

WARM SPACES – SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

Planning the event:

We are aware that the CIS have published guidance about the setting up of Warm Spaces. It refers to consulting the Safeguarding Coordinator, so we thought it may be helpful to send out some guidance to read alongside the guidance. With the cost-of-living crisis, we all want to do our part to help others in a time of need. In creating a safer environment in our parishes it's important each Parish considers their parishioners needs but also the staff and volunteers that will be supporting each event.

When planning the event, look at risks as they apply to attendees and to volunteers/staff. Ensuring that risk assessments and procedures for the event are clearly communicated with all help to create a successful event and a warm welcome for all. Start by reading through the CSSA guidelines for planning an event. Attached is a copy of the shortened guide to help you with your initial risk assessment.

Planning the event:

Do you have a risk assessment that takes into account both health and safety and safeguarding?

- What staff/volunteer roles will be needed to carry out the event?
- How will you make participants aware that all under 18-year-olds must be accompanied by a parent/ carer and supervised by their appropriate adult at all times?

Safe Recruitment of volunteers and staff:

- Do the roles need to be DBS checked? Although an individual may have an opportunity to come into contact with children or vulnerable adults, this is not sufficient to be entitled to an Enhanced DBS check. Eligibility to apply for a DBS check depends on the specific role a person will perform whilst conducting their duties within an organisation.
- Do you already have volunteers in the parish that are DBS checked for the child or adult activity?
- If you have roles that need to be DBS checked allow time for the check to take place. Up to 8 weeks minimum.
- The Event Coordinator has responsibility to check insurances and DBS are in place and that all staff are aware of their role

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- Any volunteers who are responsible for transporting parishioners to the event by arrangement of the Parish will need to be DBS checked. If it is a personal arrangement e.g. Volunteer drives their neighbour then a DBS is not required.
- Refer to the Accessible Transport Policy - GOV.UK website for all advice on transport.
- Safe Practice of volunteers and staff:

Along with the risk assessment, ensuring:

- Volunteers work in pairs or more from opening to closing.
- Avoid meeting one on one with parishioners outside of the event space and that they know who to report concerns or issues during the event.

For event co-ordinators:

Signpost participants to appropriate local services such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Local Authority.

- That all volunteers DBSs, car insurance etc. are checked and cleared before commencing
- That all volunteers are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and know their obligations to best safeguarding practice.
- Where possible use volunteers who already have an enhanced parish DBS cleared for the specific role they are appointed - check with your PSR.
- Make sure your venue has the Diocese Safeguarding posters displayed including who to contact in case of an emergency.
- Refer to the Creating a Safer Environment manual for further guidance, and liaise with your PSR and the Diocese Safeguarding team

Responding to allegations and concerns:

- Supporting people with their wellbeing, faith and lifestyle can sometimes lead to disclosure. Please ensure that all that you have a named person for safeguarding, and that your staff and volunteers are aware of who this person is.
- All allegations and concerns must be reported; if you are unsure of what action to take, please see advice from our webpage Reporting a concern about a child or adult at risk If you have information of a safeguarding nature where a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or requires immediate medical attention call emergency services on 999.
- If you would like further information, resources, and guidance on how to create safer environment in your parish please check the Diocese of Westminster website: Creating a safe environment. With appropriate measures we can ensure a truly warm welcome for all who visit our parishes.

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