

# Child & Youth Friendly Church Awards



## Welcome Award Self-Assessment Pack



Dear Leader,

Welcome to the Youth and Child Friendly Awards. Across Oxford Diocese we find many churches who have a heart to better connect with children and young people but aren't always sure how. Through our work with parishes and deaneries, we have devised this award scheme to help parishes and benefices explore the 'how'.

The principal aim of the awards is to take a fresh look at the welcome and community that we offer to children, young people and families, to look at what we do with fresh eyes. The aim is to celebrate what is going well whilst challenging ourselves on what may need to be changed, tweaked, challenged or added.

There are two awards:

The First is the "Welcome Award" which we believe will be useful for *all* churches, looking at how children and young people experience their building, the community and Christian faith. This is the starting point for any church wanting to engage with this process.

The second (only available after submitting the "Welcome" application) is the "Good News Award" and builds on the first to look more fully at engagement and provision. Its name is taken from the 'Going for Growth' Report within which churches are asked to 'be good news for young people' rather than just telling *about* the good news of Jesus. What that looks like will differ from place to place so this award is asking you to examine values and attitudes as well as what actually happens for, with and to young people.

The awards are intentionally labelled "Family Friendly". Children and young people do not exist in isolation but find themselves in all sorts of shapes and types of families and our welcome is importantly connected with them too.

Using the process to examine the underpinning values and attitudes of a church is very significant and asks every member to be aware of their individual contribution to the community and therefore the way 'Church' is experienced by others. That way, in churches presented with 'Welcome' or 'Good News' awards, *if* anyone is less than welcoming to a child or young person in their attitude, behavior or words, it will be known that they do not speak for the whole church.

In terms of methodology you will find each award has a self-assessment form, taking you through eight key areas in a cyclical way because we want to encourage the evaluation process as a tool for on-going development. You will notice that we ask you to show what you are already doing and

where you have ideas and opportunities to develop or change things to improve the welcome or ministry. You may be asked to implement some of these before receiving your award.

We believe from experience that it is most important to have more than one person looking through the evaluation, ideally including children and young people to enable you to see things through their eyes. This gives grounding, relevance and greater integrity to any developments and changes that may come out of the process.

We hope this will be a great journey re-looking at what it really means for us and our churches to 'be Good News for children and young people.

In terms of process:

- Read through the pack.
- Work out your process and people for gathering information and ideas.
- Complete the self-assessment form as thoroughly and honestly as possible.
- Return the completed form to Melanie Hawgood (details below)
- Ian or Yvonne (or one of their nominated Champions) will be in touch to discuss further any developments or training needs.
- Once awarded your church will receive a specially designed 'Welcome Award' or later a 'Good News Award' plaque. You are able to display the plaque inside or outside your church, and use the art work on your web site or literature
- After three years we'll be back in touch to see how things are going. We are excited to see how your churches ministry will have developed in that time and what new opportunities are emerging.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is a stylized, elongated shape with the name 'Ian' written in a simple font below it. The second signature is the name 'Yvonne' written in a cursive, flowing script, with a period at the end.

Ian Macdonald or Yvonne Morris are available to help with any questions you may have.

In the first instance please contact Melanie Hawgood by telephone on 01865 208252 or e-mail [melanie.hawgood@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:melanie.hawgood@oxford.anglican.org)

Completed forms can be sent to Melanie by e-mail or by post to;

Melanie Hawgood, Dept of Mission, Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington OX5 1GF

# Welcome Award

The Welcome Award asks you to reflect on how your parish is welcoming children, young people and families. This is illustrated in the cycle below with the thinking behind the elements overleaf. Take a moment to consider these steps before beginning the self-assessment which follows this process.



# Welcome Award

## 8 Elements



1

We are carrying out an honest assessment of how welcoming our church is to children, young people and families. The 'Assessment Group' have included the views of children, young people, families, congregation and PCC.

2

We are laying out our vision and values for being a church that is fully welcoming to children, young people and families.

3

Clear steps are in place to improve the welcome and ministry children, young people & families experience.

4

We make opportunities and use appropriate methods to enable children, young people and their families to encounter God and grow spiritually.

5

When we make decisions or put new things in place we ask ourselves if this is consistent with our vision and values for welcoming of children, young people and families.

6

We affirm that developing and supporting work with (for example) mums and toddlers, uniformed organisations and local schools is a valuable part of our mission among children, young people and families.

7

We regularly communicate that *everyone* in church plays a part in welcoming. We look at training and accountability for those directly working with young people.

8

We are committed to regularly reviewing and evaluating how welcoming we are. The actions and timeframe we are a currently working towards have been identified.

## Child & Youth Friendly Church 'Welcome' & 'Good News' Awards

***Please complete***

Name of Parish/Benefice: \_\_\_\_\_

Deanery: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people involved in assessment group \_\_\_\_\_

Age range of assessment group (from – to) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Please help us support your children and youth ministry by providing the contact details of your key children and key youth leaders (continue overleaf if necessary):

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick whether this person is Children's leader  Youth leader

Voluntary  Employed

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick whether this person is Children's leader  Youth leader

Voluntary  Employed



**Welcome Award**  
**Self Assessment Form**

<p><b>1</b> We are carrying out an honest assessment of how welcoming our church is to children, young people and families. The 'Assessment Group' have included the views of children, young people, families, congregation and PCC. Honest assessment of current situation</p>	<p>Where are we (before we begin the process) in relation to our: welcome to, and connection with, Children and young people</p>
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**2 We are laying out our vision and values for being a church that is fully welcoming to children, young people and families.**

	We can show this in these ways	We could improve or begin this by
We regularly pray for the children, young people and families of our church and local community.		
All children, young people and families are welcome, acknowledged and included.		
The church has a Child Protection Policy in place.		

**3 Clear steps are in place to improve the welcome and ministry to children, young people and families**

	We can show this in these ways	We could improve or begin this by
Thought has been given to how children, young people and families are welcomed. <i>Are children and young people welcomed in their own right?</i>		
We know the names of children and young people in our church.		

**4 We make opportunities and use appropriate methods to enable children, young people and their families to encounter God and grow spiritually.**

	We can show this in these ways	We could improve or begin this by
There are services that are 'child/young people/family friendly'.		
Thought and creativity has been given to the ways children and young people engage with and participate in the mysteries of faith.		

**5 When we make decisions or put new things in place we ask ourselves if this is consistent with our vision and values for welcoming of children, young people and families.**

	We can show this in these ways	We could improve or begin this by
There is nothing that communicates 'children should be seen and not heard' and if such practice occurs it is appropriately challenged.		
There is a space for children, parents and young people to go/be when services are not for them.		
Thought has been given to the value of children and young people at differing ages, stages and abilities (including those with special needs). <i>Do children have to 'conform' to adult expectations of behaviour to be welcome?</i>		

**6 We affirm that developing and supporting work with (for example) mums and toddlers, uniformed organisations and local schools is a valuable part of our mission among children, young people and families.**

	We can show this in these ways	We could improve or begin this by
Opportunities are recognised to explore and promote links.		
Our children, youth and/or family activities are accessible and affordable so we have the potential to reach as many people as possible.		

**7 We regularly communicate that everyone in church plays a part in welcoming. We look at training and accountability for those directly working with young people.**

	We can show this in these ways	We could improve or begin this by
We explore/communicate how this is for the whole church.		
Volunteers are identified, safely recruited, trained and supported in their ministry.		
Opportunities are taken and created to celebrate and listen to children and young people?		
Children, youth and family ministries are a regular feature of PCC/DCC meetings and other appropriate forums		

**8** We are committed to regularly reviewing and evaluating how welcoming we are. These are the actions and timeframe we are a currently working to.

Actions	Timescale