

Principles of good working practice



All adults working with children, young people and adults who require care and support are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital that workers ensure they do not, even inadvertently, misuse their position of power and authority.

We take seriously the way we handle personal information. We comply with data processing regulations. We also recognise that safeguarding issues take precedence over data protection (GDPR).

BEHAVIOUR

All staff and volunteers working with children, and the adult who requires care or support, must adhere to the principles of good working practice outlined below, wherever possible.

- Treat all children, young people and adults with warmth, respect, and dignity relevant to their age.
- Be aware of your language style, tone, body language, and dress, and how an individual child, young person, or adult might perceive them.
- Ensure that you are never alone with a child or young person where your activity cannot be seen. This may mean leaving doors open or two groups working in the same room.
- Keep all physical contact public, e.g. hugs.
- Touch should be related to the child/young person/adult's needs, not the worker's needs.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child/young person/adult rather than the worker. (N.B. In the case of babies, they will initiate the need for a cuddle, usually by crying).
- Team members should support one another regarding physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misconstrued.
- Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child is never acceptable.
- Under no circumstances should physical punishment be used.
- Where a child requires the toilet, the following should apply:
 - Nappies will not be changed by workers - only by the child's parent or carer.
 - Children who require assistance with toileting should be assisted only by parents or carers, when those parents and carers are on site. In instances when parents and carers are not on site (e.g. summer kids club), children requiring assistance with toileting should be accompanied by 2 adults.
 - Always ensure a second adult is present when removing a child's clothing is essential (e.g., soiling of clothes or a medical emergency).
- Only those over 18 may assume responsibility for children. We aim to staff children's work according to the following minimum ratio of adults to children:
 - Age 0-2 yrs: 1 adult to 3 children
 - Age 2-3 yrs: 1 adult to 4 children
 - Age 4-8 yrs: 1 adult to 8 children
- We may also have assistants under 18 assisting in our children's groups. These assistants do not help us expand these ratios under the Leader's guidance during each session.
- No person under 18 years of age should be left solely in charge of any children of any age.
- Children or young people attending a group should not be left alone at any time.
- Personal cameras should not be used to take photos during sessions. Photographs should only be taken of children for whom you have permission to photograph.
- Any internet use during a session should be safe, appropriate, and closely monitored.
- Concerns about a colleague's behaviour should always be reported to the Safeguarding Lead (SL) (see section 'Responding to a disclosure or allegation of abuse' for details).

Behaviour to avoid

Workers should NOT engage in any of the following behaviour:

- Participation in physical or sexually provocative games, however “innocent” they may appear.
- Inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.
- Intimidating, ridiculing, belittling or apparent rejection of a child/young person/adult.
- Making racist, sexist, homophobic, or ableist remarks of any kind.
- Showing favouritism to any child/young person/adult.
- Invading the privacy of children/young people/adults, either toileting, changing, washing or showering.
- Making sexually suggestive remarks to or about children/young people/adults – even in “fun” - is unacceptable.
- Allowing young people/adults to develop excessive attention-seeking behaviour, especially if it is of a sexual or physical nature.

Anti-bullying Policy and practice (children & young people)

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully one another, be bullied by adults, and sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying causes the victim pain and distress and is unacceptable behaviour within any organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, including via emails or text messaging.
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts.
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Sexual - sexually abusive comments or gestures.
- Racial - any of the above because of or focusing on the issue of racial differences.
- Homophobic - any of the above because of or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation.
- Unofficial activities, such as practical jokes, may cause children physical or emotional harm, even if not intended.

We recognise the harm that bullying can cause and have a zero-tolerance attitude towards bullying, which is abuse. We deal with the victim of the abuse, the parents, and the bully to avoid repetition in line with our procedures.

Responding to challenging behaviour

Sometimes children and young people become angry, upset, or disruptive. Occasionally, their behaviour may endanger themselves or others. As a team, we are corporately responsible for discipline. The best way to maintain a high level of discipline is for the whole team to use clear, common-sense communication to address disruptive behaviour. This is best handled by the nearest team member at an early stage, so disruptive behaviour doesn't escalate.

When dealing with disruptive behaviour:

- Ask them to stop.
- Speak to them to establish the cause(s) of the upset.
- Inform them they will be asked to leave if the behaviour continues.

If they are harming themselves, another person or property, then others in the group should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, with a second worker present, request that they STOP.

Solvents and Illegal Substances

Workers should be alert to the possession and use of illegal substances.

If a worker becomes aware that a child, young person, or adults who require care and support may be abusing solvents or using illegal substances, they should make the Safeguarding Lead (SL) aware of the situation.

For the individual involved, action may include the following:

- Ask them to stop and warn them of the consequences if they do not (e.g., suspension or exclusion from the group).
- Inform parents/carers if the individual is under 16 years.
- Inform the parents/carers if the individual is over 16 years (with their permission).
- Discuss the proposed course of action with the individual, particularly if they reoffend (e.g., by informing the police).
- Write down the content of any discussion with the individual, including the action taken and keep this in a secure place.
- Liaise with the police to develop a strategy for addressing the use of illegal substances.

It is a criminal offence to allow anyone attending an activity run by an organisation to supply illegal drugs or use them on the organisation's premises.

PROCEDURE FOR SUNDAY SERVICES

Registration

A registration form is required for a child to participate in Sheffield Vineyard activities.

If parents or carers remain in the children's area, their names must be recorded on the register, and they may not contact children other than their own, as they should be present only to help their child settle in.

Signing in: Children remain under parental supervision until they are 'signed in' for a specific activity by a parent (or someone designated by the parent) on ChurchSuite (the Church database system).

Signing out: Children may not leave their groups until they have been 'signed out' of ChurchSuite by a parent (or an adult designated by the parent).

Toilet Trips

Parents/carers should be asked to ensure their children have been to the toilet before bringing them to the group.

While the group is running, children who need to use the toilet should alert a team member. The Team Member will then alert the Team Lead/Helper that they are leaving the room, before going to collect the child's parent. The parent will then support their child with toileting before bringing them back to the group.

Consent forms

Consent forms must be completed for all activities and events. See Appendix 4. These forms must be kept securely.

Keeping Records

Concern forms (see Appendix 5) should be used to record incidents, behaviour, significant conversations, or disclosures of abuse. These forms must be kept securely.

PROCEDURE FOR OTHER EVENTS

Other Activities

Where additional activities, trips, or social events are organised for children/young people/adults, the group leader should ensure adequate supervision for those attending. It is recommended that when planning and undertaking additional activities, the following guidelines should be followed:

- A Risk Assessment is completed for each activity.
- Young people aged 17 and under must have a completed parent/carer consent form before attending a trip. This can be included in the annual consent form for trips, photography, and videos if the trip doesn't involve an overnight stay or a sporting activity.
- When transporting children, workers should avoid being left alone with a child in the car. If this is unavoidable, ask the child to sit in the back.
- When planning residential/sleepovers, the Thirtyone:eight guidelines and checklist should be followed.

Workers should be aware of the potential risks when meeting with young people in one-on-one settings at home or on trips. They should consider taking steps to avoid such risks, such as meeting in a public place, informing others of the meeting, and leaving the room door open if appropriate.

Transportation

When children or young people are transported by vehicle, consent should be obtained.

Drivers who are members of the children's team and transport children in their own vehicle (rather than a personal favour) should have an appropriate licence and insurance.

Residential holidays

The safety and suitability of residential accommodation will be assessed on an individual basis. All workers will be selected from our regular children's team, have appropriate DBS checks, and operate in accordance with our child protection policy.

Filming and taking photographs

Filming and photography are undertaken in full compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and with the relevant permissions from the individual or the child's parents/carers. See Appendix 4.

ONLINE SAFETY (SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION)

Information on social media and digital communications is available in the Online Safety Policy.

SAFETY

Risk assessments

Risk assessments must be conducted for all activities undertaken by the Church. The regular weekly activities are reviewed and updated annually. One-off events are assessed on an individual basis.

The person leading the ministry area will compile the risk assessment, which will be reviewed by a staff member or Trustee responsible for health and safety.

Fire safety

All team members should be aware of fire procedures.

First Aid

The designated first aider is a member of staff, and first-aid boxes are located in the children's area and the kitchen.

Accidents

An accident book is to be present at Sunday Services, and any accidents recorded.