

Guidance on staffing levels/ratios

There must always be a minimum of two leaders who are unrelated, even if the group size is smaller than indicated in the table below.

We endorse the OfSTED **minimum** requirements which are:

Age of Children	Number of adults	Number of Children
0 – 2	1	3
2 – 3	1	4
3 – 8	1	8
8+	1 1	for the first 8 children for every further 12

Please note that these ratios apply to activities in the church halls i.e. Sunday school, crèche, youth group. Higher ratios are recommended for activities taking place offsite when travel is involved.

Good Practice Points to Follow:

If groups are mixed gender, try to have both male and female leaders.

Ensure you follow 'Safer Recruitment Guidelines' (following the link to National church guidance from the Policy pages of Blackburn Diocese safeguarding pages), when recruiting staff to work with groups with vulnerable people (children / young people and adults at risk). Ensure that all elements of this are completed satisfactorily before they are in post.

Ensure that all leaders are familiar with 'Safeguarding in the Diocese of Blackburn' and know what to do if they have any concerns. If concerns arise, these should be treated as confidential and shared only with the parish priest and Church Safeguarding Officer in the first instance. In an emergency, always dial 999.

A minimum of two leaders need to be in attendance from before the first child arrives until the last child has left. It is strongly advisable that these leaders are not related in any way.

Young people (16 – 17 years old) can help with children’s groups but they must work under the supervision of a suitably appointed adult leader. They would also count in the ratios of adults: children above as a child.

Please note: no person under the age of 18 years can be left in charge of an individual or group of vulnerable people of any age and must always be supervised by a properly recruited and checked adult leader.

During Activities:

Make sure that the children are visible to leaders at all times and that leaders position themselves where they can clearly see the children.

Ensure that children have access to the toilets without having to be in contact with other groups using the halls.

Make sure there is a telephone available in case of emergencies – a mobile phone or easy access to a landline.

Ensure that all accidents are recorded in the Accident Book (see Guidance on first aid and accident book record in the safeguarding toolkit for details).

Ensure that, as far as possible, there are sufficient adults with the group that would allow an emergency or accident to be dealt with safely without putting the remainder of the group at risk or with inadequate supervision.