

Health & Safety Checklist for Children

These guidelines are about the physical environment in which we care for (particularly young) children and are for those responsible for activities with children and young people in the Church. They should not be onerous to implement.

Implementation will depend on the age(s) of the children. If followed, they should prevent some of the more common accidents and so contribute to the process of **keeping our children safe**. They are based on:

- guidance issued by the then DfEE to child minders and are applied common sense and based on the experience of others.
- acceptance of the principle that the Church needs to be a safe place for children and young people entrusted to our care.

Area	Issue	Remedy
Entrance and Exit	Are the doors to the outside world secure?	Ensure small children cannot wander off in the building or out of it. Consider whether the fitting of a childproof barrier is necessary.
Stairs	Does the building exit on to a safe area or a road? Are the stairs safe for small children? Wooden or stone? Can they fall down them?	Ensure an adult is at the door when children leave and that children who need to be accompanied leave with an adult. Ensure small children are accompanied down stairs. Is a stair gate needed?
Heating	What type of heating? Could a child burn themselves if they fell against it?	Ensure heating has guard where necessary.
Cooking and kettles	Is there child access to cooker, boiling kettle, etc?	Don't allow children access to cooking unless supervised. Never boil a kettle at child level. Ensure wires cannot be tripped over or kettle pulled over.
Electrics	Can children access electrical installations and sockets?	Ensure socket outlets have shutters that comply with BS1363 and IET Wiring Regulations BS7671:2008 (2015) Ensure electrics are boxed and/or inaccessible

Furniture	How child friendly is the furniture – sharp/metal corners/edges; old wooden objects which could splinter?	Remove or make inaccessible (in a corner?) child unfriendly furniture. Fit corner cushions if necessary
Stacked chairs	Are chairs stacking variety?	Ensure stacks of chairs are safe and children have no access. Children should never be allowed to climb on stacked chairs.
Cleaning materials and poisons		Ensure cleaning materials etc are in locked and inaccessible cupboard. Ensure cleaner(s) are aware of risks to small children of leaving materials out.
Craft materials	Glue, tippex, permanent markers are potentially noxious.	Ensure craft materials are put/locked away when not in use.
Rat poisons or pest control	Are poisonous pest controls used?	Ensure poison is put down in places inaccessible to children. Ensure those who put down the poison are aware of children/s use of building
Toilets	Are toilets sanitary? Can a child lock themselves in the toilet?	Ensure toilets are clean. Ensure toilet doors can be unlocked from the outside.
General cleanliness	How is the floor? How dirty will a small child get if s/he crawls? Is the floor covering adequate for crawling?	Ensure floor covering is appropriate to age group and activity. Check for loose carpet tiles, frayed carpet etc.
Fire	Are Fire Exits known and unlocked? Are Fire Exits locked when building is not in use?	Ensure adults know Fire Exit routes and Fire Exit doors are unlocked. Ensure Fire Exits are unlocked and/or that keys are identified and accessible.
Access by stranger/others	Can people from the outside world access the building?	Ensure entrances which are not Fire Exits are locked. Ensure that if children go to unsupervised parts of the building, they are accompanied.
Cupboards/Storage	Could things fall out of a cupboard onto a child?	Ensure cupboards are filled safely. Should cupboard lock/fasteners be fitted?
Carbon Monoxide	If gas is used is there a Carbon Monoxide detector?	Fit Carbon Monoxide detector
Registration	A register of children attending (and the responsibility of the Leaders) MUST be kept. Is it?	Keep Register, which allows all children to be traced in the event of Fire or Accident. Include parents and/or carers' name and address and phone number.

Medical	Are there children who have special needs by reason of health or disability? – their medical needs must be covered. Is there a First Aid Box? Is there a First Aider – preferably more than one – and trained?	Leaders need to be aware of special needs. The First Aid Box needs to be checked regularly for contents. A First Aider needs to be present or easily accessible.
Accidents	Do you have accidents? Do you keep an Accident Book (preferably a hard backed book)?	Keep an Accident Book which identifies the causes and remedy if appropriate. The Accident Book should be easily available and on show if possible.
Plants	If plants are in the building are they poisonous?	Some common and decorative plants are poisonous. Ensure they are not accessible to children. Preferably remove them.

The way leaders implement this Risk Assessment will vary, depending on the type of room/building being used, the age of children and also the extent to which other groups share the accommodation at the same or other times.

Leaders will quickly become familiar with the issues and a quick inspection, carried out a couple of minutes before the children arrive, should normally suffice to ensure your premises have no obvious death traps!

Young people and older children

Similar principles apply, though hopefully we can expect older children to be able to be more responsible for themselves.

Leaders should be particularly aware of the need to:

- Keep a register of attendees with name, address and telephone number
- Work with another leader and not on their own
- Know if a child/young person has medical needs or a disability
- Ensure First Aid resources are available and the First Aider has recent training
- Ensure parents, guardians or carers give written permission if children or young people are taken on a trip or visit off premises
- Be alert to the presence of strangers or others who might wish to do the children or young people harm
- Ensure principles of ensuring a safe environment still apply.