

Youth Ministry in Communion SW  
St Mary's Church  
High Street, Putney  
London  
SW15 1SN



## **SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE – TAIZE YOUTH PILGRIMAGE 2026**

The purpose of this document is to layout the Safeguarding Guidance for the youth pilgrimage to the Taizé community in France taking place between the 18<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> of July 2026. This trip is organized and led by YMIC Southwark, in collaboration with YMIC London. This guidance has been shared with and approved by the safeguarding teams at the dioceses of Southwark and London.

To attend this trip all young people will need to fill out the registration form and provide parental consent to attend. In line with UK and French law we will require each young person to have a signed 'loco parentis' form giving us permission to take young people across the border.

Alongside this guidance, risk assessments will be undertaken for this trip to ensure all aspects of the safety and wellbeing of participants are duly considered.

### **Leadership and Staff**

The trip has a dedicated Safeguarding leadership team consisting of one lead and two deputy leads from across the two networks. The leadership team have overall responsibility for safeguarding during this trip, and all members of the leadership team have been subject to an enhanced DBS check and undergo the necessary safeguarding leadership training via the Church of England training portal.

All staff on the trip are YMIC staff from both networks and all have been subject to an enhanced DBS check and undergone the necessary safeguarding training. Amongst the staff and leadership team there are several trained First Aiders.

The ratio of young people to staff is 5:1, and so each young person will be part of a dedicated small group of 5 with a dedicated member of staff as their first port of call during the trip. This staff member will also take on the responsibilities of *loco parentis* required to take minors on international trips. This staff member will manage the safe transit of their 5 young people through customs and borders. All additional needs, medical conditions, and dietary requirements will be handled by the small group

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leaders ensuring each young person has ample oversight and care in all aspects of their trip.

**Safeguarding lead:** Fr Kieron Rowley – *Director of YMIC Southwark*

**Dept Safeguarding lead:** Jacob Holme – *Project lead, YMIC London*

**Dept Safeguarding lead:** Nequela Whittaker – *Youth Worker, YMIC Southwark*

If a disclosure is made during the trip, or a safeguarding concern arises, all concerns will be recorded and reported to the safeguarding lead who will in turn contact the relevant diocese, parish, school, LADO, and all other relevant persons.

### **Travel**

Travel to Taizé will be by coach using Anderson Travel who is a trusted travel partner of YMIC. Young people will be accompanied on the coach by their leaders and during any rest stops on the journey will always be under the supervision of leaders. We shall be crossing via ferry from Dover using DFDS and at no point will young people be able to leave the ferry at any time. Whilst on board young people will be supervised by group leaders.

When passing through customs all young people will be closely managed by their small group leader. The trip leader will keep hold of all passports and travel documents during the trip and will issue the relevant passports to small group leaders before entering the custom terminal. This ensures each adult is immediately responsible for no more than 5 young people and their travel documents. Once each group is successfully through customs, small group leaders will gather their groups travel documents and hand them back to the trip leader who will keep them and then deposit them in the safe once at Taizé. It is possible for leaders to gain access to items in the safe during our stay in the need should arise.

Where there are additional seats spare on our coach, these will be offered to the wider church community who may wish to travel to Taizé. These young adult pilgrims will not form any part of the official youth pilgrimage and will be engaging in the separate adult program once we arrive at Taizé. All young adult pilgrims will be required to provide a

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reference from their vicar, chaplain, of college/uni tutor attesting to their good character before being able to book a seat on the coach.

### **Accommodation**

Young people will be staying in single-sex shared dorms with bunk beds and will be grouped as much as possible with young people of similar age. Trip leaders will be accommodated in separate dorms nearby to supervise young people and ensure appropriate behavior during our stay. Each evening there will be leaders 'on duty' to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all young people.

Toilet and shower blocks at Taizé are large communal style single sex blocks, as you would expect in a commercial camping ground in the UK. All are fitted with single person cubicles for both toilets and shower facilities. These are situated nearby to our dorms and so leaders will be nearby if a young person needs to make a report or has any concerns.

With the shared bathroom facilities, leaders will be encouraged to exercise good discernment and discretion about when they chose to utilize these facilities. Alternatively, there are toilet and shower facilities in other locations, further away from our dorms that can be used by adult leaders.

### **Supervision**

During our stay young people are free to roam the site outside of set activities such as prayer, meals, work, and small groups. Each day during meals, prayers, and at the 'Oyak' café in the evening, duty group leaders will be in a set location as a point of contact if young people need to speak to a leader. Leaders accompany young people in bible groups and in their work so there is ample contact and supervision time between leaders and young people.

There will be a duty phone with a bespoke number for this trip, and a leader will always be 'on duty' with the phone in case a young person needs to make urgent contact with a leader while freely roaming the site.

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All pilgrims at Taizé must respect the curfew which begins once the 'Oyak Café' closes in the evening. This signals the end of the day, and all pilgrims must be in their accommodation at this time.

### **Medical, Dietary, Accident, and Emergency**

YMIC staff are First Aid trained and will be on hand to attend to minor injuries that may occur during our stay. Taizé has a small First Aid unit onsite capable of handling minor injuries and illness. The same unit is the where special dietary requirements are catered for, and we shall register any requirements with Taizé prior to our arrival. Group leaders will ensure young people know how to access this center as part of our orientation.

Details of any regular medicine/treatment taken by young people should be made clear at the time of booking, including if young people are capable and confident to administer this treatment to themselves. Group leaders will ensure they are fully briefed on the specific requirements of the young people in their group. Any medication the needs to be kept cold can be stored at the medical center on site. Any EpiPens and other equivalent treatment will be always carried by the young person. All regular medical treatments will be monitored during our stay.

In the unlikely case of a young person requiring emergency care beyond the scope of the onsite team, there are staff and cars available to drive pilgrims to the near by hospital in Cluny. If this is necessary, the young person, their group leader (who has *loco parentis*) and a second leader will travel to the hospital. All pilgrims who are eligible are required to have a GHIC card.

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This guidance has been reviewed by the safeguarding teams of the diocese of Southwark and London.

If you have concerns and wish to speak to someone, please see details below:

**YMIC Southwark:**

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Diocesan Safeguarding Team - [safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org)

**YMIC London:**

Jacob Holme – *Project Lead of YMIC LD* - [Jacob@standrewsfulham.com](mailto:Jacob@standrewsfulham.com)

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