**Essential Requirements for Safeguarding Children**

**Any organised activity in the Bahá’í community with children aged under 18 years, must fit into one or more of the categories below** and organisers must follow the listed requirements on the next page.Examples are provided, but these don’t include everything. If you are unsure, please consult with your Safeguarding Lead or the Office for Safeguarding Children.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Definition** | **Possible Examples** |
| **A** | **Parents / Carers are responsible for their children.**  Parents / Carers are always on-site or have a private arrangement in place with another Parent / Carer. | 19 Day Feasts  National Convention  Residential Schools  Conferences & Seminars |
| **B** | **A Bahá’í Institution is responsible for childcare for a daytime-only activity.** | Children’s Class  Study Circle  National Convention  Residential Schools  Cluster Reflection Meeting  Neighbourhood Teaching Projects  Transport to / from a venue |
| **C** | **A Bahá’í Institution is responsible for childcare for an overnight stay.**  **An Overnights Stay Permit needs to be applied for (p8)** | Youth Conferences  Training Centre activities  Junior Youth Camp |

An activity may overlap into more than one category. Here are some examples:

Summer School: **Category A** (parents responsible outside of sessions and overnight)

**Category B** (summer school providing activities for children)

Teaching Project **Category B** (youth involved in teaching activities in a local park)

**Category C** (youth staying overnight in host family homes)

Junior Youth Camp: **Category B** (junior youth on a trip, walking to a local swimming pool)

**Category C** (camp held at the Bahá’í Training Centre)

The checklist below provides organisers and Safeguarding Leads with the requirements needed for the three different types of activity. Each of these requirements are explained in the following pages along with various forms to be used.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  | **Category:** | | |
| ***Requirements to consider before***  ***starting an activity involving children:*** | | | | **A** | **B** | **C** |
| Read Bahá’í safeguarding policy | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Health & Safety checklist | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Minimum of two checked adults | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Orientation Sheet for new volunteers | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Childcare ratios considered (see Orientation Sheet) | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Parental Consent Forms | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| A criminal records check[[1]](#footnote-1) for everyone in a ‘regulated activity’ or with ‘substantial access’ to children.  A higher-level DBS check is required for an activity in an applicant’s home.  Please see page 3 for those without a criminal records check. | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Training Level 1 (for those responsible for children’s activities) | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Inform your local Safeguarding Lead of plans | | | |  | ✓ |  |
| Home visits (think about, to meet families) | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Attendance / On-Site / Off-Site Registers | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Transport to / from venue (including Lone Working) | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Training Level 3 & Overnight Permit | | | |  |  | ✓ |
| Safeguarding Lead (on-site role) | | | |  |  | ✓ |
| Temporary Guardianship Form | | | |  |  | ✓ |
| Human resource arrangements (e.g. point of contacts, or individual or group guardians) | | | |  | ✓ | ✓ |

**Contact with Children Without a Criminal Records Check**

All people aged 16 years and above working with children in the Bahá’í community must have an appropriate criminal records check[[2]](#footnote-2).

A person wishing to observe a children’s activity, or currently waiting for their check to be completed can assist with community activities with children (aged 0-18 years) as a ‘helper’ provided:

* The person has submitted their criminal records application, and this has been confirmed in writing by the Office for Safeguarding Children. (If the individual is not intending to work with children longer-term, they are required to register on the safeguarding web pages and provide a reference before working with children).
* The local Safeguarding Lead has confirmation that the application has started and agrees to this temporary arrangement.

##### **Conditions:**

1. There are at least two other ‘checked’ adults supervising the helper (within hearing and sight range).
2. The helper is not allowed to be alone with any children at any time.
3. Their role as a ‘helper’ is explained to children / adults as appropriate.
4. A maximum of two helpers per activity.
5. The helper can only support core activities in a hired venue (not in homes).
6. The helper cannot stay overnight while supporting children’s activities and events.
7. They cannot make contact with children on any social media type platforms outside of sessions (e.g. text messages and access to personal information of children) or after the event itself.
8. They can attend a maximum of 8 sessions of 1-2 hours each: for example, weekly sessions spread over a maximum of 8 weeks, or daily sessions spread over 2 weeks.

##### **Guidance to Organisers:**

* Organisers are reminded that safeguarding children takes priority over community activities, and this arrangement provides some flexibility until a person’s criminal records check is complete.
* Organisers can contact the Office for Safeguarding Children to request one-off exceptions to this agreement.

1. The term criminal records check covers all four nations: Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for England and Wales, Disclosure Scotland for Scotland, and AccessNI for Northern Ireland. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The term criminal records check covers all four nations: Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for England and Wales, Disclosure Scotland for Scotland, and AccessNI for Northern Ireland. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)