



**Southwell Cathedral**

# **VISITING GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS POLICY & GUIDANCE**

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## 1. Introduction

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Southwell Minster is committed to providing a safe, welcoming environment for all visitors, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy sets out safeguarding procedures for visiting groups and individuals, including visiting clergy, choirs, bellringers, work experience students, and other visitors under 18.

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## 2. Visiting clergy

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Visiting clergy may preside at or assist with services only if:

- They hold current authorisation to exercise ministry in the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham (Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate).
- They have a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.
- Relevant safeguarding training and diocesan checks have been completed.

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## 3. Visiting choirs

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Music Department staff responsible for visiting choirs must:

- Provide the choir leader with the Cathedral Safeguarding Policy, Procedure & Guidance prior to the visit.
- Send the choir leader the Visiting Choir Declaration.

See Appendix 1 for the Visiting Choir Declaration.

On arrival, the responsible Music Department staff member must collect:

- The signed Visiting Choir Declaration.
- Visiting choir's safeguarding policy.

International choirs must confirm that all adults have been carefully recruited using the relevant checking arrangements in the country of origin, or, if not, suitable references.

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## 4. Work experience students under the age of 18

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Southwell Cathedral endeavours to plan work experience placements so that students gain a realistic view of a job which is within their capabilities and are able to feel that they have made a genuine contribution to the activity of the department to which they have been assigned.

Southwell Cathedral expects to be informed by the school or college whether any student requires special arrangements to take account of any disability, medical condition or other special need.

Students should be asked to come for a pre-placement meeting to give them an idea of the activities they will be undertaking and the conditions in which they will be working. At this meeting, they should be interviewed by the head of the relevant department and be given the opportunity to ask questions to assure themselves that the placement is right for them. If either party is unhappy

with the proposed placement, the school or college must be informed and the placement must not take place.

## Eligibility

Students must be in the last two years of compulsory schooling or post-16 courses.

Pre-16 placements typically last two weeks; post-16 placements may be longer.

## Safeguarding measures

- A Health & Safety risk assessment must be completed before the placement begins.
- An induction must take place on day one, with emphasis on emergency procedures and general Health & Safety rules. In the event that a student refuses to comply with any Health & Safety rule, the placement will end and the school/college will be notified.
- Students must always be assigned to a paid employee with Enhanced DBS for supervision and should never be left unsupported in their working role.
- Southwell Cathedral holds Public and Employers' Liability Insurance which extends to students undertaking work experience.

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## 5. Bell Tower policy for under-18s

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Southwell Cathedral is committed to safeguarding all children and young people in the Bell Tower through:

- Compliance with Cathedral and Diocesan safeguarding practice and any national Bell Ringers' Association/Guild best practice.
- Ensuring safety, supervision, and reporting any concerns to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.
- Challenging any behaviour or comments that are likely to cause harm or offence or endanger a child whilst in the Tower.

Accompanied under-18s visiting the Tower as part of a group or visiting the Bell Tower where their parent/carer is ringing are welcome to be in the Tower.

## Practice guidance

- Any concerns regarding the welfare or safety of a child (under the age of 18) must be reported to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer. All members of the Volunteer ringing group should know who to contact if they have a concern and that they must do so.
- The Tower Captain retains the right to ask a parent/carer to remove their child from the tower if the level of risk is considered too great.
- Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied by a parent/carer, who will be responsible for them at all times, even if the parent/carer is ringing.
- If under 8s are part of a Tower Tour, the children remain the responsibility of their group leader but the Head of the Tower reserves the evacuate fully or partially if they feel that the health and safety of other users is compromised as per the general responsibilities for Tower safety.

- All children visiting the Bell Tower as part of the Minster Volunteer Ringers' Practice Night, Sunday Service Ringing or other ringing session should sign the attendance record. At least one DBS checked member of the Minster Volunteer Ringers Group will be in the Tower.
- All children visiting the tower as part of a visiting band, for example for a specially arranged ringing session or quarter peal, must sign the attendance record. They must be accompanied by their parent/carer or a designated adult with a valid DBS check at all times. That means they will only be in the ringing chamber with their parent/carer; and if they need to go down the tower steps they will be accompanied by their parent/carer or designated adult.
- **At no point must an under-18 non-ringer be left unsupervised.**

## Context-specific guidance

### **Accompanied under-18s who have volunteered to be bellringers, been accepted as part of the bellringing group and whose parents/carers are also in the ringing group:**

- A parent/carer must complete a child permission form before the child may enter the ringing chamber. Forms will be made available by the Head of Tower.
- In an emergency, the parent/carer assumes responsibility for the safe egress of the child, under the direction of the Head of Tower.

### **Unaccompanied under-18s who have volunteered to be bellringers and been accepted as part of the bellringing group:**

Where an under-18 cannot be accompanied by a parent/carer, the parent/carer can give permission for the child to be accompanied during ringing by a DBS-checked ringer or the Head of Tower. In such cases the child will be made aware that they must stay within sight of the nominated adult / Head of Tower at all times during the ringing session.

During ringing, the parent/carer or nominated responsible adult must ensure that they are sitting with the child and that their behaviour is safe.

### **Members of the bellringing group who are 16-18 years of age must not:**

- be used to teach younger ringers unless closely supervised by the Head of Tower or another adult who has an Enhanced + Barring DBS certificate through the diocese;
- contact/message adult ringers unless on an open group messaging system that is externally monitored (such as a ringers group WhatsApp);
- contact other ringers under the age of 18 without the consent of both sets of parents/carers. The Cathedral will not be responsible for policing this but has a duty of care to remind all ringers of the expected code of conduct that will keep everyone safe.

## Code of Conduct for under-18s

### **In the ringing chamber**

- Babies, toddlers and those not yet able to sit independently must be closely supervised by their parent/carer or designated responsible adult accompanying them. Close supervision means the child will be held or within reach at all times.
- Under-18s old enough and responsible enough to sit by themselves during ringing are allowed to do so on the understanding that they will behave in a manner that does not interrupt the ringing session.

- Under-18s should understand that if they are instructed to do something by the named responsible adult or the Head of Tower (whether their parent or not) they must do as they are instructed if this relates to security, health & safety or well-being.
- Under-18s must not touch any rope unless they are a ringer who has been asked to ring a particular bell by the Head of Tower or whoever is running the ringing.
- Under-18s must not go into the middle of the rope circle or the centre of the ringing chamber (unless they are ringers moving to ring a particular bell under the direction of the person organising the ringing).
- Under-18s must walk, not run, in the ringing chamber.

### **Going up or down the tower steps**

- Under 18s capable of walking up/down the steps themselves must do so in a sensible manner, not running on the stairway or attempting to go faster than the person in front.
- The parent/responsible adult accompanying a child must walk immediately **behind** the child on the way up the stairs and immediately **in front of** the child on the way down. This will enable the adult to break the fall of a child should they trip.
- Children who are too young to walk up or down the stairs confidently and safely by themselves should be brought in a baby sling so that the parent is able to climb/descend the tower steps carrying the child and has both arms free.
- Where a child is too large to be carried in a sling but is not yet capable of climbing up/down the stairs by themselves, the parent/carer must be capable of carrying the child safely.

### **Safeguarding notice for parents/carers**

If you have any concerns regarding the safety or wellbeing of a child visiting or undertaking activities in the Bell Tower, please contact the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer: [safeguarding@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@southwell.anglican.org) or 01636 817200.

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## Appendix 1: Visiting Choir Declaration

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*We want Southwell Cathedral to be a place where visiting adults and children thrive.*

*We hope that all young choristers from visiting choirs feel welcomed by the Cathedral clergy and staff they meet during their visit here. All children and young people who come as part of, or as a supporter of, a visiting choir are the responsibility of that choir at all times.*

*It is also the responsibility of the choir to which they are attached to ensure that all adults abide by the child protection and safeguarding policies of the cathedral, church, college or school of which they are a part.*

*All choirs must ensure that a copy of their safeguarding policy (or that of their cathedral, church, college or school) is sent to the Liturgy and Music Administrator before their visit.*

*Visiting choirs that include children or young people under the age of 18 should also confirm that they follow their own child protection policies and procedures.*

Name of choir: \_\_\_\_\_

We confirm that our choir has procedures in place for background checks of all adult leaders, including a current Enhanced DBS or equivalent where there are children (under 18s) in the choir.

We confirm that all adults in the choir have familiarised themselves with Southwell Cathedral's Safeguarding Policy, Procedure & Guidance.

We confirm that we have provided, or will provide upon arrival, a copy of our own choir's safeguarding policy.

List of adult members:

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_