



A Safe Environment and Activities

A guide for those participating in Cathedral activities where there are children, young people, and vulnerable adults present

Weaving Jesus into the rich fabric of the city and beyond

“The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults...”

[The House of Bishops¹]

This document is Bradford Cathedral’s code of safer working practice for those working or volunteering for Bradford Cathedral and participating in Cathedral activities where there are children, young people, and vulnerable adults present. It is based on Sections 11.1 and 11.2 of *The Parish Safeguarding Handbook* and adapted for those working in professional and voluntary roles where there are children, young people, and adults who may be vulnerable present.

All those working on behalf of Bradford Cathedral in a professional or voluntary capacity with children, young people, and adults who may be vulnerable should refer to section 11 of *The Parish Safeguarding Handbook*².

All those working or volunteering alongside children, young people and adults must:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.

- Ensure that they know who children, young people and adults can talk to about a personal concern.
- Report any concerns, however minor it may appear, about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another person to the activity leader and/or the Cathedral Safeguarding Team safeguarding@bradfordcathedral.org
- Inform the activity leader if unknown adults have direct access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.
- Alert the activity leader to any persons who require first aid.
- Ensure that they are not alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Ensure that the activity leader is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, making sure that there are other adults around, and then immediately notifying the activity leader.

All those working or volunteering alongside children, young people and adults must not:

- Invade an individual's privacy whilst washing and toileting. This includes using communal toilet facilities at the same time as children or young people.
- Use any form of unacceptable touch.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.
- Participate in abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group. This includes the giving of gifts.
- Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.
- Offer or give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group.
- Share personal contact details with children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable or befriend them on social media.
- Take photographs of children and young people, and adults who may be vulnerable on personal phones or cameras
- Smoke, vape or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people.

- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include adult family members/ carers) outside organised group occasions.

Vulnerable adults

Definition: "A person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired"³.

This definition encompasses the possibility that the ability of people to keep themselves safe can depend on the context they find themselves in, as well as on their own personal characteristics or abilities. For example, in some settings or relationships, people may find themselves in less powerful positions than others, and this could, depending on all the circumstances, significantly impair their ability to protect themselves from physical abuse or exploitation by the person who is in the more powerful position⁴. Therefore, the term "adults who may be vulnerable" is appropriate.

Acceptable touch

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Although some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, is wholly appropriate on occasions, it is not appropriate for this to become a repeated occurrence. Normally, where physical contact is needed by a child or an adult, they should be referred to the activity leader in the first instance.

The following guidelines regarding touching are suggested:

- Always ask permission.
- Be mindful of your body position.

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be in response to a child's needs and not related to the worker's or to the volunteer's needs. It should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker or volunteer.
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual and/or abusive/offensive.
- Allow the child to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention).

References

1. Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement for children, young people, and adults, The House of Bishops of the Church of England, 2017, downloaded on 27/02/2024 from <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>
2. The Parish Safeguarding Handbook, The House of Bishops of the Church of England, 2018, downloaded on 27/02/2024 from <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>
3. Church of England, The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure (2016).
4. <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-children-young-people-and-vulnerable-adults/1>