergone the relevant checks.
- All staff and volunteers (including sub-contractors) should have completed child protection training to make sure they are able to recognise and respond to any concerns.
- Draw up a code of conduct for all the adults who are working or volunteering at the event or activity and make sure everyone understands it and agrees to follow it.
- Draw up a safeguarding and child protection plan for the event.
- Have a clear procedure for how staff and volunteers should respond to any welfare or child protection concerns that may arise during the event or activity.

Lost or Missing Children

Think about what measures you can put in place to prevent children getting lost and make sure you have clear procedures to follow if children go missing during your event or activity. Things you should consider include:

- whether you will have a designated meeting point for lost children, where this will be, how you will make sure children know about it and how it will be supervised.
- how you will contact parents or carers to inform them that their child is lost or has been found
- how you will verify that adults coming forward to collect a missing child are the child's parents or carers
- whether any of the children you are working with might need extra supervision to prevent them going missing, for example if they have a history of running away or if a learning disability means they get confused in unfamiliar places.
- who will co-ordinate the initial search for a missing child.
- who is responsible for contacting the police if necessary, and when this should happen. Refer to missing children's policy.

See [Photographing and Filming policy](#).

After the Event or Activity

Make time after the event or activity to review what happened and identify any improvements you can make to your future practice.

Health and safety

Make sure you have all the necessary health and safety measures in place. For example:

- make sure appropriate first aid cover is available
- make everyone aware of fire safety procedures
- find out as much as you can about external venues including visiting in advance wherever possible

- talk to any third party providers directly and make sure they are fully compliant with the law
- carry out comprehensive risk assessments in advance
- check that any organisations you are subcontracting to run activities comply with safety standards.

Take into account the level of ability and stage of development of the children who will be involved and think about any support they need.

More information about health and safety at events is available from the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#).

You should also make sure you have adequate insurance. If you are a member of an umbrella body or have a local council for voluntary service, they can give more information about this. The Cabinet Office provides information about insurance for voluntary and community events in its [guide to organising voluntary events](#) (Gov.uk, 2017).