

LIFE CHURCH

BATH

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy reviewed: August 2023

Date of next review: August 2024

This policy is an important part of creating a safe environment for children at Life Church Bath. It helps make sure that everybody working with children and young people under the age of 18, whether as a volunteer or in a paid capacity, is suitable to do so and ensures that the process is fair for all applicants.

The Leadership will ensure all workers, whether volunteers or in a paid capacity, will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- there is a written job description / person specification that is sent to applicants
- the Children's Pastor or Youth Pastor will themselves explain what serving in Life Kids or Found Youth will involve and what the recruitment process will look like
- those interested in joining the children's ministry or youth ministry may be invited to try out the team for one week under the supervision of the group's team leader for that week. The interested person would ideally already be a member of Life Church Bath and be someone known by at least 2 people in the church family before being invited to do this
- Those applying to work with children or youth will:
 - complete an application form
 - meet with the Children's Pastor or the Youth Pastor who will explain more fully their vision for children or youth at Life Church Bath

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- o explain the roles and responsibilities of children's or youth volunteers as detailed on the job description / person specification
 - o go through the application form and discuss with the applicant why they want to be involved, discussing any previous experience of working with children or youth, ensuring that the form contains contact details for referees
 - o complete a self-declaration form
 - o apply for a DBS check at the appropriate level
 - o complete an introduction to safeguarding training session
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- written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate and when possible
 - o in the event of unsatisfactory references the potential worker would be disqualified from any involvement with children's or youth work
 - a satisfactory disclosure and barring check has been obtained by Life Church Bath (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information) at the appropriate level
 - o in the event of an unsatisfactory check the potential worker would be disqualified from any involvement with children's or youth work. This would be shared with the Disclosure and Barring Service as appropriate
 - o where it is not possible to obtain a disclosure and barring check (for example newly arrived to the UK from another country) then relevant checks from the applicant's home country will be obtained **where possible**, and references obtained. The volunteer will not be allowed to

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be on their own with a child / group of children until they have a satisfactory DBS check

- qualifications, where relevant, may be verified
- a suitable training programme is provided
- all applicants will complete a trial (probationary) period of a minimum of 3 months, or 6 sessions (whichever is the longer)
 - during this period training will be given
 - support will be given by the Children's Pastor / Youth Pastor
 - support will be given if needed by the Safeguarding Coordinator, or a member of the Safeguarding team when on duty on a Sunday morning
 - during this period the potential volunteer must never be left alone with a child or group of children
 - during this period a worker will not take on the role of team leader, but may take responsibility for an aspect of the morning under the team leader's supervision
- at the end of the trial (probationary) period
 - a further discussion between the Children's or Youth Pastor and the helper will take place
 - a review will be made as to how things are progressing and whether all parties are happy that the volunteer remains on team
 - the volunteer will be encouraged to feedback on how they are finding being on team
 - the trial (probationary) period will be extended if felt necessary by the Children's / Youth Pastor, the Safeguarding Coordinator or the worker themselves

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- both paid staff and volunteers who continue working with children will be required to complete a self-declaration form and a Disclosure and Barring check every 3 years. We recognise that this is good practice and in line with the recommendation of the Charity Commission
- should a volunteer take a break from serving in Life Kids or Found Youth (but stay an active member of Life Church Bath) and then return to serving, with a satisfactory DBS at the relevant level that is less than 3 years old, then the Children's Pastor or Youth Pastor will sit with them and find out what has happened in their gap in volunteering. If satisfied, then they can be reappointed without the need for a new application form, references or DBS check
- all volunteers will be asked to sign a safeguarding commitment form (found in appendix D of the child protection policy) at the end of their probationary period
- all volunteers are required to attend ongoing safeguarding training provided by Life Church Bath at least every 2 years