

Safe practice and safe premises. *Ruddington Baptist Church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working that promote their safety and well-being.*

There is widespread concern that the “Health & Safety” culture has got out of control, with people now so afraid of taking risks that children can no longer take part in activities that bring adventure and challenge. We believe that part of a child’s development is in learning to live in a world that can sometimes be threatening and harmful. However, we should seek to minimise the occasions for unnecessary risk.

Talking with parents

We will give parents/carers clear information about the activity for which consent is being sought, including:

- The venue.
- Start and end times.
- Travel arrangements.
- Consent regarding photography and electronic communication.
- Contact details of the event leader.
- The fact that the church has a Safeguarding Policy and the name and contact details of the Designated Person (Ruth Ross) should they have any concerns.

We will seek the consent of parents/carers for our activity with children and young people, which will include:

- A point of contact for emergencies .
- Key information about medication or behavioural issues etc. for the well-being of the child or young person.
- Consent for emergency medical treatment.

This information will be held by the leader of the relevant activity during the event, so that information is readily available, and then stored by Ruth Ross in accordance with the RBC Data Protection policy.

Risk assessments

We don’t want to create unnecessary paperwork, or burden ourselves with tasks that detract from the practice of youth and children’s ministry.

However, in the same way that making a shopping list can help ensure that we end up with the food we really need, experience shows that writing out a risk assessment helps us to think ahead about how to help make the activity/event safe.

In the event of an incident, written evidence that we have carefully considered safety and possible risks may both help disprove allegations of negligence, and reassure the parents who entrust their children to our care.

The following people are responsible for writing and reviewing (annually) risk assessments, using the standard template supplied.

- Hub** – Derek Sanderson. (review November)
- Ruddington Young People’s Centre.** Derek Sanderson (review November)
- Youth cell evenings** – cell leaders. (review annually)
- One-off youth events** – event leader. It is essential that risk assessments are completed in advance for any events involving children/young people staying away from home overnight.

Following events, risk assessments should be given to the church secretary to be stored in accordance with the RBC Data Protection policy.

Outings and overnight events.

In addition to informing parents of arrangements, gaining consent and carrying out a special risk assessment, we will:

- ✓ Have a mix of male and female adult workers for mixed boy/girl groups.
- ✓ Sleep males and females separately.
- ✓ Judge according to the circumstances whether it is wise for adults to share sleeping accommodation with children or young people. An adult will never sleep alone in a room with children or young people.
- ✓ Ensure that children and young people can dress and undress separately from both adults and the opposite sex.
- ✓ Issue RBC leaders of residential events with separate instructions to ensure safe and smooth running.

Sunday services

There are some particular areas of concern on Sunday mornings, which need the help and involvement of every adult present.

- ✓ Junior church workers are only responsible for the children in their care during the service. At all other times, including all-age services, parents are responsible for the supervision and welfare of their own children and any others they have brought to church.
- ✓ At the end of the service, parents and carers therefore need to go to children without delay, and supervise them at all times.
- ✓ All adults should be vigilant to avoid the possibility of a child leaving the premises unnoticed.
 - No child should be allowed to play in the porch, nor should the outside door ever be propped open.
 - The car park gate should normally be closed between 10.30 and 12.30pm.

Photography

We want to be able to take photos or videos of both children and adults at church activities – for use in future sessions, publicity, as a record to look back on, and as a memento for the person being photographed/videoed (e.g. at their baptism). We can be responsible without being overly restrictive!

Our promise.

We will:

- ✓ Have signed consent from parents/carers to take photographs of children at church activities.
- ✓ Ask before we take photographs, and respect the wishes of children and young people who do not wish to have their photograph taken.
- ✓ Delete, at their request, any photograph we take of a young person.
- ✓ Store photographs digitally on the main office desktop computer.
- ✓ Exercise discretion when taking photos, e.g it is inappropriate to take photos of children and young people in their nightclothes at overnight events.
- Not store images of children and young people on mobile phones.
- Not distribute photos to other individuals without the permission of a parent/carer.
- Not publish any photograph to a social networking site without the consent of both the young person and their parent.
- Never identify children or young people by name in photographs sent to the press.