

Promoting Good practice in working with children/young people
As part of our Safe to Grow policy we agree to promote good practice in all our activities and to follow the guidelines below.

1. Good practice in running activities and events.

Ratios

In all the activities, at all times – each group must ensure that there is a suitable ratio of leaders and helpers of children. These ratios vary according to the age of the children and the nature of the activity. There must also be a balance of male and female leaders in each group.

- Any helpers under the age of 18 are effectively counted as children and young people for the purpose of calculating ratios.
- The number and sizes of rooms being used during activities must also be taken into account when considering ratios.
- Recommended ratios are as follows and these are the ratios we will use when planning groups and activities

Indoor Activities

Age	0-2 years	1:3
	2-3 years	1:4
	3-8 years	1:8
	8 and over	2: 20 (1 male and 1 female, plus 1 extra adult per 10 Children and young people)

Outdoor Activities

Age	0-2 years	1:3
	2-3 years	1:4
	3-8 years	1:6
	8-13 years	2: 15 (1male and 1 female plus 1 extra adult per 8 Children and young people)
	13 and over	2:20 (1 male and 1 female plus 1 extra adult per 10 Children and young people)

Registers

- Registers will be taken at all activities (Sunday and midweek) Ensuring that this is carried out is the responsibility of the Session/Activity leader.
- Where parents and carers are not staying on the premises during an activity they will be required to register a child or teenager with a leader or helper before leaving. This registration should include contact details for the duration of the session.
- A child should not be left at a church activity unless the necessary consent forms and paperwork have been completed and handed into the leaders.

Dropping off and collection of children

- It is the parent or carer's responsibility to ensure that their child has arrived safely and is registered at an activity. In midweek activities parents should bring their children into the building and register them with the appropriate leader. They should not drop off their children on Watnall Road and allow them to make their own way into the church building.
- At the end of each session the leaders must ensure that all children/young people leave with a responsible and recognised adult.

If a young person is intending to travel to and from activities on their own, the leaders should obtain written consent from parents to say that this is the arrangement.

Transporting children and young people

- All private transport must have correct insurance for passengers. (All volunteer drivers can check this with their own company.) A maximum ratio of 1 adult to 4 children and young people is acceptable for transporting by car.
- Where Hire coaches are used, it must be ensured that the company has full insurance cover and there is a seatbelt for each person.
- Where adults are giving lifts to children/young people in their cars, wherever possible they should avoid giving lifts to children/ young people on their own. If they are alone then the child should be asked to sit in the back.
- Parents and carers will have been asked to sign a consent form in respect of the travel arrangements.
- On every trip that involves transporting children and young people, each adult should be allocated a group of children or young people with a written list of names for who they are responsible, even if the whole group is to remain together. It is best that the group should travel to and from the event with the same adult (if groups are to be changed for the return journey then new lists should be allocated.)

Overnight Activities

(The document 'Safe to Grow' has detailed guidelines for overnight arrangements both on church premises and for taking a group away. These should be consulted by those organising such an event)

Basic considerations are as follows:-

- There should be male and female leaders at the event.
- Males and females should sleep separately. (A decision should be made about whether or not the adults should sleep in the same room/area as the children and young people.)
- Where an overnight stay is involved leaders should meet together to agree how they will best protect themselves, the children and young people. (These arrangements will depend on age, numbers and premises. The agreed details should be confirmed with the Responsible Persons.)

2. Good Practice in Relationships with parents and carers

- All children and young people should be registered and parents/carers asked for details of full name, date of birth, address, contact telephone numbers. Consent forms for emergency medical treatment should be completed.
- Parents/ carers should be advised of the Safe to Grow policy of the church and given a written statement about who is caring for their child and the name and contact details of the leader.
- If a young person requests or a leader feels that a one-to-one meeting should be offered then Parents/Carers will always be advised by the leader. If parental consent is not given then the meeting would not take place.
- The parents/carers should be advised of what action would be taken if a child protection issue arises.
- There should be a clear understanding of what sort of activities the child or young person will be doing and the time limit of these.
- Arrangements for returning children/young people to their parents' care should be clarified.

3. Good Practice in relationships with Children and Young People

As leaders and helpers of children and young people the relationships we form with them are a crucial part of the care we give to them. As adults who seek to be caring and nurturing leaders and helpers we are in a place of great trust, responsibility and privilege. The details of our relationships with the children and young people in our care will be influenced by a number of factors, for example individual personalities, how well we know the children, their age and needs. However, in order to ensure their safety and ours, it is essential that we follow the good practice guidelines. All leaders and helpers will complete a DBS check.

Speaking and listening

- All children and young people will be treated with respect and dignity. We will use age appropriate language and tone of voice.
- We will listen well to the children, being careful not to assume that we know what they are thinking or feeling. We will listen to what is spoken, how it is said and observe their body language.
- If it becomes necessary to discipline and control a child this will be done without shouting.
- We will never engage in scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.

Role modelling

- We will be aware always that as leaders of the children and young people we are also role models in our actions, our relationships and our speech. At no time should anything that we say or do, either intentionally or inadvertently undermine or negatively influence their relationship or perception of others.
- In our relationships with other CYF leaders, the leaders of the church and other people in the church we will always seek to model the qualities love, grace, encouragement and forgiveness. We will take seriously that we are called to be like Jesus in the way we treat and respond to others.

- If at any time we have issues that need to be resolved between adults in the church we will do so away from the children and young people and will not discuss any details of that issue with the children and young people.
- When young people and children's groups are having times of sharing and prayer etc. we will be cautious about what we share on a personal level. As leaders we will not share in detail about our own personal relationships and life issues/ problems (instead this should be shared in appropriate peer group or ministry settings)

Physical Contact

- A sensitive approach is needed in relation to the appropriateness of physical contact between adults and children/young people in church. Church is an environment where brief hugs, kisses or an arm around the shoulder are a part of greeting one another, or offering support, reassurance or encouragement. Wisdom and sensitivity are needed to establish the boundaries of what is, or is not, appropriate. This will vary from individual to individual; according to situations, circumstances and relationships – as long as boundaries are clear and appropriate some physical contact is acceptable. E.g. there can be a genuine need to reassure a hurt or upset child by putting an arm around their shoulders; it is appropriate to give a brief hug to a teenager who shares some good news with the group.
- At all times we need to be aware that not everyone welcomes this kind of contact, including some children. To a child who has suffered abuse an innocent touch from a leader can have a more sinister meaning; if a child is shy or new to the group physical contact can make them feel extremely uncomfortable. If a child or young person cringes or responds in some other negative way to physical contact then alternative ways should be found to express concern, comfort or support.
- All adults should be aware of their own and co-workers behaviour in terms of physical contact. We should always ask, "For whose benefit is this taking place?"
- If it becomes necessary to discipline and control a child this will be done without physical punishment.
- On any occasions where a child or young person may need to be restrained to protect themselves or others, help on safe handling techniques will be sought.
- We should not engage in rough games that involve extreme physical contact between leaders/helpers and children/young people.
- If a child needs to be taken to the toilet, their privacy should not be invaded.
- If a child needs to change soiled under clothes and be washed – if possible the child's parent/carer should be brought to carry out the task. Where this isn't possible another adult should be present with the leader carrying out the task.

Personal Relationships

- As leaders and helpers we form relationships of trust with the children and young people in our care. As such we must not abuse this position of 'power'.
- Where leaders have close 'friendship' relationships with individual children or young people (perhaps due to close family ties and friendships) it is important that this does not impact the dynamics of the group. Favouritism should not be shown, closeness should not be overt and where arrangements are made that take account of the closer relationship (for example: a leader giving a lift home to a child who is a family friend.) This should be regarded as a private arrangement and made clear to the group leaders.

- It is acceptable to invite a group of young people to a leader's home as long as there is another adult present. (Ideally if the home is that of a couple there should be a third adult present...where this is not the case a member of the Ministry team should know that the group is meeting)
- It is best not to invite a child or young person into your home if they or you are alone. However, accepting that a teenager may unexpectedly arrive at a leaders home to talk through an issue seek advice in such a way that it cannot be postponed – then the leader should inform a member of the ministry team that the visit is taking place.
- It is wrong for a leader to enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a child or young person in their care. (Clearly it would be illegal with a child, but even in the context of a young leader and a 16 year old child this would not be acceptable in the context of church youth work) This would lead to a confusion of roles and a potential abuse of trust. (If a leader chooses to enter into such a relationship with a young person in their care they would be expected to immediately step down from their leadership role within the church and action would be taken within the safeguarding guidelines)
- Leaders/ Helpers should not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun.
- We should not engage in sexually provocative games.
- Leaders should not respond to excessive attention seeking behaviour that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Leaders should not discuss their own personal relationships either with or in the presence of children and young people.

4. Good practice in Health and Safety

- The Health and Safety Policy of Watnall Road Baptist Church should be adhered to at all times. This policy is available separately;
- Children and Young People should not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present. (Responsible being those who are over 18, have been checked by the DBS and are known to the children, young people parents and carers)
- As leaders and helpers we need to consider the following
 - First Aid and Accident Book – As many leaders and helpers as possible will take a basic First Aid course. All Accidents will need to be recorded and information given to parents/carers. The book will be kept in the kitchen.
 - Fire Equipment and Drill – we need to make sure that we know the Fire Exits, Assembly point and the location of Fire Extinguishers in case of fire.
 - Security – we need to ensure that children and Young People cannot leave the building unnoticed and similarly that no one can enter the building without a leaders or helper knowing.
 - Activities away from the church premises may require leaders/helpers to carry out a risk assessment before going. E.g. swimming
 - All other aspects of health and safety are covered by the Church's policy.

5. Good practice – dealing with concerns

All leaders and helpers will be strongly encouraged to attend EMBA Safeguarding Training.

If an individual leader or helper has a concern about a child or young person; a co-leader or helper then an appropriate course of action known by all will be followed as below.

Note: The East Midlands Baptist Association **Safeguarding Procedure** (attached) will be followed as appropriate with any concern

- ⊗ Initially – discussion of the concern raised may be shared with leaders and helpers of the group which the child attends. If possible an appropriate resolution can be made, sharing a decision with the child's parents/carer if felt appropriate.
- ⊗ Secondly the concern may be taken to the Children and Family Worker, the Designated person, the Deaconate Trustee for Safeguarding - where the issue can be confidentially discussed and an appropriate resolution made.
- ⊗ The EMBA Safeguarding flowchart will be followed and adhered to whenever appropriate
- ⊗ When concern is raised. Action must be taken and full notes must be recorded by the person who raises the concern.

6. Good Practice in appointing volunteer leaders and helpers.

It is essential that proper care is taken in appointing volunteer leaders and helpers and there are some simple steps that we will take to ensure that we protect the children and young people in our care.

- When a post is vacant the existing leaders will discuss with the Ministry Team what is needed in terms of an outline description of the tasks, responsibilities and time commitment involved as well as the name of the person to whom the volunteer is responsible.
- The job profile will be announced verbally in the notices and placed in the church notice sheet.
- When an interest is expressed an informal discussion will take place asking for details of interests, gifts and experiences, particularly any previous work with children and young people. A volunteer will also be asked to agree to complete a Disclosure and Barring Services Application
- Interviewing – this will take the form of an informal chat with the Children's and Family Worker or Youth Worker and someone already involved in that area of Ministry. (For a key leadership role the Minister may also be involved in this process) It will give an opportunity to discern whether the volunteer is suitable for the role and together discuss the responsibilities of the post and the volunteer's experience.
- Making the appointment – any decision must be made on the basis of the best interests of the children and young people.
- DBS: Disclosure and Barring Services Application – this can be carried out after a decision to appoint a volunteer to a post has been reached.

- The BU stress that if a person has no criminal record it does not mean that they are suitable for work with children and young people and this can only form part of good practice.
- Signing a Volunteer agreement. – This a standard BU form which ensures that volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Training in Child protection – once a volunteer has accepted a position, the church has a responsibility to ensure that the individual understands the policy and the good practice guidelines.
- Those who work or help with activities or groups for children, young people or vulnerable adults will be actively encouraged to complete Safeguarding Training as soon as possible.
- Each helper/volunteer will be required to attend a WRBC led training session.
- Where a leader or helper is under 18 they will be in a clear relationship of guidance/mentoring with another leader and in a clear 'apprenticeship' role with high accountability. They will not be able to act independently within this role or lead activities without an adult leader present.

7. Good Practice in the Use of technology

The use of technology and Media is a reality and is here to stay. We recognise that all use of technology has impact – some of it helpful some of it unhelpful and some of it raises concerns for the well-being of those using it. In order to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people, vulnerable adults and the leaders and helpers we will adhere to the following guidelines in relation to the use of technology.

SOCIAL MEDIA SITES –

- As leaders and helpers, wherever possible, we will use technology to communicate with young people using a means which is visible to others i.e. Group Facebook Page.
- When using social media to connect with young people- as far as possible we will use secure groups for sending arrangements and information; we will send messages that make it clear we are young people's leaders.
- Wherever possible we will avoid inbox messages and private messaging. If it necessary to do so, for example, to follow up an existing issue then the guidelines (below) will be followed.
- When the above cannot be avoided – the following practices should be adopted.
 - Ensure another leader is informed of the conversation (either Sally or Jamie depending on group).
 - Keep notes or copies of the messages (particularly if concerned about information within the message).
 - Inform 'Designated persons' (Denise or Martin) that a conversation is taking place.
 - If a young person inboxes about a personal/ pastoral situation – it is important to follow the above guidelines and ensure that the young person knows that another leader will be informed of the conversation.

- We will use language that is appropriate and transparent in its meaning – messages sent will be for the purposes of organisation, information or encouragement. We will not engage in long one to one interactions with young people or children through the use of technology.
- We will only become Social Media friends with young people who are involved in groups run by the church and for whom we have written parental consent for their attendance and involvement in activities. These young people will then immediately be added to a church young people's group .e.g. 180, 180+ Groups (in light of this a leader still has the right to decide not to accept a friend request)
- We will not accept friendship requests from young people in fringe groups (e.g. Explore) and School groups (IMPACT) – in these contexts it is advisable to explain to the Young People the good practice guidelines of the church so that they understand why the decision is made.
- We will not accept friendship requests from children or young people under the age of 14 without explicit consent from parents.

PRIVATE/PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA - At all times we will be aware that we are in a position of responsibility and role models to young people and others in the community, When posting personal messages on Social Media networks we will do so with an awareness that they are seen by many

- we will not swear or use inappropriate language
- we will not enter into discussions or chats which involve talking about other people or situations that could be understood as gossip, belittlement, mocking or bullying
- We will only post personal messages that are fitting to the integrity of our role as children, family, youth workers.
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TEXTING

- We fully accept that texting is a common and necessary form of communication therefore it is essential that leaders recognise their personal responsibility for safety of themselves and others in the nature of the messages they send and receive.
 - When texting is used for the purposes of organisation and information where appropriate send a group text (advisable to include another leader in the text)
 - Use language that is appropriate and transparent in its meaning (avoid ambiguous messages such as 'you free for coffee?' and instead ideally text messages such as 'if you would like to meet up and chat through the things that were discussed at 180 on Sunday we could go for coffee'. Such explicit messaging is especially important with young people who are new to groups or from families that are not part of the wider church family.
 - It is best to refrain from using phrases or terms of affection such as 'love from' or kisses at the end of texts or messages.