



NEW LIFE CHURCH, CONGLETON

WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE – CODE OF PRACTICE

New Life Church (NLC) requires the following:

- Adult Leaders are all over the age of 18 and have been DBS checked.
- Young Leaders are all under the age of 18 and have been deemed suitable by the Children and Youth Workers to act in this role.

Supervision of Groups

It is important that clear guidance of expectations is given to all Adult Leaders in order to ensure quality childcare, protection of young people from possible abuse, and Youth Workers from false accusation:

- All young people should be treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- A clear strategy for summoning additional adult help, if needed should be in place.
- The privacy of young people should be respected, avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games, actions and comments.
- Where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling) and a young person is being seen on their own, ensure that other workers know the interview is taking place and that someone else is in the building. It is preferable that meetings of this nature are 'same sex'.
- No person under 16 years of age should be left in charge of any young people of any age. Young people attending a group should never be left alone at any time.
- Ensure that the only people allowed to participate in a young person's activity are the workers assigned to that group. Other adults should not be allowed free access.

The ratio guidelines for young people is two adults (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 young people, with an additional leader for every 10 young people. Following a risk assessment, this ratio would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered high risk or dangerous, or when catering for young people with special needs and disabilities.

A worker might be alone with a young person (eg: in discipleship situations) and this will always be arranged with a leader of the same sex as the young person.

In situations where a Youth Worker is approached by a young person of the opposite sex about an issue or problem, they should carefully seek to involve another worker of the same sex as the young person.

Registering Young People and Record Keeping

A register of young people attending a group or activity should be maintained, together with details of workers and any visitors.

Workers should write down unusual or problematic events or conversations, recording what they witnessed, a copy to be kept by themselves, and a copy to be given to the Adult Leader(s) in charge. This may be very helpful, if workers have to deal with a difficult young person who subsequently makes an accusation or complaint. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights amongst young people and any actions taken. Logs can protect both young people and workers.



Maintain other records such as an accident book. Concerns can be raised many years after an event and records should therefore be kept as advised by insurance companies.

It is good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities and a general consent form should be signed, giving details of parents/carers. In the event of an accident, the parent/carer must be informed if the young person is under the age of 16 and should be informed if aged between 16-18. Medical assistance should only be provided by a designated first aider.

Transport

Advice on transporting young people is as follows:

- Parental/carer consent should be given and all journeys should be carried out with the knowledge of the Children & Youth Workers.
- Consideration should be given to dropping off the least vulnerable young person last and plan routes accordingly.
- At collection or dropping off points do not leave a young person on their own and always ensure that an appropriate adult is present to receive the young person.
- Drivers of vehicles transporting young people should be aged at least 21 and have had a full driving licence for at least two years with no endorsements or points.

Personal Contact

- Any personal contact should be related to the young person's needs, not that of the Youth Worker.
- Any personal contact should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the young person, rather than the Youth Worker.
- A hug in sight of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors...keep everything public.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually provocative.
- Young people have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances (eg: when they need medical attention).
- Youth Workers should monitor one another in the area of physical contact and feel free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- Concerns about abuse of any kind should always be reported.

Guidelines for Discipline

Discipline is not the sole responsibility of the Youth Workers, but they may be required to intervene in situations, so as to prevent a worsening of a crisis or to prevent a situation occurring again in the future. The following are guidelines for Youth Workers when faced with situations that require immediate intervention or follow up advice and guidance:

- They should pray with the other workers before the session and debrief before they leave.
- They should ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the young persons in their care and for the particular situations being faced.
- They should work on each individual young person's positives without making comparisons to another young person but encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- They should build healthy relationships with young people and be a good role model by setting an example.



- They should be consistent in what they say and ensure that other Youth Workers know what has been said, which avoids the possibility of manipulation.
- They should never use any form of physical chastisement and they should try not to shout, using voice tone as necessary.
- They should be aware of other Youth Workers and situations or issues where support may be needed, especially being aware of younger workers and people in new situations.
- They should lay down ground rules including respect for property, making sure the young people understand what action will be taken if not kept.
- Each young person should be dealt with on an individual basis.

Any form of bullying will not be accepted or condoned in any situation and all forms of bullying will be addressed. If bullying is witnessed or suspected, the Youth Workers will refer to the NLC Anti-Bullying Policy and seek the advice of a Church Elder.

Smoking Products, Alcohol, Controlled Substances and Solvents

New Life Church has a no smoking policy at all events managed by NLC Youth Workers. If a young person needs to engage with smoking products, then they must leave the organised event and find a designated smoking area and not return to the event until they have extinguished all smoking products.

New Life Church has a no alcohol policy at all events managed by NLC Youth Workers. If a young person is found in possession of any alcoholic product, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately. If a young person arrives at an event managed by NLC Youth Workers in a state of intoxication, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

Controlled substances, drugs and solvents are banned on New Life Church premises. If a young person is found to be in possession of controlled substances, drugs or solvents, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

If a young person refuses to leave the premises after having been asked to do so, parents/carers should be informed immediately and in the event of any danger to the young person themselves or anyone else or serious damage to property, the police should be called.

Modern Technologies and Safe Communication

It is accepted that most young people will have a mobile phone which may well be their main way of communicating with both their peers and Youth Workers, whether by phone call, text or other messaging service. Particular diligence needs to be applied when Youth Workers use mobile phones to communicate with young people and these guidelines should always be followed:

- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on/shown to the Youth Worker's line manager or a Church Leader.
- Youth Workers should use clear and unambiguous language particularly when texting, leaving no room for misinterpretation. The use of generally accepted abbreviations and emojis in texts and messages, should be carefully selected, leaving no room for misinterpretation.



- Youth Workers should ensure they only take photographs of young people when consent is obtained and all images should be stored in accordance with Data Protection Act principles.
- Youth Workers should keep copies or history of online conversations as a safeguard to themselves and inform their line manager or a Church Leader of any concerns.

Praying with Young People

Some of the main ingredients that underpin any effective ministry to young people, including prayer, are:

- Acceptance
- Respect
- Non-judgemental listening
- Sensitivity
- Discernment
- Patience

When praying with young people, it is expected that these values will be applied, enabling trust and respect to be built and a good prayer model to be provided, so young people can learn how to pray for others in a sensitive and responsible way.

Parents/carers should be made aware that prayer is an integral part of church life (particularly if they do not attend church themselves) and that on occasions young people may be prayed with/for either corporately or individually. Should a parent/carer request that their young person does not participate in individual prayer, this must be respected.

When praying with young people, the following principles should always be followed:

- Always make sure the young person has given permission, and always pray in an open area where other workers, and/or young people are around.
- Ask the young person what they are requesting prayer for and remember to listen to their reply. Speak quietly and calmly, never shouting or raising a voice.
- Always be alert to safeguarding issues and other concerns such as bullying and if appropriate, do not delay in taking appropriate action.
- Encourage the young person to tell their parents/carers/teachers etc. as appropriate.
- If a young person becomes distressed, stop praying. Stay calm and gently ask them what has caused the distress and talk to another Youth Worker if appropriate.

<p>This Code of Conduct sets out an expectation that everyone within New Life Church and everyone who uses its services, or participates in its activities, should relate to each other in a mutually respectful way.</p>
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