

Good practice guidance

Working with Adults

The Parish of West Swindon & Lydiard Tregoze

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1. Guidance Context

This guidance must be followed by all staff and volunteers working for the Parish of West Swindon & Lydiard Tregoze. There are additional guidelines for clergy contained within 'Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy, 2015'¹.

This guidance is provided for all staff and volunteers to enable them to have an understanding of the behaviours and standards expected in relation to work with adults and the provision of activities within the Parish of West Swindon & Lydiard Tregoze.

The guidance contained within this document is based on 'Promoting a Safe Church, 2017'²

2. Code of Conduct

Everyone involved in work with adults within Holy Trinity Church, Shaw, should:

- Ensure that they are aware of the relevant policies: e.g. safeguarding, lone working and that those policies are followed alongside the good practice guidance.
- Treat all adults with dignity and respect, avoiding any language or actions which may be perceived as threatening, harassment, bullying or abusive.
- Exercise care when ministering to persons with whom they have a close personal friendship or family relationship. Ask for another person to provide this pastoral care where appropriate.
- Be aware of the risks associated with pastoral and professional relationships and seek advice or supervision when these concerns arise (this could include

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/guidelines-professional-conduct-clergy>

² <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>

development of inappropriate feelings towards the person providing ministry or a level of dependency that places unreasonable or excessive demands on time and availability).

- Recognise that pastoral relationships may develop into romantic attachments and such situations should be handled sensitively. Alternative arrangements should be made for the ongoing pastoral care of the person concerned.
- Ensure that anyone exercising a healing ministry has been trained in the theology and non-intrusive practice of that work and are part of a supported and supervised team.
- Recognise their limits and not undertake any ministry that is beyond their competence or role (e.g. therapeutic counselling, deliverance ministry, counselling victims of abuse and domestic violence, or their perpetrators, or giving legal advice). In such instances the person needing such support should be referred to another person or agency with appropriate expertise.
- Avoid behaviour that could give the impression of inappropriate favouritism or the encouragement of inappropriate special relationships.
- Treat those with whom they minister or visit with respect, encouraging self-determination, independence and choice.
- Not provide any assistance with physical needs, including washing and toileting.
- Not undertake any pastoral ministry while under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs/substances. (There maybe occasions when a prescribed substance affects the capacity of the person to engage in a ministry activity if this is the case they should either step down from the ministry or limit their role until they are safely able to resume).
- Be aware of own language and body language, e.g. using innuendoes or compliments of a sexual nature are always inappropriate.
- Consider the appropriateness of initiating or receiving any physical contact, for example a hug may not be welcome by everyone.
- Not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond any salary or recognised allowances.
- Any gifts received should be disclosed to another e.g. a colleague, Churchwarden, Incumbent, relevant activity leader where it should be decided whether they could be accepted.
- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those who may be vulnerable, e.g. the recently bereaved.

Visiting in the home

(See also guidance on 'Pastoral visiting') Where visiting a person at home be careful to:

- Visit in pairs, but recognising this is not always possible for pastoral and practical reasons ensure that appropriate risk assessments are completed before visiting alone.
- Go only when and where invited, and do not follow the person being visited into e.g. kitchen or bedroom
- Avoid entering private areas such as bedrooms if possible.
- Only assist with tasks that are an agreed part of the role
- Do not administer any medication, or take food gifts that may interfere with medication
- If confined to bed, then knock on door before entering (even if open) and sit on a chair and not the bed, leaving the door open
- Do not accept personal gifts of money, If they wish to donate it should be done in an official way through the church
- If carrying out any errands, such as shopping, this will need an agreed system. E.g. check with family, carer, keep a separate purse, receipts etc³.
- Record visits in a notebook or similar that is accessible to others visiting the same person(s) and the pastoral visiting co-ordinator

Driving

Where a volunteer is driving adults for church activities (i.e. collecting them for services etc.) they must be recruited safely and the organiser of this activity should ensure that the driver has adequate insurance cover if they are using their own vehicle⁴.

3. Arrangements for activities involving adults

All activities provided for adults by The Parish of West Swindon & Lydiard Tregoze are the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

The PCC should require that all activities are safely and appropriately managed. Every activity must have the following and it is the responsibility of the activity leader, supported by the PCC, to ensure this happens:

- An up to date risk assessment - reviewed annually or following any incident
- Pay due consideration to the access needs of all involved
- Access to a First Aid kit, an accident book and appropriately qualified first aiders⁵ where meeting at Church
- Ensure that there is a clear fire evacuation procedure from the premises

³ Shopping is a regulated activity as it involves the administration and use of another persons finances it must only be done by those with sufficient DBS clearance and as part of an agreed pastoral care arrangement.

⁴ <https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/choosing-the-right-insurance/motor-insurance/volunteer-drivers/>

⁵ First Aid training is often available from British Red Cross <https://www.redcrossfirstaidtraining.co.uk/> or St John Ambulance <https://www.sja.org.uk/courses/>

- Ensure that leaders have access to a phone and hold emergency numbers
- Complete a log in the accident book for any accident
- Use staff that have been safely recruited where a group or activity is specifically for vulnerable adults and or where any 'regulated activity⁶' will occur.
- Ensure that the space used for the group is:
 - Adequately heated or cooled
 - Big enough for the activity and number of people attending
 - Is safe and that any broken furniture or fittings are reported and not causing a health and safety risk
- Ensure that where adults are visited in their own homes that:
 - The adult and their visitor are clear of the purpose of the visits, the duration, frequency and boundaries to the relationship
 - That risk assessments are completed and due consideration made to lone working requirements
 - That the adult has the opportunity to have a friend or relative with them when visits occur if they choose
- Ensure that where visits are made to hospitals or care home settings that staff and volunteers:
 - follow the sign in / out procedures for the setting and observe agreed timings (duration and e.g. 2pm to 4pm) of visits (and whether appropriate to the person being visited) and agreed purpose
 - are aware of what areas are open to visitors
 - do not interfere with provided care and that advice is sought from the staff within the setting if it is not clear what the visitor should/ should not do
 - report any concerns about care to the setting manager and reported as a safeguarding concern if appropriate.

4. Young Helpers

Young helpers, i.e. those under 18 years of age may require particular support and supervision where they help with activities for adults.

- Young people aged 16 and 17 should be recruited via the Safer Recruitment process and are old enough to apply for a DBS check where the role requires one. They should not however be given supervision responsibility and should always work under the supervision of an adult. They should not be counted in the ratios.

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216900/Regulated-Activity-Adults-Dec-2012.pdf

- Young people under 16 may act as helpers with activities. Consideration should be made regarding their level of maturity and their ability to behave responsibly and to follow instruction. Any young helper must have a clear role and be able to understand and follow the code of conduct. Young helpers will require parental consent (signed) to be present and assist with activities.