

Beeston Methodist Church

Guidelines for overnight stays with Children without parents or guardians

As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All workers should be aware of the Beeston Methodist Church's safeguarding policy and the policy the safeguarding of the welfare of children. (A copy of these policies can be found at www.beestonmethodist.church or by contacting BMC Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@beestonmethodist.church)

For the purpose of this document a child is anyone under the age of 18 years and an adult is anyone over the age of 18 years.

Any child aged 16 or 17 years that are taking a leadership role must have the same documentation as an adult.

Overnight stays with Children and Young People need careful planning and there are many guidelines to follow to keep both children as well as the adults caring for them safe. These guidelines apply whether the stay is on or off Church premises.

- All adults on the stay MUST have a current DBS certificate approved by the BMC Safeguarding Officer.
- Adults should wherever possible have attended a Creating Safer Space training course. At least one adult must have completed the course.
- All adults must have read the BMC policy on the welfare of children and young people and the BMC guidelines for workers with children and young people covering photography, e-mail and text messaging, internet and social media and the transportation of children and young people and signed and returned the form verifying this to the BMC Safeguarding Officer.
- The overnight stay should be covered by a suitable insurance policy.
- All children must have a consent form completed by a parent or guardian.
- There must be a dedicated adult leader of the stay responsible for the planning of the stay.
- There must be an adult Safeguarding Lead responsible for safeguarding the children and young people on the stay.

- There must be an adult first aider responsible for medicines and parental/guardian consent for emergency medical care.
- Correct Adult: child ratios must be complied with and there must be a mix of gender amongst the adults if the group is of mixed gender. Ensure that the correct adult:child ratios are maintained for the group in the case of an emergency e.g. if an adult has to accompany a child to the hospital Ensure that the adults are not related to or in a relationship with each other

4 - 8 years - one adult to six children

9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children

13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children.

- If the group are travelling abroad then the correct regulations for taking children abroad without a parent or guardian must be followed (www.gov.uk/permission-take-child-abroad).
- The stay must be risk assessed and a copy of the risk assessment passed to the BMC safeguarding Officer.
- Sleeping arrangements must ensure that children and adults have separate sleeping accommodation with genders being kept separate from each other unless the adults are in a relationship with each other.
- There must be separate toilet facilities for each gender and separate facilities for children and adults.

What to do if...

You have concerns about possible abuse, including allegations:

1. In an emergency, respond immediately. Consult BMC safeguarding officer and decide together whether to seek advice or to make a referral.
2. Keep a record of what happened, your concerns and your actions.

A child or young person wishes to disclose that they have been abused:

1. Keep listening. Do not question or investigate.
2. Do not promise confidentiality; tell them we need to share this.
3. Assure them they are not to blame.
4. Tell them what you are going to do and that they will be told what happens.
5. Make careful notes of what is said, record dates, times, events and when you are told.
6. Report to BMC Safeguarding officer email safeguarding@beestonmethodist.church
7. Only tell those who need to know.