

## Touch

Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse.

One of the aims of the policy is for church groups to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made.

- All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.
- If any activity, for example bell-ringing, requires physical contact make sure that the child, young person or vulnerable adult, and their parents/carers are aware of this and its nature.
- There must be no physical punishment of any kind nor should any sanction ridicule or humiliate a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Avoid physically rough games.
- Avoid unnecessary informal touching.
- Avoid taking young children to the toilet, but when unavoidable make sure another adult is informed or organise a toilet break for the whole group.
- Children, young people and vulnerable adults may sometimes need comforting; make sure they are responded to warmly but with other adults around.
- First Aid should be administered with others around.
- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child, young person or vulnerable adult who is harming themselves or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Parish Safeguarding Representative.
- All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child, young person or vulnerable adult's needs and not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

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