



## **Youth Leaders Safeguarding and Safety Procedures**

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to highlight the key areas of health, safety and welfare relevant to the activities of Trinity Youth and to ensure a safe environment for all the young people involved in this ministry. This is a brief overview and reference should be made to the Trinity Policy Documents mentioned below for in depth guidance.

Our aim at all times is to welcome and encourage young people, to provide them with quality care and teaching, and to make them feel part of God's family. Our vision is for them to become disciples and committed followers of Jesus.

We have a responsibility to ensure that where we provide care for young people it will be in a safe environment and in line with the guidance given in the Trinity Policy Document for the Welfare and Safety of Children and Young People.

### **2. Key Policy Documents**

This document gives brief guidelines only and reference should be made to the following key Trinity policy documents, which cover all aspects of health, safety and welfare:

- > Trinity Cheltenham Welfare & Safety Policy for Children & Young People
- > Trinity Cheltenham Health and Safety Policy
- > Trinity Cheltenham Food Management System

### **3. Responsibilities**

Gareth Dickinson oversees Trinity Youth. Tim O'leary has overall responsibility for the day to day running and management of Trinity Youth

The day-to-day management of safeguarding and safety at Trinity Cheltenham is the responsibility of Neville Page-Jones.

### **4. General Good Practice for the Care of Young People**

Please Do :

- > treat everyone with respect
- > provide an example you wish others to follow
- > respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- > plan activities that involve more than one other person being present or, at least, which are within sight or hearing of others
- > provide access for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have

- > encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour that are not appropriate
- > maintain a healthy adult lifestyle
- > remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned they may be
- > recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse

Please Do Not :

- > play physical contact games with young people
- > have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- > jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- > exaggerate or trivialise child-abuse issues
- > show favouritism to any individual
- > make suggestive remarks or gestures
- > rely on just your good name to protect you
- > believe "it could never happen to me"
- > arrange to meet young people on a one to one basis
- > permit abusive youth peer activities eg initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying
- > allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes

## **5. Confidentiality and Dealing with Disclosures**

As youth leaders you will need to:-

- Understand your role in safeguarding
- Read the Best Practice Guidelines
- Know how to refer concerns
- Know where to seek further help and information
- Have a plan for what actions you need to take

You will sometimes have to deal with a disclosure by a young person. This normally happens when a young person wants to talk about mental illness (depression, self harm, eating disorder, etc) or abuse. At Trinity we have strict procedures for how disclosures are dealt with and these must be followed at all times.

When a young person wants to share something that they are struggling with and it's clear that it falls into the category of a disclosure, the following should apply:-

- Reassure
- Listen
- Don't judge
- Don't ask leading questions
- Don't promise to keep anything secret
- Be honest about who you have to tell
- Ask the young person if they would like prayer and invite another leader to join you
- Immediately talk to your youth pastor and Neville Page-Jones
- Afterwards, and as soon as possible, write a record of what happened
- Consider support for yourself

Remember - our role is pastoral support and to ensure we pass on the health issues appropriately as we are not experienced in dealing with these issues. The safeguarding officer will want to involve parents and/or professionals as soon as possible

Leaders should not promise to keep secrets, only confidentiality. Remember the confidentiality statement "We are unable to maintain secrets, but anything you say to your leader will be kept as confidential. If what you say indicates that either you or others are at risk of harm, your leader will talk to the youth pastor and safeguarding officer. There are certain circumstances in which we have a duty of care to take further action".

The youth pastor and safeguarding officer will want to :-

- Informally talk to the young person, establish facts and assess relationship with parents
- If necessary, talk to Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
- Consider level of need
- If appropriate persuade the young person to allow us to talk with parents
- If not, consider referral to local authority, GP, or other professional
- Keep notes of conversations and discussions

## **6. Touching Guidelines**

- > Touch should not be prolonged
- > Touch should be related to the young person's needs, not the worker's
- > Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
- > Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the young person rather than the worker
- > Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be construed as, sexually stimulating to the adult or young person
- > Young people are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances, ie when they need medical attention or for their own safety
- > Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact and should express concerns to the 'Nominated Person'

## **7. Working with groups of young people**

- > Be well prepared
- > Be aware of what's going on
- > Be calm and stay objective
- > Be fair, but firm
- > Have an element of choice if young people refuse to join in
- > Be prepared to listen
- > Beware of misinterpreting behaviour or what they are saying
- > Be honest in answering questions
- > Be yourself but look critically at how you behave too. You are their example. Watch what you say and do. Try not to take remarks personally. Answer if you can – laugh if you can

## **8. Documents and guidance notes to be aware of**

Be aware of the procedures in place for:

- > Transporting young people
- > Off site activities
- > Self harm
- > Abuse
- > Eating disorders
- > Notifying a parent in the event of an emergency
- > Guidelines for Youth Residential

## **9. Discipline**

- > If necessary stop all activities until order is restored
- > Apply all rules fairly and consistently
- > Don't shout, lose your temper or strike a young person
- > Say what you mean and mean what you say
- > The leadership team should be in agreement as to the standard of behaviour allowed in the group
- > The young people in the group must be given the boundaries of behaviour that are acceptable
- > Always ensure adequate supervision of activities by leaders. Have other leaders helping

## **10. Guidelines specific to both on and off site events**

- > Leaders and helpers must have a current DBS disclosure certificate and have received appropriate training in the areas of the safety and welfare of young people, fire safety and emergency evacuation
- > There must be adequate supervision of groups with ratios in accordance with those set out in the Child Welfare Policy
- > When food is being prepared and served, at least one person holding a food safety certificate must be present in the kitchen, and that the use of the kitchen and the preparation of food is strictly in accordance with the Trinity Food Management System
- > Risk Assessments must be carried out and documented for each event, except those regular events which are covered by an annual risk assessment

### **11. Guidelines specific to on site events**

- > For all regular events an attendance register or electronic booking in system must be kept and all young people booked in and out
- > Emergency escape routes and fire exit doors must be checked for availability and free from obstruction. At appropriate times throughout the term, the group must be reminded of the fire evacuation procedure
- > Checks must be made for hazards which could cause harm such as slips, trips and falls and hazards found must be removed or controlled

### **12. Registration Procedures**

- > During BOOM (age 11 to 14) in the morning, no young people are allowed to leave until the finishing time of these events, unless picked up by a parent or guardian. Young people at this event will be registered at the start and then not released until the published time unless (a) a young person is disruptive and needs to be removed, in which case they will be walked over to their parents in church or responsible adult, (b) they are picked up early by parents or (c) we have parental permission to release them early
- > During EPIC (age 15-18) evenings, the young people will be released at 8pm, the finishing time. A nominated leader will have the responsibility of monitoring the exit door to ensure compliance. Young people will be registered at the start. After the first 30 mins the external door will be locked (to prevent entry from outside) and latecomers will use the intercom
- > Parents will also be made clear of this in written communications with them
- > BOOM and EPIC life groups groups. See separate operational guidelines and best practice document for youth life groups

### **13. Guidelines specific to off site events**

- > Parents and guardians will be informed in writing of events and any conditions that apply, and their written approval obtained for their youngster to attend
- > The leader must prepare a duplicate file containing emergency contact names and numbers for all people on the trip. The leader should take one copy on the trip and leave the second copy with the operations manager
- > Transportation of young people must be in accordance to the procedure set

out in the Trinity Welfare Policy document

- > A risk assessment must be completed for each off site event and attached to the booking form

#### **14. Booking Form**

A booking form must be completed for every youth event whether on or off site. For regular recurring events, an annual form is acceptable. The booking form includes catering requirements, operational guidelines and risk assessments. The booking form will, where necessary, serve the purpose of approval by operations executive for those events which have a high-risk element. Third party public liability insurance will only be provided by our insurers if the event has the approval of the senior leadership team and if risk assessments have been carried out and written down. For certain events where the risk is high, our insurers may not be prepared to cover the event and separate public liability and general insurance will have to be taken out through a broker. The booking form and risk assessments must be completed and signed off by the person who is responsible for the event and who will be present at the event. For regular weekly events, an annual booking is acceptable.

#### **15. Training**

All leaders will be given appropriate training in the areas of leadership, safety and welfare relevant to the care of young people, and training records will be kept. Fire safety and evacuation training will be included.

#### **16. Evacuation Procedure**

We have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to have an evacuation procedure in place that will ensure that in the event of an emergency everyone in the building can get out safely. This is particularly important where young people are concerned.

- > It is essential that in the event of an emergency everyone involved with the care of young people is confident to safely guide young people out to one of the assembly points bearing in mind that evacuation may be hampered by smoke and poor lighting
- > Every leader should be familiar with the escape routes and assembly points (under normal conditions there will be at least two routes)
- > Before the start of every session make sure that the escape routes are clear and all doors are unlocked and can be opened
- > At the start of every session, know how many young people are in your care
- > From time to time, remind the young people of the procedure and what to expect

Fire evacuation procedure documents for all buildings can be found on the Health and Safety notice board in the building, and also in Google drive: Health and Safety - Key Policy Documents - Evacuation Procedures folder.

Do Not:

- > Stop to collect personal belongings
- > Use lifts
- > Re-enter the building until the all clear is given by the fire officer or the person in charge

Neville Page-Jones

February 2017

**Trinity Youth Operational Guidelines  
for Leaders**

I ..... have read and understood the  
Trinity Youth Operational Guidelines and Best Practice for Youth Leaders

Signed ..... Date .....

*(Please return this completed page to Trinity Youth Department)*