



ROUGH GUIDE TO  
**WORKING  
WITH CHILDREN**

# INTRODUCTION

This document aims to provide an overview of recommended practice for individuals and groups, paid or voluntary, working with young people under the auspices of the Church of Scotland in the Presbytery of Annandale & Eskdale.

For more detailed information, the Church of Scotland Safeguarding handbook can be found at:  
[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0013/7105/safeguarding\\_handbook\\_1.pdf](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/7105/safeguarding_handbook_1.pdf)

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## BASIC OVERVIEW

It is mandatory for volunteers working with vulnerable groups to have a Disclosure Scotland Check or to be members of the PVG scheme with the appropriate Church of Scotland update completed.

Staff and volunteers should be familiar with the Church of Scotland's Safeguarding Fact File which is available to individuals and groups.

Never work alone. (There may be times when it is appropriate to talk to a child on their own. This, however, should always been done within the sight of another adult.)

Ensure that you have up-to-date contact details for parents and guardians.

Ensure that the facilities you are using are safe for yourself and the young people you are working with.

Always let common sense prevail.

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Handbook has adopted the Care Commission's safe adult:young people or children's ratios as follows:

AGE	RATIO
Under 2s	1:3
2 to under 3s	1:5
3 and over	1:8
If all children are 8 or over	1:10

When calculating the number of adults needed, it is helpful to factor in one extra person. This allows an adult to work between groups or take over if someone is unable to attend at the last minute.

Where children aged 3 and over attend facilities providing day care for a session which is less than a continuous period of four hours in any day the adult: child ratio may be 1:10, providing individual children do not attend more than one session per day.

It is helpful to be aware of any mix in genders. (eg. Consider if it is appropriate for there to be two male leaders with a girls-only group.)

## TRANSPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

When transporting young people to and from events it is very important to take every possible precaution to ensure that a worker is not left alone with a child or young person in the car. Best practice recommends that there are always two adults in a vehicle transporting children.

When transporting a young person whose parents are personal friends and where they have given you permission to transport their child/children alone, this is acceptable practice.

When transporting children, ensure that:

- the driver is experienced or confident enough to cope with all situations, especially in the event of an accident. It is recommended best practice to only use drivers over 21 and who have held a full license for more than a year
- the driver has the appropriate insurance for the vehicle
- the driver has emergency contact details for their passengers with them

- the driver does not use a mobile phone whilst driving, even with hands-free devices
- the driver ensures that their passengers use seatbelts and booster seats if needed.

Advice about the use of booster seats is available from [www.safemotoring.co.uk](http://www.safemotoring.co.uk)

If you are transporting more than two car-loads full of young people/children then it would probably be easier and safer to consider using a minibus.

If you are unhappy transporting children, then don't do it.

When using public transport:

- know the timetables of the public transport you are using
- ensure that all the young people/children are counted on and off the transport
- ensure that someone separate from the group knows what your travel plans are

# SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

**All volunteers (including personal friends or relations) working with vulnerable groups (e.g. children, young people and the elderly) must have a criminal record check done before working with these groups.**

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (implemented in 2011), ensures that criminal record checks are now automatically updated (i.e. if an individual is charged with or convicted of a crime which would make them unsafe to work with vulnerable groups, the organisations they work or volunteer for will be automatically notified.)

**It is illegal to employ/continue employing someone with previous charges or convictions in a post which necessitates contact with vulnerable groups.**

Once an individual has joined the PVG scheme (by filling in a form similar to the previous Disclosure Scotland Check), subsequent applications to work with other organisations will only require the completion of a simpler form. This form will ask for the applicant's permission to allow the new organisation to request an update on the applicant's status.

**Implementation of this new scheme will take place over a period of time, with anyone previously vetted through the Disclosure Scotland Check process before 2011 being transferred over to the PVG scheme between 2012 and 2013. If, however, volunteers have not had a previous Disclosure Scotland Check processed through their church or organisation, then they must join the PVG scheme immediately.**

It is not possible to give a definitive list of those who will require PVG checks as roles vary from congregation to congregation (e.g. an organist in one congregation may just accompany worship, without a choir or using the church to practice, while in a different congregation the organist may have a choir or singing group of all ages and/or use the premises to practice in whilst children or other vulnerable groups are around.) The Safeguarding Service has produced the following flow chart to help you decide if an individual needs to be PVG checked.

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/4869/pvg\\_newsletter\\_01\\_2011.pdf](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/4869/pvg_newsletter_01_2011.pdf)

There are a few examples below where it may not be necessary to have a Criminal Record Check undertaken:

- **The individual is standing in to help at short notice**, on a one-off basis, and will be supervised at all times by someone who has had a Criminal Record Check.
- **An individual will be working in the background** and will not have exposed contact and will never be left alone with vulnerable groups e.g. volunteers helping to make juice and biscuits in the kitchen at a holiday club.
- **You have a guest speaker** at an event or meeting where they will not be left alone nor will have exposed contact with any vulnerable groups.

The Safeguarding Service (0131 240 2256) is always available to offer advice about any safeguarding issue.

# CONSENT FOR ACTIVITIES

When working with children and young people it is essential to ensure that parents of the children and young people involved are aware of the type of activities on offer and have given consent for their child to participate.

When working with children and young people, activities will fall into one of the following two categories:

- **activities where you have sole responsibility for the children/young people**  
e.g. when children are attending a Holiday Club and their parents are not in the building with them. Consent must always be obtained for this type of activity from the parent/guardian.
- **activities when the children/young people are joining in with an activity but are free to leave at any point and the leaders do not have 'locum parentis' responsibilities**

e.g. when running a youth cafe drop-in for secondary school-aged young people when they voluntarily attend and are using designated facilities. (It would still be advisable to ask the young people for emergency contact details in this setting, especially if the activities you offer have some risk attached to them. e.g. sports coaching sessions.)

As a general rule of thumb, if a child is in secondary school and you are not transporting them away from their home location, they do not need consent.

**Examples of Church of Scotland Consent Forms can be found in the appendix at the end of this booklet. Alternatively, the forms can be found on the Church of Scotland website:**

<http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/subjects/safeguarding-information>

## SOCIAL NETWORKING

It is recommended that staff and volunteers do not use personal social media accounts when communicating with young people but use a group format instead.

Never search for a young person online and invite them to be your 'friend' - wait for the invitation to come from them.

Ensure that any young person wanting to join a group, etc, is 13 or over. For more information on this, please use the following link: <http://www.Facebook.com/help/?page=937>.

Ensure account content is beyond reproach and age appropriate for your youngest 'friend'.

Have your privacy settings at the securest level.

Ensure that all Wall to Wall comments are not open to misunderstanding.

Ask permission before putting a young person's photograph on the internet (see photography guidelines).

## SOCIAL MEDIA

It is evident that young people today communicate in radically different ways from previous generations. It is very important that we communicate with young people through social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Myspace) within appropriate frameworks as recommended on the right.

# PHOTOGRAPHY

It can be both inspiring and instructive to take photographs/videos of our events and to have a record of our celebrations and achievements using these methods. All recording of this type should be done in an appropriate way and the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Office has produced good practice guideline as follows:

It is always good practice to seek **written permission** from a parent or guardian before taking any photographs or video footage of children. This can be incorporated in the registration form when a child joins a group or the Safeguarding Office has produced a photography/video consent template which can be downloaded from the Resources section of the Church of Scotland website as below.

[www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/subjects/safeguarding-information](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/subjects/safeguarding-information)

No video or photographic footage should be publicly displayed (i.e. notice-board, local press or world wide web) without prior notice being given by the group and an opportunity for any objections to be received.

No names or any personal information should be displayed alongside any photographs.

Mobile phones are widely used to take photographs and videos which can be immediately uploaded onto the web or social networking sites without permission. Group leaders should therefore discourage the use of mobile phones during church activities.

The group may wish to produce a mobile phone Code of Good Practice to ensure safe usage. Congregations may find it helpful to refer to the Safeguarding Office website which includes links to organisations providing guidelines on safe use of mobile phones and the internet.

During large events, arrangements can be made by the host to provide video coverage or photographic stills of the participants in action whilst deliberately avoiding any children who are not to be photographed. This allows a performance to be recorded but allows the children who are not to be photographed to take part.

An open 'photoshoot' can be held at the end of the performance (sensitively distracting any children not to be photographed) to allow families to take their own private shots.

Special consideration should be given where taking photographs or video footage might be misinterpreted or the images could be seen as provocative (e.g. beach trip or gymnastics display, etc). It is not to say, however, that with the right planning, these events cannot be recorded and enjoyed.

Responsibility of storage and destruction of photographic material should be taken at local level and clear agreement should be made for this purpose. All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that photographs are stored safely, with a limited amount of people having access.

## MOBILE PHONES

Nearly every young person has a mobile phone which they use as their primary source of communication. Text message conversations can very easily be open to misinterpretation and it is extremely important to be unambiguous and clear with language when texting. When running events or programmes with young people, every care should be taken to ensure that mobile phones are not used in an abusive way, especially as all mobile phones have cameras. It may be appropriate to ban the use of mobile phones during certain events.

## STORING DATA

Permission must be obtained to keep any information you have on a young person after an event. (e.g. you will need the address and date of birth information for a child attending a holiday club.)

You may also want to be able to invite these children to any follow-up events that you do. Permission should therefore be sought to store this information for follow-up events.

When storing someone else's information, it is important that that person knows or understands what information you are storing about them.

An example of a declaration asking parents to give permission for information to be kept is given opposite:

**The personal details you supply on this form will be held for [state primary purpose of processing] and for [state any other use].**

**Your details will be used only by our congregation and will not be made available to any third party [alternatively state to whom personal data may be passed].**

**I consent to my details being held for the above purposes.**

Signature.....

Date.....

*Taken from the Church of Scotland Law Department Data Protection Guidance Notes.*

## HALL LETS AND INSURANCE IMPLICATIONS

- There may be frequent occasions when church premises are let out to external groups or private parties. When a group or private individual hires church premises it is the responsibility of the person hiring to ensure that the appropriate insurance cover is provided and that they have sought the correct PVG checks for any individuals working within the vulnerable groups.
- In summary, if those hiring the premises do not come under authority of the Kirk Session then the church has no responsibility for insurance or PVG checks. The person letting the hall does, however, need to ensure that those booking the hall are fully aware of their responsibilities as above.

We do hope that you will find this information helpful in meeting the safeguarding needs of your activities within Annandale and Eskdale Presbytery. If you would like any additional information, please contact the Further Ministries Team on 01387 371037.

**The Church of Scotland**  
**Camps & Residential Holidays Health Information and Consent Form**

To be completed by someone with parental responsibility (e.g. this does not include a foster carer.)  
Some information parts can be completed by a children's worker.

Name of congregation and group:

Name of child/young person:  Date of birth:

Address of child/young person:

Telephone number for contacting you during  
the camp or holiday, in case of emergency:  
Day

Telephone No.

Evening

Name of alternative emergency contact, if you are unavailable:

Telephone number in case of emergency: Day  Evening

Name of GP:

GP's Tel No.  National Health No.

Date of last tetanus:

Details of any illness or disability about which leaders should be aware:

Details of any medication required during the camp or holiday. (All medication should be labelled  
correctly and clearly, with name and dose required daily.)

Details of any allergies or special dietary needs:

During the camp the child or young person may be involved in outdoor activities, under the  
supervision of trained personnel. Please detail any activities you do NOT wish your child to take  
part in:

**PARENTAL CONSENT**

In an emergency and/or if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary  
hospital or dental treatment, including an anaesthetic.  Yes  No (please tick)

Signature ..... (Parent or adult with parental responsibility.)



**The Church of Scotland  
Activities & Day Visits Consent Form**

**Part A** to be completed by a children's worker, and **Part B** by someone with parental responsibility (e.g. this does not include a foster carer).

This consent form should be taken with the worker on the activity or visit.

**PART A**

Name of congregation and group:

Date of activity:  Type of activity:

Venue/destination:  Departure place & time:

Return place and time:  Cost:

Transport arrangements:

Items to be brought (e.g. coat, swimming kit, packed lunch. money, etc.)

**PART B**

Name and address of child or young person:

Please give details of any medical conditions (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, dietary needs) or disability that may be affected by this activity:

Your telephone number(s) for emergency contact:

Day  Evening

Name of alternative parental contact if you are unavailable, with telephone number(s):

Day  Evening

**PARENTAL CONSENT**

I have read the above information and I give permission for my child to take part in this activity. In an emergency and/or if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary hospital or dental treatment, including an anaesthetic.  Yes  No (please tick)

I enclose a cheque or cash to the sum of £

Signature ..... (Parent or adult with parental responsibility.)

The Church of Scotland  
**General Information and Consent Form**

Form SG10

In order to ensure your child's safety, we would be grateful if you would complete and return this form. Please let us know if there are any significant changes. A copy will be retained confidentially by the group leader.

Congregation  Church group

Name of child or young person

Date of birth

Address of child or young person

Name of person with parental responsibility

Telephone No. Day  Evening

Name of additional contact with parental responsibility (in case of emergency)

Telephone No. Day  Evening

Details of any regular medication, medical condition (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies, dietary needs) or disability which may affect normal activity:

**PARENTAL CONSENT**

- I give permission for my child, as named above, to take part in the normal activities of this group.
- I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group.
- I understand that while involved in the activities of this group, he/she will be under the control and care of the group leader and/or other adults approved by the church leadership and that, while the staff in charge of the group will take reasonable care of the children, they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by my child during, or as a result of, the activity.

In an emergency and/or if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary hospital or dental treatment, including an anaesthetic.  Yes  No (please tick)

Signature .....(Parent or adult with parental responsibility.)

# Childrens Parties Guidelines

THESE GUIDELINES, PRODUCED BY THE SAFEGUARDING OFFICE, ARE FOR THE LETTING OF CHURCH PREMISES FOR CHILDREN'S PARTIES AND FORM A FRAMEWORK OF GOOD PRACTICE ONLY

The event organiser and the adults in charge of the children's party should be made aware of the Policy Statement of the Church of Scotland.

At least two responsible adults should be present at the party at all times and should undertake the following:

- the adults who are in charge should be introduced to the children attending the party
- a record should be kept of the names of the children attending the party and emergency contact numbers for their carers.
- the adults in charge must have access to a phone in the event of an emergency.
- the adults in charge should have an awareness of first aid facilities, fire exits and assembling areas.
- it is important that the adults in charge are informed of any child with allergies or acute medical conditions.

- Entertainers should at no time take responsibility for the care of children and young people.

- Other adults who may require to enter the church hall during the party, but are not part of the party, should at no time take responsibility for the children and young people.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF LET

The Booking Form below should be completed and must be signed by the event organiser, .

The premises are accepted by the event organiser as being in good condition and repair. The event organiser has the responsibility of leaving the premises in the same condition as it was let to them.

## INDEMNITY

It is the event organiser, not the church, who will be responsible for any loss, damage or claim made resulting from this let. The event organiser should check whether they have insurance cover e.g. under their personal home insurance. If not, it is recommended that they arrange 'one-off' insurance cover.

## BOOKING FORM

..... would like to hire .....  
(Event organiser) (Church name)

church hall and use the kitchen and toilet facilities.

The period of let will be from (time)..... to (time)..... ON (date).....

The charge will be the sum of £..... payable to the Church Treasurer at an agreed date.

The event organiser has read the above guidelines and agrees to the terms and conditions of the let.

.....  
(Event organiser)

.....  
(Church representative)

Annandale & Eskdale

# Further Ministries Team



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