



Starting Something Younger

All church communities should to provide a safe and secure foundation where younger generations can encounter the love of God in Christ Jesus. As Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" *Matt 19:14*.

When looking to start a new project, programme or event with families and younger people there are a number of things to consider, both practically and spiritually.

Gather to pray. Spend time with Matt 19:13-15 imagining how to make way for Jesus' blessing of children. As ideas come, consider your aim; what are you hoping to provide; what focus will you have? What balance of Christian worship and teaching, and social activity to build relationships with you offer?

1

Consider your audience. Who is your group for? What age groups: primary or secondary phases, pre-schoolers, or a mix? Are you looking to include those with additional needs? An intergenerational project for families, the whole church or community? Remember to consider adult to child ratios for safety and safeguarding*.

2

Where, when and for how long will your project run? What space and resources are available; what is needed? Think about days and timings – avoid clashing with similar groups. Consult widely.

3

Engage with the wider Church. How does the idea fit in with the church's vision? Do you require PCC approval for the session(s)? How can you feed back to the PCC and seek their prayer support? Is there a project budget and how can it be financed?

4

Cast a vision inviting people to respond. What roles are there? Catering/ set-up/ pack-down/ leading/ caring/ planning/ praying/ DBS checks. Safeguarding and role descriptions are part of building a secure and loving space.

5

Communicate

How can you promote the event? Can you use links with local schools using flyers in book bags, library or leisure centre desks, parent mail and community groups or social media?

6

Use a risk assessment for the church and for the activity. Who will be your trained first aider? What information do you need to keep?

How will you keep records safe and follow Data Protection law?

7

Learn as you go! Who will help with all these decisions, then listen, evaluate and reflect after each session? Children, young people, parents, helpers and carers? How will you gather feedback and use it to help you develop the project?

8

Hospitality works with all ages! Some projects will need Food Hygiene training and safe practices. Be aware of allergens and display a list of ingredients in any food provided; keep a record of allergies and food requirements. Follow the hygiene standards appropriate to your activity.

9

Have loads of fun and thank God for everyone involved before, during and after every event. How can you involve the whole team? Are there people who will pray for your project on an ongoing basis? Can your project be added to the intercessions in services, newsletters or prayer rotas?

10

Next Steps

Read: The College of St Hugh Resources Bank at Edward King House has a good range of resource packs, books and ideas for working with younger people - all free to borrow! You can see the list online:

www.lincoln.anglican.org/resources-centre

Join: Diocese of Lincoln Children & Youth Network gathers for ideas swaps, networking and training events. The Diocesan Children & Youth Enabler shares a Padlet website with lots of ideas and links around seasons, events and celebrations: padlet.com/DioceaseofLincolnCFY.

Websites:

Postcard resources to help start the conversations can be found: lychee-raccoon-z7pf.squarespace.com/ with example projects from churches, schools and communities.

Messy Church Resources have useful role descriptors, risk assessments and templates for setting up a project; these can be useful to adapt for your own context. www.messychurch.org.uk/resources/messy-admin
To learn more about **adult-child ratios** go to: learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children

Church of England has some ideas and resources for supporting & nurturing children's faith: www.churchofengland.org/about/children-and-young-people

Blackburn Diocese have a useful resources to help with setting up children's ministry: www.bdeducation.org.uk/what-to-think-about-before-setting-up-a-youth-group

And a free resource bank of ideas from Youth For Christ is available at: yfc.co.uk/rocksolid/

Discuss your plans with:

*Safeguarding: safeguarding@lincoln.anglican.org

Tel: 01522 504070

Children & Youth Enabler, Micki Carey-Slater

College of Saint Hugh Tel: 01522 50 40 50

email: collegeofsainthugh@lincoln.anglican.org



DIOCESE OF LINCOLN
faithful · confident · joyful

