



Vision

Come up with a clear vision for your ministry, and don't be afraid to start small, with a vision to grow. Any youth ministry should complement other ministry in the church, and be part of the overall vision and mission strategy, so make sure you consider how they might weave together.

This guide will help you to think through a few things as you prepare to set up ministry for young people in your church. As with any new ministry, we recommend you spend a focused period of time in prayer, so God can speak into your plans.

How to set up youth ministry in your church

Be realistic about what the church can offer and honest about your limitations.



What will you do?

The list of what can be done is endless, and you may consider more than one approach. Whatever you decide to do, it should be based on local needs and what the church can realistically provide. Allow plenty of time for preparation, planning and promotion. This will allow you to prepare properly, build a team and take into account any additional needs/requirements.

Who you need to speak to

- Church leadership and Church Parochial Council (PCC).
- Parents
- Young people
- The congregation and potential volunteers
- Others who may be affected or want to input (schools, other local groups)

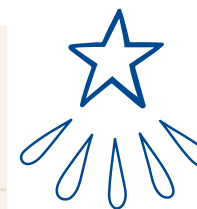
Key questions to ask

- Why do you want this ministry in your church?
- What are your hopes for young people in your church?
- What are the expectations?
- Who have you spoken to?
- What permissions might you need?
- What needs to be in place to allow it to run safely?
- What will you do and what resources might you need?
- What team will you need?
- How will you evaluate your progress?
- What additional help is out there?



Scan the QR code for specific guidance and resources for setting up a new youth group.





Keeping everyone safe

- Safeguarding and Safe Recruitment (find Diocesan policies on our [website](#))
- Health and Safety (including Risk Assessment, First Aid, photography/videography policies)
- Inclusion and diversity policy
- Code of conduct/behaviour
- Anti-bullying policy
- Social Media and Electronic Communication policy

Start by seeking God's plan for your ministry



Evaluating your ministry

After each session, or regularly throughout the year, evaluate as a team. These simple questions may help:

- How was the session? How has the term/year been?
- What was good about the session? What were the highlights?
- Did anything go wrong? What has been learnt?
- What can we do better next time? Do we need to change anything for next year?

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Permissions you might need

Before starting anything new in the church, it will need the backing of the PCC and the church leadership. Depending on who else is involved and where the youth ministry takes place, you may need additional permissions. For example, if the youth ministry links with a local school, you will need permission from key people in school to allow it to happen. If you use a village hall or public space, you will need permission from the village hall committee or Parish Council to use that space.

Staff ratios

- Recommended ratios for different age groups:
 - 9-12 years: 1 adult to 8 young people
 - 13-18 years: 1 adult to 10 young people
- A minimum of 3 adult leaders should be present at each session.
- Mixed gender groups should include both male and female adult leaders wherever possible. In certain situations, it will be necessary to have more adults, for example when you are going off site, doing an unusual activity, or if there are young people with additional support needs.

Budget

You will need a budget to cover running costs for things such as:

- Hire of premises
- Equipment
- Resources
- Refreshments or tuck
- Volunteer expenses
- Advertising



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Venues

The three most common types of youth ministry are outlined in the table below.

A drop-in youth group will need a venue with a lot of space and equipment for young people to use as and when they choose.

An open youth group is more resource heavy, and likely to need space, as well as appropriate spaces to do group activities and games.

For a discipleship group, the venue matters less, as it is the time and content that counts. Somewhere comfortable which enables good conversation and possibly space for small group work to take place.

All types of youth groups will need equipment and finding somewhere safe to keep this is also important.

What type of youth ministry do you want?

The three most common types of youth ministry are outlined in the table below, with a list of the different aims and objectives of each group.

Drop-in youth group	Open youth group	Discipleship group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get young people off the street • Give young people something to do • Provide a safe and sound environment • Informal with minimal structured activities • Build relationships and community amongst peers and leaders • Focus on mission not ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe and caring environment • More structure with planned activities/themed sessions • Develop meaningful relationships within the group and leaders • Informal opportunities for leaders to share faith. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a Christian community • Organised Bible study and fellowship • Engage faith with real life • Develop meaningful relationships within the group • Build community • Develop relationships with God • Focus on ministry not mission.

Scan the QR code for more advice and guidance from the Go Team

