



THE DIOCESE OF
SHEFFIELD

Ministry with children

Starter pack



In this pack you will find;

- Information to keep everyone safe
- All you need to begin children's work in church
- Essential information before you start
- Craft ideas for you to use and adapt to your own groups

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Keeping Everyone Safe 1

This handy list will run you through the most important things to get right when working with children and young people.

It's a starting point, not an exhaustive list. Please refer to your full safeguarding policy for more information.

Safeguarding

Before Commencing work with children:

- Your church should have a safeguarding policy in place which is reviewed every year by the PCC / church council. You and all the other volunteers should read it annually.
- All those working with children and young people should be trained in safeguarding to at least Foundation level (was C1). The person heading up / overseeing the group should complete Leadership Training (C2) or higher.
- All leaders should know the confidentiality policy as outlined in your safeguarding policy. You might like to practice how you will explain to the children and young people that you can't keep secrets if you think they are at risk.
- Always be on the lookout for the signs and symptoms of abuse and report them to your safeguarding representative.
- Scan below to go to the Signs of abuse webpage on the Church of England website:



Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments should be completed for each group and venue that is used. One risk assessment can cover a regular group and venue for as long as the risks for activities and venue do not change. It is advisable to revisit your risk assessments each year to ensure there are no new risks.

Scan here for an example risk assessment:



Registers

Registers should be kept for all groups that parents and carers are not present for and should include a record of leaders in attendance. Registers should also include children's and young people's emergency contact information and should be stored securely and kept indefinitely. Many leaders use the back of a register as an incident / accident book.

Consent

Parents and carers should complete an activity consent form for their children to attend your group / activities.

Scan to see a template from the Parish Safeguarding handbook:



Parents must be given full details of the activities / event and the form can be used to ask for parental contact details and any special accommodations or help the child may need whilst they are in your care.

Insurance

Most churches are insured by Ecclesiastical Insurance, but you should ask to see the policy. Your insurance is only valid if the Parochial Church Council has approved the activity, and it is classed as 'normal activity'. As long as your group falls within the definition of 'normal activity', it doesn't need to be approved every time.

Keeping Everyone Safe 2

Helpers

All leaders must be recruited by following the Safer Recruitment guidelines (Church of England)

Scan to see the Church of England Safer Recruitment guidelines:



Observe an appropriate age-gap: A five-year age-gap between children and those working with them is highly advisable. This may not always be possible with, for instance, trainee youth-workers, but in that instance the group should be led by other adults who are at least five years older than the young people in the group.

Staffing Ratios

There should be a minimum of two adults for each group. Those under the age of 18 should not be counted in the requirement of the first two adults, but if they are 16 or over may count towards any further numbers of supervisors needed. With groups of mixed gender there should be both male and female workers, and it is recommended that wherever possible one of the leaders should be female.

The Children Act requires the following standard ratios for the supervision of children for indoor activities:

Age Group	Staff	Children
0-2 years	1 for every	3
2-3 years	1 for every	4
3-5 years	1 for every	8
5-8 years	1 for every	8
Over 8 years	1 for the first	8 children and then 1 for each additional 12.

However, on no account should an adult be left by themselves with any age group. Staffing ratios with all age groups should always take into account the need and nature of the group.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Ensure everyone is welcome to your groups and that you are able to cater for additional needs that some young people or children may have. Write a statement that shows your commitment to this which all your leaders agree to.

Scan to see an equal opportunities policy by Thirtyone:Eight:



Disabilities and Additional Needs

Assess what changes should be introduced to ensure that those with disabilities or additional needs have access to and are included in your activities. Consider how you could work with parents and carers to understand children's needs more fully. Are there changes that could be made to your venue?

Accountability

It's a really healthy practice to debrief with your team after each session / group. When you debrief a session, ask what went well, and what could be improved. Encourage everyone in your team to contribute and to speak up when they see something that concerns them, either about a child, young person or other leaders. Create a culture of accountability in your team. Brief notes should be taken and kept for reference. If there are any safeguarding issues to report, these notes should be taken carefully and used to inform your safeguarding representative.

Talk with your Oversight Minister about appropriate making sure appropriate supervision is in place for you.

Keeping Everyone Safe 3

Physical Contact

Within the world of working with children there is a concern about touch. While it is necessary to keep children safe, this need not involve keeping the child at arm's length. Such an approach can be neglectful of children's needs and demoralising to workers. However, children need to be protected from inappropriate touching.

Suggested guidelines for physical contact:

- Always ask permission.
- Be mindful of your body position.
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group or side-hug 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 needs. It should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as inappropriate, 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). Discourage over-clingy children from excessive physical contact.

In addition:

- You can allow people you support to give you brief hugs if you feel comfortable with this.
- You can allow people you support to hold hands or link arms with you to help with travel and stability.
- You should discourage people you support from touching your face. You can offer your hand instead.
- You should discourage people you support from sitting on your lap. You can offer to sit side by side.
- You should avoid using touch if the person you support is very distressed and is unlikely to tolerate it.
- Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to challenge a colleague constructively if necessary. This issue should form a part of any review of children's activity.
- Concerns about possible abuse should always be reported in accordance with the Allegations Policy.

Keeping Everyone Safe 4

Communications

Do not have contact with under 18-year olds via social media, texts or more traditional means.

Always contact via the parents or carers. If a child requests a one to one conversation ensure there are at least other member of the team (who have a current DBS check and safeguarding training) in the chat or physically in the room. If possible, it is best practice that the extra adult is someone of the same gender as the child.

Photos

You need to get permission (now enforced and more detailed under the GDPR rules) to take and use photos of children. For children under 16, parental / carer consent should be obtained. For children over 13, you should also seek their personal permission to use their photo.

You must be specific about how the photo will be used, and should not be used if consent is not freely and specifically given. You may have permission to use a picture on social media to show what happened at an event, but you must not use the same picture for another purpose without going back and getting further consent. Be sure to state clearly where the pictures will be stored, for how long, who will have access to them, alongside how they will be used. Parents / carers and children over 13 have the right to ask you to erase pictures of them unless you have a legitimate reason to keep them.

Transport

Only people with permission may collect a child.

Do not offer to drive or walk home children you are not related to.

Craft Ideas

There are a wealth of resources both online and in books that can be found in our diocese resource centre (Church House, Rotherham).

Some things to remember when choosing crafts and activities:

- Ability of your group
- The trickier the task, the more helpers you will need
- The time you have to complete the craft/activity
- Resources you have and what you need to buy
- The outcome in the book/online is sometimes not what will happen in reality
- If you need to adapt the craft/activity, then adapt it to suit your situation
- Have an extra activity at hand like colouring sheets, for children who finish first
- Find something positive to say about every child's efforts



APPROX
40 MINS



3-11 years



FOOD



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Flatbread

This craft can be used when teaching about Old Testament stories that talk about unleavened bread or when teaching about the last supper.

You will need:

- 175g Plain flour
- 100ml water
- 2 tablespoons oil
- Pinch of salt
- Oven tray
- Greaseproof paper (enough for 6 portions)

Safety points

- Keep children away from the hot oven
- Use oven gloves when removing hot tray from oven
- Allergies – you can swap plain flour for gluten free flour

Directions:

1. Mix together the flour, salt, water and oil until a dough is formed. You may need to add a little more flour if the dough is too wet to handle.
2. On a floured surface, take turns in kneading the dough over a period of about 5 minutes and then separate the dough into 6 pieces.
3. Place dough on a baking tray lined with greaseproof paper and bake for 15- 20 minutes.
4. Take the bread out of the oven and leave to cool.
5. When cooled, use the bread to act out the last supper and get the children to reflect on how the story makes them feel and what questions it makes them ask.



APPROX
10-20MINS



3-11 years



BIBLE



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Zacchaeus up a tree

This craft can be used when teaching about the New Testament story of Zacchaeus who climbed a tree to get a better look at Jesus in the crowd.

You will need:

- tree pattern
- Zacchaeus pattern
- green paper
- jumbo lolly sticks
- wool
- scissors
- hole punch
- crayons
- glue and tape

Safety points

- remind children how to use scissors safely.
- Pre-cut the craft for the younger children

Directions:

To prepare

1. Cut out the top, leaf portion of the tree pattern, and trace it onto green paper.
2. Cut out tree and Zacchaeus figures.
3. Punch a hole near the top of each tree.
4. Cut wool into approximately 7"/20cm lengths.

In session

1. Provide crayons for the children to colour Zacchaeus, and the jumbo lolly stick.
2. Help them attach the leaves to the lolly stick with glue.
3. Tape Zacchaeus to the wool, thread the wool through the hole in the tree, and tie the wool off in the back to move Zacchaeus up and down the tree.



APPROX
10 MINS



3-11 years



BIBLE



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Crossing the Red Sea

This craft can be used when teaching about the Old Testament story of Moses leading the Israelites through the Red Sea as they escaped Egypt.

You will need:

- Blue & Brown Construction Paper (1 per child)
- Glue Sticks
- Fish Stickers
- Scissors

Safety points

- remind children how to use scissors safely.
- Pre-cut the craft for the younger children

Directions:

1. Cut a blue piece of construction paper in half. Then, fold it into thirds.
2. Glue the blue paper onto brown. Put glue on 1 edge strip of the paper cut into thirds. This they will stick down on the long edge of the brown paper.
3. Glue the verse into the centre of the brown paper and stick the fish in the water.
4. Next, take the Moses printable and cut it out. A blob around Moses is just fine, will hold up better and save you time.
5. Next, fold under the tab, put glue on the bottom and glue Moses to the end of the Red Sea. He can then fold down and can pop back up when the waters open.



APPROX
10 MINS



3-11 years



NATURE



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Rainbow nature hunt

This is a great craft that can be linked to the story of Noah and the ark.

You will need:

- Recycled cardboard
- Tape (or elastic bands)
- Flowers and plants from the outdoors

Safety points

- Consider the cleanliness of the flowers and plants you choose

Directions:

1. Cut a rainbow shape out of cardboard. Then paint or draw on all the colours of the rainbow.
2. When your rainbow is coloured in you can either put double sided tape across the surface, or stretch elastic bands round the rainbow to keep your nature finds in place.
3. Once the rainbow is prepared gather some flowers, grass other natural things and add them to your rainbow.
4. Spend time comparing your rainbows. Do they look the same or different?.



APPROX
15 MINS



3-11 years



NATURE



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Planting Seeds

Planting seeds is a great craft activity to do together when learning about new life, growth, creation and more!

You will need:

- Potting soil
- Plant pots
- Seeds (any type you would like to use)
- Stickers or paint to decorate pots

Safety points

- Make sure children do not put the soil or seeds in their mouths
- Lay out an area to help contain the soil

Directions:

1. Decorate the plant pot. This could be done with stickers or painted and left to dry before filling.
2. Fill a pot with soil.
3. Make a hole in the soil and add seed(s) as directed on the packet.
4. Water the seed and send it home to be cared for.
5. Don't forget to ask your group how their plant is growing!



APPROX
15 MINS



3-11 years



CHRISTMAS



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Angel handprint craft

This craft can be used when teaching about Christmas or any other stories that include angels.

You will need:

- Card or sugar paper (white, light blue, medium blue, yellow, dark yellow, and your choice of skin colour)
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Pencil
- handprint angel template

Safety points

- remind children how to use scissors safely
- Pre-cut the craft for the younger children

Directions:

1. Place your child's hands on the white paper and trace the outline with a pencil. Cut out the traced outline.
2. Print and cut template pieces on the correct colour of the paper. The other option is to print them on computer paper and trace the shapes onto coloured paper.
3. Cut out cardstock template pieces
4. Glue the two hands together by overlapping the sections below the thumbs to form handprint angel wings.
5. Glue the blue dress to the middle of the wings.
6. Glue the yellow (or any colour you may choose) hair to the head. Then glue the head to the top of the angel's dress.
7. Glue the arms and praying hands to the front of the dress.
8. Finally, glue the halo to the top of the head.



APPROX
10-15 MINS



3-11 years



CHRISTMAS



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Stained glass nativity

This craft can be used when teaching about Christmas.

You will need:

- Sticky backed plastic
- Nativity Silhouette (free nativity printable on website)
- Colourful tissue paper cut into squares
- Scissors

Safety points

- remind children how to use scissors safely
- Pre-cut the craft for the younger children

Directions:

1. Print and cut out your nativity
2. Lay out your sticky backed plastic, sticky side up.
3. Centre your nativity silhouette on top of the contact paper.
4. Begin placing squares of tissue paper inside the nativity silhouette to create the look of stained glass.
5. Optional extra:
Once the nativity is filled with tissue paper, lay a second sheet of contact paper on top of the entire project. Be careful not to trap air bubbles.
6. Trim the excess contact paper with scissors.
7. You can either tape your stained-glass nativity to your window or use a hole punch and hang it from a string.



APPROX
10 MINS



3-11 years



EASTER



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Easter Tomb

You will need:

- Paper plates or paper
- lolly sticks
- felt tips or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Split pins

Safety points

- remind children how to use scissors safely
- Pre-cut the craft for the younger children
- You may need to help make a hole for the split pin to go through

Directions:

1. Cut the plate in half, or cut the bottom off of it to make an arch shape.
2. Decorate the plate with “stone” colours and additional pictures as desired.
3. Cut an upside down “U” shape out of the bottom of the plate to create a stone “door.”
4. Carefully attach the “stone” to the “tomb” by poking the split pin through the door and the plate (it may be helpful to poke a hole in the plates first, to allow the fastener through).
5. Glue the lolly sticks into the shape of a cross, and attach it to the side of the plate.
6. Add a verse, caption, or handwritten note on the tomb to celebrate that Christ is risen!



APPROX
10 MINS



3-11 years



EASTER



CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

Donkey

This craft can be used on Palm Sunday or for any story involving a donkey!

You will need:

- Donkey outline
- Scissors
- Crayons/felt tips
- Pegs
- Wool (optional)

Safety points

- remind children how to use scissors safely
- Pre-cut the craft for the younger children

Directions:

1. Print out and colour the donkey templates. (Template)
2. Cut out the donkey and glue both sides together.
3. Paint/colour two pegs grey.
4. Then paint the bottom of the pegs black for the hooves.
5. Using small pieces of black wool, glue them onto the mane and the tail of the donkey. Cut off any excess wool.
6. Add the pegs to the finished body of the donkey.

An example session plan for a Sunday morning group (1.5 hours)

Date:		
Learning objective for session: What do you hope your group to have learnt? An example: To understand that prayer is for everyone		
Time	Topic	Details
9.30am	Set up room (15mins)	Set up your room as it is needed for your time together
10.15am	Prayer with team (15mins)	Allocated person to lead time of prayer
10.45am	Sign in opens (15mins)	Allocated person to sign in children as they arrive
11.00am	Session starts (10mins)	Opening song, reminder of group rules etc. What have you done this week? (to give the chance to let the children share what they want to and have been doing)
11.10am	Hook <i>intro to session</i> (10mins)	Intro session with an exciting and interactive activity.
11.20am	Book <i>time to look at the bible together</i> (20mins)	Read the bible story together. Make it as interactive as you can. Children involved and pause to ask questions at different points in the story (where there may be a natural break or pause)
11.30pm	Look <i>digging deeper into what's been read</i> (20mins)	Spend some time going through the story together. How does it relate truth to life? Explore how it impacts the children's lives, why is it relevant to today? What actions does this story/bible passage encourage us to make?
11.50am	Snack time (15mins)	Let the children have a small snack, to have a change in pace and gives them a chance to relax and socialise with the children in the group outside of a learning context.
12.05pm	Took <i>the take away from the session</i> (15mins)	What can you do with you group to help them remember the teaching and learning? A craft, or something to take home or to display in your church or a small part of something bigger that they work on throughout the teaching series or term.
12.20pm	Tidy up (10mins)	Don't forget to help encourage life skills in your group such as helping to tidy up the mess you might have made or helping others who might need some extra help (if they are able to)
12.30pm	Finish and pack down room (15mins)	Those leading and helping should stay to help pack down the whole room and it's always good (if there is time) to help get the room ready for the next group or all back to normal so the next group can easily set up what they need without having to tidy up after you.

An example session plan for a Sunday morning group (30 minutes)

Date:		
Learning objective for session: What do you hope your group to have learnt? An example: To understand that prayer is for everyone		
Time	Topic	Details
9.30am	Set up room and pray (30mins)	Set up your room as it is needed for your time together and spend a short time in prayer to ready yourselves as a team.
10am	Join Church service	
10.15am	Children go to their groups	Take out children to their groups and settle them into the session
10.20am	Hook <i>intro to session</i> (5mins)	Intro session with an exciting and interactive activity.
10.25am	Book <i>time to look at the bible together</i> (5mins)	Read the bible story together. Make it as interactive as you can.
10.30	Look <i>digging deeper into what's been read</i> (5mins)	Spend some time going through the story together. How does it relate truth to life? Use this time to explore how it impacts the children's lives, why is it relevant to today? What actions does this story/bible passage encourage us to make?
10.35am	Took <i>the take away from the session</i> (10mins)	What can you do with you group to help them remember the teaching and learning? A craft, or something to take home
10.45am	Tidy up/return to service	You might need to return to your room after the service to tidy up for the next person to use the room.



You may want to set up Messy Church for all ages of your community to attend together, including those who've never been to church before. Messy Church includes a time of eating, play and worship together. You will plan activities, songs and prayers and an entirely new way to express your faith.

Messy Church has the following values:



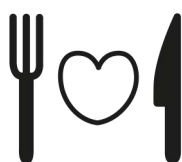
Christ Centred - Messy Church is a church that helps people encounter Jesus as Lord and Saviour.



All-age - Messy Church is for adults and children to enjoy together. Every element aims to be relevant and accessible to all ages.



Creativity - Messy Church reflects the creativity of God in its imaginative hands-on approach to being church together.



Hospitality - Messy Church is outward-facing, welcoming everybody to enjoy the hospitality and unconditional love of God.

Messy Church is about hospitality, expressed most evidently by eating together.



Celebration - Messy Church reflects a God of joy who wants his people to have life in all its fullness.

For more information and resources visit www.messychurch.org.uk/ or scan below.



Messy Church is part of BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship) which believes, with the historic churches, in one God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Forest Church

Many people around us find that their most profoundly spiritual moments are when they are outdoors, in nature. Forest Church is a contemporary movement, with roots in the long Christian tradition of engagement in nature, such as the Celtic and Franciscan approaches. Those engaged in Forest Church are seeking to meet with God in and through their connection with the natural world. The hope is that Forest Churches will become a spiritual home for those outside the traditional church who relate better to outdoor spirituality than gatherings in a church building.

Many Forest Churches meet eight times a year on a pattern determined by nature – the solstices and equinoxes, and the mid -points between these. Others chose a different pattern, but either way, the themes of the seasons are often useful connections to make when preparing gatherings.

When planning a Forest Church gathering, in general, simple is good. It is all too easy to overcomplicate to the point where there isn't enough space and time for engagement with nature and God. A guiding principle therefore is don't over -organise. Just provide a framework and trust God working in and through nature.

Taken from the Diocese of Gloucester Forest Church booklet. Scan here to see it:



If you have an outside space, big or small you may want to start a Muddy Church.

Muddy Church is a place for people to gather together, outside and to connect with the space and God.

One of the wonderful things about Muddy Church is the low cost and low pressure. The idea of being in and part of nature means that we try to use those resources around us.

There are a range of craft ideas that are fun to make and activities for drawing together or feasting but generally try and see what is around you and use that.

Every Muddy Church is different, each is autonomous, because it is about you engaging with your community; some people are in very rural areas, others in the inner city, for some people there is a specific age group but generally we aim to be intergenerational. The ideas and resources here are to spark ideas, to add some of the ingredients or to help support you. We do not provide plans or programmes, structures or routines because that is not the heart of Muddy Church. It is about being aware, listening and responding to the world around you and God.

More resources and ideas can be found at muddychurch.co.uk or scan here:

