DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle
Department for Safeguarding

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A brief guide to planning and organising parish or diocesan events and groups

For further information about planning and organising activities, see the 'Creating a Safer Environment' Guidance on the CSSA website.

For all events and groups, a CASE2 form must be provided for authorisation by the Parish Priest.

1. What are you seeking to achieve?

Be clear about what you want the event or group to be, what you want it to achieve and the size and scale of it. E.g., is it a fundraising event, a social-get together, or a regular gathering with a specific purpose?
Broad questions you will need to consider are:

- Who are the intended participants? Will it cater for a range of different people? When is it intended to take place? What are the implications for certain days of the week or times of day? E.g. traffic or public transport; daylight hours; availability of target participants;
- Do you have the right venue and facilities, including public venues? How many people can participate? Is it accessible to everybody taking part?
- Will it incur a cost to participants?

Give yourself plenty of time to plan and prepare.

2. Sharing out the work

Do you need to share out the work with core team and/or sub-groups? For example, do you need small groups that have specific areas of responsibility e.g. publicity, fundraising, health and safety?

- For events, who needs to know about it and get involved? Do you need to get police, fire service, ambulance service involved at an early stage?
- Do you need to approach the Council or local businesses?

3. Safety

Risk Assessment

Your risk assessment will be the key document to ensure the safe planning of the event or group. It involves carrying out a careful examination of each activity in a group/event and recording the findings. This also helps you think through and plan for different roles, responsibilities and measures to put in place for the well-being and protection of those at the group/event. For events that are held on a frequent basis and in the same venue the assessment may be annual or sooner if there is a change in arrangements or circumstances. The questions you will need to ask are:

- What are the risks, high or low, of somebody being harmed by a hazard, and how serious the harm could be?
- How could accidents happen and who might be harmed?
- What do you need to do to control the risks and make the event safer?

If you are using a village or community hall or similar venue, the Health and Safety Executive has a simple checklist to help you:

- Confirm that any actions needed are sensible;

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- Deal with the risks in a proportionate way.

Incident reporting
You will need to ensure that any incidents are recorded on the CASE 6 form and forwarded to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

4. Accessibility

You will need to consider arrangements for:

- Getting to and from the event or group – directions, transport and parking;
- Accessibility for people with disabilities;
- A contingency plan in the event of adverse weather conditions such as rain, wind, heat or cold, impacting on an event.

Transport (where applicable)

You will need to ensure that diocesan or congregational travel policies and procedures are understood and followed.

Health and medical conditions

You will need to give as much detail as possible about an event or group e.g. walking distance, stairs, rough terrain, accessibility to ensure that people can make informed choices about whether or not they can participate.

Consent

For events and groups involving children and young people, it will be necessary to obtain consent from parents or those with parental responsibility. Form CASE4 is used for this purpose.
Consent forms need to be obtained in advance to ensure that relevant factors such as health, can be taken into consideration in the planning stage.
Care should be taken to ensure that any sensitive information on the consent forms is shared on a need to know basis only.

5. Insurance

You will need to check the terms of your insurance policy to make sure it provides the cover you need and any requirements you may have to meet.

6. Leaders and helpers for running the event or group

You will need to consider the following:

- What roles are required to run the event or group?
- Do you have sufficient leaders and sufficient helpers?
- How many people do you need to run the event or group safely and for activities involving children, can you meet the recommended adult: child ratios?
- Are people suitably trained and experienced for the role?

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- Where appropriate, do the volunteers have criminal record checks at the appropriate level for the role?
- Do people understand their roles and responsibilities?
- Do people know what to do if something goes wrong?
- Do people know what to do if they have a safeguarding concern or allegations are made?

There must always be a minimum of two adults linked to every group for all activities. For children, a general guide for minimum supervision ratios provided by the DfE is:

- One adult leader for every 3 children under 5;
- One adult leader for every 6 children aged 5-7;
- One adult leader for every 10-15 children aged 8-11;
- One adult leader for every 15-20 children aged over 11.

When children and young people are identified as having additional needs that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist care or support, this must be discussed with the child's parent or carer and the child if appropriate.

After the event or group, allow time for a de-brief or evaluation to aid learning and inform the running of the next event or group.

7. Other considerations

Photography and filming

Make people aware that photographs/filming may be taken during the course of the event and what will happen with the images. Ensure that the necessary privacy notices have been issued and consent obtained. Form PHOTO1 is used for this purpose.

Record keeping

For events or groups involving children and young people, a written record of those present, information about the session and any incidents should be kept. Form CASE5 is used for this purpose.

Food Safety

If you are planning to provide or sell food at an event or group activity, you will need to consider the following questions:

- Are the preparation and serving facilities and equipment clean and in good repair?
- Are there risks of contamination from waste for example?
- Are the washing facilities adequate?
- Are food allergies and intolerances known about and can somebody answer questions about the origin of the food and its ingredients?

More information about food safety can be obtained from the Food Standards Agency

Special licenses

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You will need to consider whether you need any special licences. Advice about special licences can be obtained from your local authority. Consider when you have :

Raffles, lotteries and race nights.

Providing Entertainment.

Providing alcoholic drinks.

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