



Parent & Baby/Toddler Group Guidance

Safeguarding considerations need to be included and implemented when organising this type of social activity. We have assembled a guidance that will help the Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR), the parish priest and anyone involved in the creation of an activity group for under 5's.

Hall Hire vs Parish Run Activity

- For external organisations making a booking to run a parent and baby/toddler group in the Parish, the organisation must sign the 'Hall Hire Agreement' as with all other bookings.
- The organisation must demonstrate safeguarding good practices, training and meet the Ofsted requirements for their delivery. The Safeguarding section of the hall hire agreement outlines what needs to be provided for the booking to be accepted.
- For parishes that want to start a parent and baby/toddler group as part of the activities they offer to families and children in their parish, further guidance is provided here after.

Safer Recruitment Considerations

- The person managing the Baby/Toddler group will need to be DBS checked as well as all volunteers supporting the group.
- Check with our DBS team – dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk - whether the parents/helpers who would like to start this group on parish premises are eligible for a DBS check and proceed with their diocesan safe recruitment process as soon as possible. Safe recruitment to be completed before the start of this group.
- Ensure that the proposed group leaders are clear and knowledgeable in running this type of provision for parents and children. Group leads must pass on to the PSR as soon as possible any concern or allegation they may come across during the life of the group. All concerns must be reported by sending an email to the PSR's safeguarding email account. PSR's safeguarding email should be publicly displayed on each parish notice board on a safeguarding poster. This can also be found on the parish diocesan microsite in the 'Contact Us' section or by talking to the PSR directly.

Safeguarding Resources to refer to:

- Ensure that Group leaders and participating adults are made aware of how to reports any safeguarding concerns to the PSR. Direct them to a copy of the displayed Safeguarding Poster in the area the group is being provided.
- Ensure that the Group leaders are familiar with the 'Creating a safe environment' guidance on the CSSA website: [Creating a Safe Environment](#) (including filming and photography, code of conduct templates, adult to child ratios).
- Early years Alliance offers the following guidance on setting up groups: [How to start a baby and toddler or stay and play group | www.eyalliance.org.uk](http://www.eyalliance.org.uk)
- Contact your local authority early years team to find out what support is available for groups locally.
- Keeping Children safe in education 2025: Updated guidance [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)
- For more advice and support, please do not hesitate to contact us by writing to: safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

Creating a Culture of Safeguarding Considerations: Training

- Group lead and all volunteers must complete the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) L3 online safeguarding training: [Safeguarding Training - Diocese of Westminster](#)
- If possible, also encourage parents and none-DBS holders to complete CSSA safeguarding training in order to advance and support that 'Culture of Safeguarding' to which we all can actively and positively contribute.

Safer Environment Considerations

- Ensure that every child will be under the sole and direct responsibility of their parent or legally nominated guardian. In the event of authorised baby sitters, childminders or grandparents bringing the babies/toddlers, the parental written consent (template on the CSSA website: [Case-4: Parental consent](#)) prior to the group starting is required and this has to be kept securely on record at the parish for the duration of the Group.
- Keep a record with basic information about the child and the parent (or authorised person) with a primary and an alternative person/contact detail.
- All adults' participants must sign in and adhere to a code of conduct (template on the CSSA website: [Code of Conduct Adults](#)). These will be kept securely as per the list of participants. Please ensure that there is record of participants at every session for any future reference for the duration of the Group.
- All records related to this Group must be stored securely and kept together within the Parish. Data protection and privacy notices should be discussed with the Parish Priest when starting the Group to ensure safe electronic or paper storage of records.
- Create a safeguarding risk assessment for the Group. Details on what should be included can be found on page 5 of [Creating a Safer Environment](#). An example is given below:

Hazards	People	Severity of harm	Likelihood	Risk Level	Controls
Child leaves club without parent	<i>Child may be harmed</i>	<i>Major injury may occur/lost child</i>	<i>Remote possibility</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>At start of every session remind parents of their responsibility of supervising children at all times. Signs remind parents to keep door closed at all times. Mobile phones not to be used while attending, to ensure focus on children.</i>

A reminder about Health and Safety Considerations

- It's important to ensure along with the safeguarding considerations outlined in this document that you have the appropriate health and safety guidance including Insurance, suitable premises, security, first aid and fire safety.
- Some considerations will be very specific to the type of activity offered for under 5's, e.g. no hot drinks to prevent risk of injury to children and participants. Supervise children at all times while eating to prevent choking.
- It is recommended that at least one volunteer holds a Food Handling and Hygiene Level 2 certificate.
- Ensure that there is at least one well-stocked first aid kit accessible at all times.
- Although there's no requirement for a first aider to be present, it's considered to be good practice.
- Check the Hall Hire Agreement and Insurance details for health and Safety requirements.