



1.1C GUIDANCE ON UNDER 18S WORKING WITH CHILDREN - JUNIOR HELPERS

Junior Helpers (aged 16–18 years) can be used in groups to assist staff and volunteers to provide children's activities. However, it is not appropriate to require someone aged less than 18 years to take on the role of leader or to be in sole charge of children, as this would mean leaving a child in charge of children. They therefore cannot be counted as part of supervision ratios (**Guidance 1.3F**).

Any 16/17-year-olds wishing to help with groups should complete an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure/Garda Vetting prior to starting to work with children. Signed parental/carer consent is a prerequisite.

If under-16s are helping, in order to gain expertise, citizenship development, personal or professional development, they should not be expected to take on the full range of duties of a member of staff or volunteer or be left in sole charge of children. They will not be permitted to submit an Access NI Enhanced Disclosure/Garda Vetting check until the age of 16. Signed parental/carer consent is a prerequisite. They therefore need to be supervised at all times by a leader who is AccessNI or Garda Vetted.

Under-18s must be provided with induction training appropriate to their level of responsibility (**Guidance 1.5A**) as well as Junior Helper Safeguarding training (**Guidance 1.5B**). The Parish Panel should ensure such induction training is provided and the leadership of the group should supervise these young leaders.

When junior helpers turn 18, they should complete the remaining parts of the recruitment process to undertake the leadership role; however if they have been in constant contact with the group, they do not need to repeat Access NI Enhanced Disclosure/Garda Vetting unless they are due for re-vetting.