



1.3N GUIDANCE ON TAKING CHILDREN ON OUTINGS/RESIDENTIALS

If planning an activity off parish premises or staying away from home overnight, church personnel should consider the following:

Before the trip

- Participate with the children and young people to help plan the trip.
- Conduct a thorough Local Safeguarding Risk Assessment before arriving (**Guidance 1.3A**). Measures to mitigate risk will include:
 - Ensuring that all leaders are appropriately recruited including training and Access NI/Garda Vetting (**Guidance 1.1B**).
 - Obtaining written parental consent to participate on the trip. This form should include contact details (including emergency contact details), medical consent and media consent for photographs, social media, etc. (**Guidance 1.3C**).
 - Identifying a key leader who has overall responsibility for the trip.
 - Ensuring adequate and appropriate child-to-adult supervision ratio (taking account of gender) (**Guidance 1.3F**).
 - Appointing a contact person who will not be on the trip but who has access to all information and contact details.
 - Ensuring appropriate insurance cover.
 - Conducting an equipment, safety and first aid kit check (**Guidance 1.3I**).
 - Developing a group agreement for children and the adults with clear procedures for dealing with a breach of the agreement (**Guidance 1.2C**). The agreement and the procedures are made known to parents/carers.
 - Having clear emergency procedures for a variety of incidents, including when a child goes missing.
 - Making provision for returning home early, should that become necessary.
 - Ensuring that any off-site location is compliant in relation to child protection and health and safety and enquiring about any additional policies which may impact your group.
 - Ensuring that there are appropriate sleeping arrangements for young people, with separate and appropriate sleeping arrangements for leaders.
 - Ensuring there is an anti-bullying procedure in place (**Guidance 1.3E**).
 - Ensuring there is a system of keeping records in line with data protection and confidentiality.



- If there are children with additional needs attending the trip, ensure that you have met with the parents and the child to consider how they take part in the trip and any additional measures that need to be considered. Depending on the specific needs of the child this may include consideration of:
 - Administration of medicines. It is important that church personnel are adequately trained to administer medicines, are willing to do so, and have obtained parental consent. Additionally, any administration of medicines should be recorded in keeping with data protection. You should also check with your insurers in this regard.
 - Showering and intimate care.
 - Access to bathrooms.
 - Suitability of accommodation.
- Agree a system of monitoring and evaluation of the trip.
- Meet with the leaders of the group to ensure that they are fully aware of the Local Safeguarding Risk Assessment and procedures to mitigate the risks.
- Meet with the parents/carers of the children and young people attending in order to inform them of the procedures in place to ensure the safety of their child. This includes sharing the following with them:
 - The consequences of breaching the group contract.
 - Agreement about the use of mobile devices and which children can be contacted.
 - Appropriate clothing needed for the trip.
 - Contact details for leaders and accommodation and transport company.

On the Trip

- Review the Local Safeguarding Risk Assessment to see if there are additional risks that haven't been considered and develop mitigation measures.
- Agree boundaries around unstructured time and bedtimes.
- Review the code of behaviour and ensure everyone is aware.
- Agree safeguarding procedures and ensure the children know who to go to if they are worried or concerned.
- Monitor and evaluate in line with the agreed procedure.

After the trip

- Conduct an evaluation with the children, parents/carers and leaders.
- Review the Local Safeguarding Risk Assessment and establish if there were additional risks that should have been considered in advance to help with future planning.



Planning a Trip Abroad

If planning a trip abroad, church personnel should consider the following in addition to considerations in the previous section:

- Appropriate paperwork should be in place in relation to passports, visas, health and medical conditions.
- Copies of documents and passport numbers should be retained by leaders at home and abroad.
- Insurance cover should be in place for all aspects of traveling and staying abroad.
- A detailed travel itinerary should be prepared and shared with parents/carers including contact details.
- Currency, legal differences, climate, time zones, cultural differences and vaccinations should be accounted for.
- A contingency plan and budget should be in place should any member of the group need to return home at short notice.

Transport

Children should not be transported by church personnel on their own. Church personnel should ensure that another adult member of church personnel is present, or other children are present in the vehicle.

- If a situation occurs when a child has to be transported alone, ensure other church personnel and the parents/carers know this is happening, have given consent and that the child is in the rear seat. Ensure everyone wears their seatbelts. Current seatbelt and child seat legislation must be adhered to.
- Those church personnel transporting children must have a relevant licence and appropriate insurance cover for the transport of children as part of their vehicle insurance policy.
- Where church personnel agree to transport children, it is a private arrangement between that person and the child's parents and is covered on the church personnel's own car insurance.
- When using public transport to transport children to activities, church personnel should complete a head count when embarking and disembarking the mode of transport. A plan should be in place if a child gets lost or is separated from the group when using transport. This plan should be agreed in advance and communicated to the group.
- Have a back-up plan in case the mode of public transport is not available.
- When hiring a coach or minibus to transport children to activities, ask for confirmation of insurance and public service vehicle licence for the firm and that an AccessNI/ Garda Vetted driver will be supplied to drive the bus on the day.