

THE PARISH OF ST LEONARD HYTHE

A Safe Environment for Children

Church groups involving children under 8 that meet for 6 days or more in any one year and where the activity lasts for more than 2 hours in the day come under statutory regulations (OFSTED). Such activities must be formally registered. Registration involves ensuring good practice standards across a wide range of issues including group leaders, staffing ratios, suitability of premises, health and safety and facilities for children with special needs. These kinds of issues of course need to be considered within any Church group regardless of whether or not it needs to be registered by OFSTED.

The staffing levels for registered groups are as follows. We recommend that non-registered Church groups should aim for the same adult/child ratios:

	Adult	Children
2 years and under	1	3
3 years	1	4
4 to 8 years	1	8

We require a minimum of 2 adults to be present whenever a group meets.

Information on OFSTED registration can be obtained from Kent County Council Children's Information Service, Freephone: 08000 323230.

For children over 8 there is no official statutory guidance. Numbers should always be based on a risk assessment. As a minimum there should be at least 2 adults for every 10 children (preferably one of each gender) and an additional adult for each additional 10 children. Following a risk assessment staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered high risk or dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved. (Guidance issued by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service).

For all groups:

- A register should be kept and be available at all group meetings. As well as attendance it should include up to date information on parents' contact numbers and any specific medical information (e.g. allergies).
- A First Aid kit should be available on any premises that are used by children.
- An accident book should be available and all accidents recorded.
- There should be access to a telephone.

- Any significant incidents (e.g. a fight between children) should be recorded on the register, which will be stored in a secure place.
- Parents must sign a consent form before children are taken off site for activities.
- When taking children off site a detailed programme and list of contacts should be left with someone in the parish.
- A risk assessment should be produced, considering the potential risks of any activity undertaken and detailing the steps taken to mitigate those risks.
- All group leaders should be made aware of the PCC's process for responding to a safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Activities planned to take place away from church premises should have PCC agreement in order to be covered by insurance.

As Vicar of St Leonard's, Hythe, I confirm that these guidelines are being followed.

Signed

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