



LIGHTHOUSE ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS POLICY

Updated: 1st April 2025

Overview

Lighthouse: is the name given to a non-residential, one week long, holiday camp for children run by Christians under the Lighthouse Brand.

Lighthouse Brand: is the identity, ethos and combination of properties that represents how Lighthouses are perceived by those who experience or interact with them.

Individual Lighthouses: a unique identifier that distinguishes one instance of Lighthouse from another (typically the name of a location). Each Individual Lighthouse is typically a registered charity in its own right that provides a Lighthouse week or other children's services using the Lighthouse Brand.

Lighthouse Central (LHC): the umbrella organisation that supports the Individual Lighthouses and is leading the nationwide growth of the Lighthouse movement. LHC provides the core administrative functions necessary to run a Lighthouse.

The Individual Lighthouse is responsible for the activities and implementation of any policies before during and after the Lighthouse week.

As part of its administrative remit LHC maintains a library of Policies and Procedures including an Adult to Child Ratios Policy.

Definitions

Throughout this policy, the term 'Lighthouse' shall be taken to mean, collectively:

Lighthouse Beaconsfield, Registered Charity No. 1198953

Lighthouse Burnham, Registered Charity No. 1182190

Lighthouse Cressex, Registered Charity No. 1183476

Lighthouse Derby City, Registered Charity No. 1207908

Lighthouse Haddenham, Registered Charity no. 1201685

Lighthouse Hazlemere, Registered Charity No. 1178562

Lighthouse High Wycombe, Registered Charity No. 1114541

Lighthouse Loudwater, Registered Charity No. 1197125

Lighthouse Mansfield, Registered Charity No. 1164680

Lighthouse Marlow, Registered Charity No. 1178062

Lighthouse Princes Risborough, Registered Charity No. 1178119

Lighthouse Safe Harbour, Registered Charity No.1180779

Lighthouse Shelswell, Registered Charity No. 1187651

Lighthouse Central, Registered Charity No. 1169839

Lighthouse Denham which is an associate Lighthouse through Denham Parish Church, yet to be registered as a separate charity.

Lighthouse Water Eaton which is an associate Lighthouse through St Frideswide's Church, a resource hub in the Diocese of Oxford for community organising and church growth.



1. Background

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors however we look at best practice in similar areas.

Ofsted: As Lighthouse is a holiday club Ofsted ratios do not apply. Lighthouse is not required to register with Ofsted because we intend to: Care for children aged under eight from particular premises for 14 days or less in any year and (we) notify (Ofsted) in writing at least 14 days before starting the provision.

The Department for Education (**DfE**) publishes guidance for early years providers ie creche age children which sets out statutory requirements about adult to child ratios (DfE, 2017). Key points include:

- volunteer arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety
- children must usually be within both sight and hearing of volunteers and always within at least either sight or hearing
- only those aged 17 or over may be included in ratios (and staff under 17 should be supervised at all times)
- Ratios: For children aged under two there must be at least one member of staff for every three children

For children aged under three years there must be at least one member of staff for every four children

NSPCC¹: The NSPCC has put together some best practice guidance to help other organisations work out how many adults are needed to supervise children safely.

Church of England: The Diocese of Oxford ² in their Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2018 follows the NSPCC ratios.

They recommend having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people with the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- 0 – 2 years 1 adult to 3 children 1:3
- 2 – 3 years 1 adult to 4 children 1:4
- 4 – 8 years 1 adult to 6 children 1:6
- 9 – 12 years 1 adult to 8 children 1:8
- 13 – 18 years 1 adult to 10 children 1:10

If young people are helping to supervise younger children only people aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating adult to child ratios.

¹<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children/#heading-top>

²<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/201910/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>



2. Lighthouse Policy Statement

- Each Lighthouse group of children should be no larger than 15 children, with one Lighthouse Keeper and at least two Lamplighters in attendance

Note: if 2 x LL is an adult equivalent, ratios are met

- A Lighthouse Keeper must be aged 18 or over, except in exceptional circumstances where they are known to the local Lighthouse Management Team and Trustees, notwithstanding this no Lighthouse Keeper should be under the age of 16
- An Enhanced DBS check with child barring is required for all volunteers aged 16 and over who have regulated contact with the children on site. An Enhanced DBS check is required for all other team co-ordinator roles including Trustees and other management committee members.
- In a Discovery/teaching session Lighthouse Keepers should not take a break to ensure ratios are maintained unless another adult is present in a supervisory role eg: Age Group Leader etc
- No person under the age of 18 years should be left in sole charge of a group of children at Lighthouse, an adult Lighthouse Keeper from another group should be supervising the young person
- Creche: For those Lighthouses that operate a Creche for Volunteers children the DfE ratio for 0-3 year old children should be adhered to at all times:
 - For children aged under 2 years - one adult to three children
 - For children aged under 3 years - one adult to four children
- Sport/Drama/Craft – for activities across an Age Group there should be one team member per Lighthouse group ie: 7 x Age Group 8 Lighthouses = 7 Sports team members
- 10+ year groups should adhere to the Church of England ratio of 1 adult to 8 children
- Staff ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved.