

One-to-one or One-to-two Ministry with Youth Safeguarding Guidelines

Introduction:

Thank you for being willing to meet to read the Bible with one or more young people at St. Bart's. This is an extremely valuable ministry and has the potential for great blessing in the lives of the young people involved, but you will appreciate the need for great care in the exercise of this ministry. Consequently, this ministry is only exercised by individuals authorised by the church and safely recruited (with a current DBS certificate) for this role.

We have put together these guidelines to keep everyone safe. They apply to any meeting with one adult to one youth or one adult to two youth. When more than two young people are present, a minimum of two leaders should be present.

We only do one-to-one ministry with young people in schoolyear 10 upwards, and only with young people of the same sex as the adult – male/male or female/female. We will ask you to undertake some training before you begin, and you will be accountable to the ministry-lead (who invited you to be involved in this way). They will be in touch with you at regular intervals and may also ask the young person informally how your meetings are going.

You must always follow the Safeguarding Guidelines for Children and Young People.

Guidance:

You must have parental permission before meeting with any young person, and you must involve their parents in making arrangements to meet – either copy parents into emails or create a WhatsApp group including the parents. The parents concerned will be given a copy of this document which is also on the Church website.

In order to help everyone feel safe:

- Always notify your ministry lead every time in advance who you are meeting, when and where – an email is fine.
- Never give young people lifts in your car.
- Never meet in your own home. Always meet in the home of the young person (if there is another adult in the house), in church (if there is another adult in the building) or in a public place like a cafe.
 - Always meet in a room that has windows and ensure curtains are open so other people can see in.
 - Never meet in a bedroom
 - Leave the door to the room open
 - If meeting in the young person's home, don't allow parents to leave them with you while they go out.
- It's good practice to keep a brief note of what you've covered in the session (Bible passages / other book)
- Do not place unrealistic or unhelpful expectations on the young person/people during or outside the meeting.

- Set up an initial meeting; then agree to meet for a defined time (e.g. until the end of term) with a maximum 9 other meetings. Give plenty of opportunity for the young person to drop out at any time. It's important to review (together, and with the ministry-lead) at the end of that period to decide whether to continue for another similar fixed period. It may be important to stop so that you let another young person have the opportunity of meeting one-to-one.
- Do not meet for longer than an hour at a time.

It is important that you always maintain a professional relationship. In an appropriate relationship you should:

- always promote openness, honesty, trust and respect
- always exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues
- always ensure any physical contact is appropriate
- never engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive including having any form of sexual contact with a young person
- never develop inappropriate relationships with young people including acting in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive or use words harshly to exercise power or intimidation.
- never allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- never make inappropriate promises to young people, including the promise of confidentiality.
- never have any closed contact with the young person or have contact with them via a personal social media account. Emails should always be copied to parents and WhatsApp groups must include the parents.

Watch out for

- unhelpful intensity
- manipulation and control (by you or by the person you're meeting with)
- inadvertently setting rules to be obeyed
- over dependence (by the person you're meeting with or by you)
- pride (where an individual feels especially "chosen" by you) which can also encourage unhelpful idolatry and inappropriate compliance

Always be aware of the power dynamics at work in the relationship – they may look up to you or even see you as a friend, while you see them as one young person you're ministering to amongst others.

Thank you for taking part in this important ministry. We will be praying that it bears much fruit in the lives of the young people and in your own life.

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