

Ministry Guidelines: Grainery Youth

1. Purpose

Grainery Church is committed to the development, safety and interests of all young people. We desire that our community will encourage young people in their faith, growing to know Jesus, and honouring Him in every area of their life. To achieve this, Grainery Youth and its leaders will demonstrate and encourage;

- healthy relationships at all levels,
- godly leadership focussing on the physical, emotional and spiritual safety and wellbeing of all people
- and God-honouring behaviour at all times at both on-site and off-site events.

The aim of this policy is to provide important practical guidelines to help ensure that the ministry is blameless and all organized activities are aimed at, and exemplary, in honouring God.

The Grainery Youth Ministry Guidelines is relevant to all Grainery ministries that involve children between the ages of 12 and 18 years old. These guidelines are particularly relevant to all Grainery Youth programs, which includes:

- Friday programs
- Sunday programs
- Off-site special events (combined youth nights, Camps or holiday events)
- Connect groups
- Afterparties (leaders and Year 11 and 12 Senior Youth only)
- One-on-one informal interactions between youth leaders and young people

2. Leader and Volunteer Checks and Recruitment

All Grainery Youth leaders and volunteers are required to:

- have been attending the Grainery Church for at least three months,
- complete the online Grainery Safe Church Ministry training (level 2),
- complete the Grainery Screening Check Questionnaire for Volunteer workers
- agree and adhere to the Grainery Leader Code of Conduct (attached in the above form) and,
- for all leaders over 18 years or older gain a voluntary Working with Children Check.

Grainery Youth staff may also request a face-to-face meeting with volunteers during the recruitment process. Here, the expectations of the voluntary role, and areas of child safety can be discussed, and opportunity for questions given.

3. General Guidelines

Parent/Carer information

The Grainery Youth team should ensure they have parent/ carer details and emergency contact details for all young people in their care. This is obtained through a Grainery Youth New Person card. All new young people are asked to complete such when they first attend a program. These details are then stored in the Grainery Church's database.

Supervision

Youth leaders should do their best to never leave young people unsupervised in any area of the building.

It is also recommended that leaders keep to the 'Rule of Two' (two adults present) with any group of young people. An individual leader should never be left alone in a room with one young people, in the case where this does occur, these interactions should be done so in an easily interruptible space, with a door left open.



In the case of informal, pastoral interactions between youth leaders and young people, it is recommended that these take place in public spaces, either at cafes or in homes, where other people are present.

Reporting Concerns

It is the responsibility of all Grainery Youth leaders to report concerns of safety and child protection to the youth pastor, who then ensures this concern is taken to the Executive Manager. Training and education around these areas is given via the Grainery's online training, but any leaders with further questions should speak to the youth pastor.

Alcohol

Alcohol is not permitted at any Grainery Youth events. Youth leaders are asked to refrain from consuming such prior to attending a youth event, and/or during informal youth gatherings.

Social Media

1. Grainery Youth social media profiles

- Youths and Parents attending Youth activities should be made aware that photographs and videos of young people at these events could be used for the purpose of advertising and promotion by the youth leadership team. Young People and Parents are to advise the Youth Pastors if they do not wish photographs of themselves, or their child, to be used for this purpose. At all special events parents will have to sign a permission form for their child to attend; all such forms will include a request to use photographs of their child in the media.
- Photographs and videos used for advertising and promotion should only be taken by approved Grainery Youth photographers, and only on church devices. Youth leaders should be discouraged from storing photographs of young people on their personal devices.
- It is imperative that uploaded photographs should never be tagged to ensure that private information about a person is not readily available to everyone. Therefore, the tagging of photographs can only be done by a young person on a photograph of himself/herself.



- If leaders think that a young person has shared a photograph which conveys an inappropriate or negative message about another person, they should bring this to the attention of the Youth Pastors.

2. Youth leaders, personal social media and its use in communication

- It is important to ensure that the messages portrayed by youth leaders in their personal social media activity (e.g., through posts, photos, stories, live etc.) are appropriate and are aligned with the values enunciated by Grainery Youth and the Leadership Code of Conduct. This includes responsible attitudes toward alcohol consumption, using appropriate language (spoken and written) at all times, and modesty in dressing and attitude.
- All individual communications with a child under the age of 16 should only take place with full parental permission and knowledge.
- Before a Youth leader initiates communication with a Young person (including texting, phone calls, and all social media), it is recommended that he/she asks himself/herself the following questions first: Is the communication and contents appropriate? How will the recipient react on reading it? Is this the right time, place and circumstance to be doing this?

One-on-one Mentoring

It is clear that an effective Youth Ministry leader often requires one-to-one mentoring/ministry time with a young person to help him/her work through personal problems or troubling matters – which is often private and the confidentiality of this conversation should be respected. Through mentoring sessions – especially when they are successful - a leader could become venerated and a ‘special’ bond develops between them. With this in mind the following recommendations should be observed.

- It is to be noted that Youth leaders are only qualified to do mentoring. If a leader encounters a situation where he/she feels unable to help or inadequate, then it is imperative that the assistance of the youth pastors is sought, and referral to a more experienced and qualified pastor or counsellor can be made.
- Same sex mentoring should be the norm and only in very exceptional cases should opposite sex mentoring happen, with the approval of the youth pastors.

- All mentoring should be held in easily interrupted locations, and this is an imperative when opposite sex mentoring is involved, or if the person being mentored has issues about his/her sexual identity.
- Physical contact to console and express love (such as hugging) and during prayer (laying of hands) should be done with great sensitivity and when the recipient is of opposite sex, the leader must exercise wisdom in determining the intensity and time of these contacts.
- A leader should be always aware that sexual grooming usually initiates with nonsexual behavior aimed at engaging a child (for example showing favoritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention), as a precursor to sexual abuse. This means that any 'special' bonds formed must be healthy and seen to be healthy – which could include making sure that other people in the ministry are acutely aware that you are in this space as a counsellor.
- In no circumstance will a leader mentor a young person or another leader while he/she is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- In no circumstance will a leader mentor a young person, if it is known that this is contrary to the young person's parent's or guardian's wishes.
- A leader should immediately contact a TGC pastor should he/she feels incapable of providing the level of support required or if the person is at risk of harm of any kind, or likely to cause self-harm.

4. Friday Programs

Sign-in

For safety reasons, the beginning of each program, young people and youth leaders are required to sign in, to record their attendance. This attendance is then kept on file in Grainery Youth's database.

It is the responsibility of Grainery Youth leaders to ensure each young person is collected at the end of the program by their parent/carer or identified responsible adult.

Security and Safety

To ensure further safety, a youth leader is allocated as 'security' on the night. It is their responsibility to ensure no young people are wandering around out-of-bound areas of the building, and no young people leave the program

without the permission of their parents/ carer or youth pastor. The allocated 'security' leader is also to keep an eye out for strangers and unfamiliar adults outside the building.

Once the program has begun inside the building, leaders ensure that the front church doors are locked to inhibit people from entering the building without the knowledge of youth leaders. A youth leader's phone number is then displayed on the front door, so any late comers can inform them of their arrival. The front door is unlocked once the program finishes, and youth leaders stay present there as parents and carers arrive for pick-up.

WHS

It is the responsibility of the youth pastors to ensure that when an incident or injury occurs during the program, that an incident report form is completed. Parents/ carers must also be contacted if/when their child is injured. Once completed, these forms should be given to the Executive Manager for filing.

Youth Pastors are to also ensure there is a trained first-aid officer onsite during every Friday night program.

5. Sunday Programs

During Sunday morning programs, between two and five leaders are present.

Before the young person leaves for the Sunday program and after leaving the program, parents/ carers are responsible for their children.

An attendance list should also be kept every Sunday of those young people and youth leaders in attendance and kept on file.

6. Off-site Special Events

Parent/ Guardian Permission

For all off-site events, parent/ guardian permission is required. This is done so via a Grainery Youth Permission form. Information collected on such form should include emergency contacts, food allergies, medical conditions and photo permission. (Appendix 4.9)

Written information should be given to parents/ guardians which includes date and location of event, details of activities, contact information for at least

1 leader attending, and information on what the young people are expected to take.

WHS

It is the responsibility of the youth pastors to ensure all special off-site events follow correct WHS processes. This includes ensuring a risk assessment is completed, which includes the assessment of risks of the event location, and as well as in individual activities.

When carrying out a risk assessment, the following areas must be considered.

1. A leader has been appointed to be a security person who is at all times aware what is happening in the toilets and darker areas.
2. If one of the youth pastors are not present at an event, a responsible allocated youth leader, over the age of 25, should be appointed by the youth pastor, who is responsible, and to take charge if/when an emergency situation occurs.
3. That all proposed challenges/games are assessed based on the safety of individuals and spectators prior to the event. Due consideration should be given to minimizing the risk of harm.
4. At camps and overnight events, every effort should be made to ensure that males and females sleep in separate rooms. If this is not possible, and males and females need to share the same sleeping space (e.g., in the same room), some form of separation between the sexes is still imperative. In such a situation, leaders need to be particularly diligent in supervising social interactions.

First Aid

To ensure the safety of all young people and workers, there should be a first aid officer present at all times, during off-site activities. A first aid kit should also be taken to all off-site events.

In the case of an injury, the child's parent/ carer should be contacted and an incident form completed.

Special medications needed for certain young people should be provided by the parent/ carer and given to the designated first aid officer in a clearly labelled bag/ box with directions.



It is important that leaders are aware of young people with severe food allergies. If food is served at an event, make sure that the ingredients used to prepare the dishes are known, and preferentially listed on a sheet of paper. At events such as Youth camps it is critical that food for those with allergic reactions are sourced from reliable outlets.

Leaders must know what to do should someone have an allergic reaction. It is most likely the young person involved will be the most aware of the seriousness of the situation, whether an ambulance needs to be called, or if an EpiPen needs to be given straightaway. In such situations, it is important for everyone to stay calm and an appropriate person be nominated to ring and speak to parents about the matter or advise the ambulance of pick-up location.