



LONE WORKING WITH CHILDREN GUIDANCE

Lone working is an everyday practice for clergy. This includes lone working with children and young people – for example as part of catechisation or during home visits. The aim of this guidance is to help SSPX clergy, staff and volunteers to think about how to undertake lone working with children and young people safely as part of their normal pastoral care.

Pastoral Care / visits

One to one contact with individuals in the context of pastoral care should be properly planned, its risks considered and recorded effectively. This is especially important in context of pastoral care for children and young people.

Touch

It is essential in pastoral care to acknowledge appropriate personal boundaries – inappropriate touching or gestures of affection must be avoided. Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact however, are needed by children as part of their coming to understand human relationships. Some physical contact with children, particularly very young children, is wholly appropriate – and often necessary to keep them safe. The following guidelines regarding touching are suggested:

- Whenever possible avoid personal touch
- Whenever possible, keep everything public
- Touch should be in response to a child's needs – not yours
- Touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child – not by you
- Avoid any physical activity that could be misinterpreted

Some simple tips regarding lone working with children as part of daily pastoral care

- Whenever possible make prior arrangements to meet rather than meet 'on demand'

- Obtain parents' consent and record it. Whenever possible, obtain the consent in a written form.
- Try to have someone else in the next room or nearby whenever possible
- Whenever possible, avoid conversations behind closed doors
- Make the purpose of the meeting clear at the outset and the time available for the discussion
- Don't take any unnecessary risks – if you feel uncomfortable at all, end the meeting and report your concerns to the Mandated Person (priest) or Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- Respect personal space and avoid doing or saying anything that could be misinterpreted
- Always ensure someone knows that you are working with the child or young person - where you are and what time you expect to start and finish your work
- After the pastoral encounter (face-to-face, emails, texts, telephone calls), always make a record – this can be in a diary or electronically – the following details should be included:
 - You name and the child(ren) full names
 - When and where the meeting / discussion took place
 - Purpose of the meeting / discussion
 - The time you / the other person arrived and left
 - Who else gave consent and knew about the meeting – when you work with the child their parents should always give you their consent for your work
 - Who else was present (if applicable)
 - A brief, factual account of what was discussed / agreed
 - Any potential or actual safeguarding concerns identified
 - Any actions taken / to be taken and any decisions made, including advice taken and who shared with
 - Sign and date the record and store securely

Responding to safeguarding issues raised during a pastoral encounter

A safeguarding issue is one where an individual, child or adult, may appear to be at risk of abuse, or may present a risk to others. Such issues cannot be kept confidential. Always follow the SSPX Chapel Safeguarding Policy.

Planning lone working: considerations for risk assessment

- Is lone working necessary? Confidentiality often can be assured with other people within reach.
- Who will be involved? And who else should know about it?
- Have you obtained and recorded necessary consent?

- When and where will it take place? Avoid making arrangements which could be misinterpreted.
- Is there a risk of violence? A good working definition of violence is: *Any behaviour which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or mentally, on people.*
- Are there any increased risks to you? This includes risks of allegations.

Are there any known medical or other factors which could make either party more vulnerable? Some medical conditions, mental health problems or traumatic experiences can lead to disinhibited behaviours.

Adopted by the District Superior on 29th October 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert Brucciani". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Rev. Robert Brucciani

Next Review: January 2022