

Responding to unaccompanied children at church services

Children may begin attending church services or church activities without their parents' or carers' knowledge. The following guidance is recommended:

1. Welcome the child(ren) and try to establish whether their parents or carers are aware of where they are
2. Try to discover when they are due home and encourage them to keep to that arrangement
3. Depending on the age and competence of the child, ring the parents or ask the young person to ring to gain the parents' consent to the child remaining. If the child continues to attend, endeavour to visit the parents or carers as soon as possible.
4. Complete a registration form as far as possible
5. Make sure an adult recruited for work with children takes care of the child – this is particularly important during public worship where unknown adults may attend and attempt to befriend the child
6. Give the child written information about the church service or activity to take home, including contact details
7. Never take the child on outings or transport them without their parents' or carers' permission
8. If you have any concerns, contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and inform the Parish or Cathedral Safeguarding Officer