

# **ST ALDHELM'S**

## **Safeguarding Policy**

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**Policy and Procedures concerning safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults**

## Contents

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Policy context	3
Policy statement	4
Defining responsibilities	5
Dealing with abuse and allegations of abuse	7
Definitions of abuse	8
Signs of abuse	9
Ways in which harm may be discovered	10
What to do when a disclosure is made	10
What to do when abuse is suspected	11
Procedure for responding to concerns	11
Confidentiality	13
Developing a culture of safety	13
Ministering to those who may present a risk	14
Contact details	15
Recruitment procedure	16
Recruitment: specific groups	18
Fair recruitment of ex- offenders policy	19
Handling of disclosure information	21
Other groups using the church building	21
Policy review	22

## Introduction

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Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

## POLICY CONTEXT

The Church of England has three main safeguarding policies in use, all of which can be accessed via the diocesan website or the Church of England website:

Protecting All God's Children 2010 (Safeguarding Children)  
Promoting a Safer Church 2006 (Safeguarding Adults)  
Safer Recruitment 2013

In addition the Church of England has two further policies which focus on specific safeguarding issues:

Responding to Domestic Abuse 2006  
Responding Well: to those who have been sexually abused 2011

The Church of England issues new practice guidance notes as required. This guidance sits alongside the above policies and is issued to address specific issues or changes to legislation. Every diocese and parish has a duty to abide by the Church of England policies. These policies have been adopted by the Diocese of Bristol Synod and Bishops Council.

In addition to this, all parishes are required to work within national legislation and to ensure that their safeguarding policies are compliant with 'Working Together' 2015 (Department of Education), 'Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014 (Department of Health) and in line with the expectations of the Charity Commission and insurers.

Copies of each of the above policies named above and all additional procedure and guidance named in this policy can be found on the Diocese of Bristol website:

[www.bristol.anglican.org/parish-resources/safeguarding](http://www.bristol.anglican.org/parish-resources/safeguarding)

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Safeguarding children, young people and adults**

Name of church: **St Aldhelm's Church, Bedminster** (hereinafter referred to as 'the church' in the Policy Statement)

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all adults and children. This includes paying due regard to the beliefs and wishes of adults and children both when a safeguarding concern arises and in the development and delivery of church led activities including worship.
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
- We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring Service disclosures.
- We will respond without delay to every concern raised which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him, or her, an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

Consequently this policy and all following procedures and guidance will be regularly updated in order to reflect current legislation, guidance and best practice.

### **Policy and procedures**

- A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently within the church and available on the Parish website.
- Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary will be given access to a full copy of the policy and associated Good Practice Guidance and will be required to follow them.
- A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person from the church or any other person associated with the church or community.
- The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the PCC.

**This policy must be read alongside the Good Practice Guidance relevant to the group a worker is involved with.**

## **DEFINING RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **PCC members**

The PCC is ultimately, and legally, responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and resourced in the church.

Therefore all PCC members should:

- Be fully conversant with the church Safeguarding Policy.
- Have a mechanism in place for monitoring or reviewing this policy.
- Nominate one member to link with the Parish Safeguarding Officer so as to receive reports, ensure regular agenda space for safeguarding and to inform the PCC of safeguarding practice updates and issues.
- Support the work of the Parish Safeguarding Officer and those responsible for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that the training needs of staff and volunteers are met.
- Find ways to communicate the policy to all within the church.
- Attend training as described in the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training Framework.

While the work itself may be delegated as appropriate, the ultimate responsibility will always remain with the PCC.

### **Parish Safeguarding Officer**

The PCC will recruit at least one person to act as Parish Safeguarding Officer. The role involves:

- Receiving and recording information from anyone who has safeguarding concerns.
- Assessing the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information when they need to, including taking advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser where needed.
- Consulting with outside bodies where appropriate to discuss concerns.
- Ensuring that any allegation against a staff member, volunteer, PCC member or minister is managed according to the Diocese of Bristol 'Allegations Management Procedure' - including informing the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser of any such allegation.
- Making a formal referral to Social Services or the police if appropriate or advised.
- Making referrals as appropriate to the Disclosure and Barring Service (as described within the Diocese of Bristol 'Allegations Management Procedure').
- Arranging and recording safeguarding training for staff and volunteers according to the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training framework.
- Undertaking and keeping records of DBS disclosure checks for those PCC members, staff and volunteers in eligible roles and ensuring that they are rechecked every 5 years.
- Supporting the annual policy review and assisting in monitoring compliance with the policy.

- Attend training as described in the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training Framework.

### **The incumbent**

In addition to the responsibilities that the ministers share with PCC members, the incumbent will have particular responsibilities including:

- Paying due regard to Church of England safeguarding policy and procedures
- Participation in the allegations management process for safeguarding issues related to PCC members, staff, volunteers or those who may present a risk to others within the church.
- Ensuring that those involved in safeguarding issues have access to pastoral support.
- Attend training as described in the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training Framework.

### **Leaders in youth, children's and adult's work**

- Know and carry out the correct process for appointing new workers.
- Know, carry out and support others in developing a ministry founded on good supervision.
- Know what to do if a worker shares with them a concern about a child, young person or adult.
- Know and implement the guidelines for good practice.
- Follow the agreed code of behavior for the relevant age group.
- Be aware of ways in which children, young people and adults are harmed and possible signs of abuse.
- Know what to do if a person discloses abuse.
- Know what to do if an allegation is made about a fellow worker.
- Know who to speak to if they have any suspicions or concerns.
- Attend training as described in the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training Framework.

### **Group members and helpers:**

- Know and implement the guidelines for good practice.
- Follow the agreed code of behavior for the relevant age group.
- Be aware of ways in which children, young people and adults are harmed and possible signs of abuse.
- Know what to do if a person discloses abuse.
- Know what to do if an allegation is made about a fellow worker.
- Know who to speak to if they have any suspicions or concerns.
- Attend training as described in the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training Framework.

### **All congregation members**

All church attendees have a part to play. It is the responsibility of all within the church community to ensure there is a welcome for children, young people and adults and an intolerance of all that brings them harm.

All attendees should be alert to situations where children or vulnerable adults. All should know who to speak to if they suspect that a child, young person or adult is being harmed. Congregation members are welcome to access Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training.

## **DEALING WITH ABUSE AND ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

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### **Introduction**

Everyone within church needs to be aware of the possibility that children and adults can be abused. It is the duty of every Christian to be vigilant about the care of all within in the congregation and in the community. Church members who have direct contact with the children, young people or vulnerable adults, are more likely to become aware of potential problems.

Children and adults can be harmed in many ways in which their health, (physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual), or social development is damaged or impaired by other people, including their peers. It is an abuse of relationships, a misuse of power and a betrayal of trust.

Abuse can affect people from any kind of background. Children and adults with any form of disability, be it physical or learning or sensory may be more vulnerable to abuse.

For the purposes of clarity:

- A child is any person aged under 18 years.
- The definition of a vulnerable adult in current legislation is:

An adult who:

*“Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;*

*Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and*

*As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.”*

(Chapter 14 Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014)

In the main, abuse is perpetrated by an adult who is well known to the child or adult. The abuser is often a family member. Other trusted adults, including various professionals, leaders and members of the church, may misuse their authority and abuse.

Abuse is known to be perpetrated by children against other children and vulnerable adults.

Recent developments in the use of computers and the internet have resulted in the misuse of chat rooms, messaging services and an increased ease in the manufacture and sharing of images of child and adult abuse.

## **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE**

Abuse has many forms, it is important to be aware of the breadth of possible abuse and to be able to respond appropriately. Some definitions of abuse are listed below.

### **Physical abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child or adult whom they are looking after.

### **Emotional abuse**

This is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or adult such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the person's emotional development or wellbeing. It may involve conveying that the person is worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or adults. It may involve causing the person to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or adults at risk. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of others, though it may occur alone. Emotional abuse may occur when a child witnesses domestic abuse.

### **Sexual abuse**

This involves forcing or enticing a child or a vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities. A child under the age of 16 cannot consent to a sexual act. Adults who lack capacity to make an informed decision about a sexual act can not give consent to such an act. Adults and young people over the age of 16 can be coerced or exploited into sexual acts and as such may still be experiencing abuse whether or not consent appears to have been given.

### **Neglect**

This is the persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health and wellbeing. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect the person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a person's basic emotional needs.

### **Spiritual abuse**

This could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting an individual's right to choose for themselves.

**The above apply to both children and adults. The additional following categories are found in legislation related to adults:**

**Financial abuse**

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Domestic abuse**

In 2013, the Home Office announced changes to the definition of domestic abuse:

Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse... by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality

Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage.

Age range extended down to 16.

**Modern slavery**

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Organisational abuse**

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Discriminatory abuse**

Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Self-neglect**

A wide range of behaviour involving neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

**SOME SIGNS OF ABUSE**

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- Unexplained injuries.
- Injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to injury,
- An injury that has not been treated.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Changes in behaviour or mood.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness in a child.

- Signs of neglect, such as under-nourishment, untreated illnesses, inadequate care or inappropriate clothing for the weather or time of year.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why any of the above are occurring – it is not your job to investigate or decide if something is abuse, only to report on what is observed.

## **WAYS IN WHICH HARM MIGHT BE DISCOVERED**

- On occasions an incident or an injury will give cause for concern but often it is a series of incidents or an accumulation of concerns which indicate that a child or adult may be suffering or is at risk of suffering harm.
- A person experiencing abuse might share with a trusted person a concern they have about their safety or disclose that they are being harmed.
- A person's observed behaviour, their physical appearance, emotional demeanor might indicate that they are being abused or neglected.
- Sudden changes might be observed in a person's behavior.
- There may be a history of concerns noted over a number of occasions.
- There may be indicators that parents/ carers are experiencing difficulties which are having adverse and potentially damaging effects on their child or the person they care for.
- Observations of an adult's interaction with a child or young person might give cause for concern or interaction between two children.

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN... A DISCLOSURE IS MADE**

A child or adult may choose to tell someone that they or someone else is being harmed or abused. They do not have to tell a specific person and will often choose the person they most trust. For this reason everyone should be aware of what to do...

- Create a safe environment in which the person can share their concerns.
- React calmly so as not to further distress the person.
- Listen carefully.
- Allow them the time they need to say what they want.
- Don't rush, or interrupt or ask more questions than you need to. You only need to establish whether there is cause for concern, nothing more.
- Always ask open questions (e.g. "Tell me...", "Explain to me..." or "Describe to me...")
- As soon as you believe there is cause for concern allow the person to finish but do not question them any further. Explain that you will have to tell someone who knows what to do next.
- Accept what you hear and take the person seriously. Do not minimise the severity of what is being said.
- Reassure the person, and tell them that you know how difficult it must be to confide in you.
- Tell the person that they are not to blame and they have done the right thing in speaking to you.

- Help the person to understand what will happen next – the person will need to know that other people will be told about the concerns and who those people will be.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the person's language and recording any questions that you asked to prompt a response. Ensure you sign and date them and record who was involved and their roles.
- Be aware that the person may be frightened and that they may have been threatened if they tell of what has been happening to them or others.
- Remember that most children and those who receive care and support feel loyalty to their parents/carers and other significant adults and find it hard to say things to their detriment.

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN...ABUSE IS SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED**

- Do not dismiss your concerns.
- Do not confront the adult or child about whose behaviour you have concerns.
- Do not take responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse is actually taking place.
- Do not investigate allegations.
- Do not act alone.
- Do not take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have.
- Do follow the church's procedures for responding to concerns.

## **PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

### **In an URGENT situation REPORT Immediately**

Any concern must be reported to the relevant Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. This can be done either face to face or on the phone but must be followed up with a written report soon afterwards.

**If the child or adult is in imminent danger a report should be made immediately to Social Services or the police: call 999 if immediate assistance needed.** If this happens, the Parish Safeguarding Officer should be informed as soon as possible afterwards. If the Parish Safeguarding Officer is the person the concern is about- contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

### **RECORD**

As soon as possible after a person tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made. The record should:

- Be made as soon as possible after the event.
- Be legible and state the facts clearly (if the record is typed up from hand written notes both should be kept).
- Include
  - Date of disclosure and date of when the notes were taken
  - The potential victims full name, address, date of birth or age

- The nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- Description of any injuries and demeanor of the potential victim
- The situational context in which the conversation arose
- The exact record of what the person said using the exact words where possible
- What was said and asked by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- Any action taken as a result of the concerns
- Signature and date of the record keeper
- The record should be kept secure and confidential and made available only to the relevant Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and any professional involved or referred to.

## REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Parish Safeguarding Officer:

- Should take account of his/her own experience and expertise in assessing risk to children and adults. If needed, they may need to take advice from those with more experience i.e. the Diocesan safeguarding Advisor or Social Services.
- Must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, adult or family.
- May speak to others in the church who may have relevant knowledge and experience that would impact the decision, being mindful of issues of confidentiality when doing so. Such conversations should not delay any necessary action.
- May seek advice from the professional services (police or local Social Services). Any recommendation by the professional services must be followed.
- The Parish Safeguarding Officer may need to act on verbal information if waiting for a written account would possibly delay the reporting of the situation to appropriate others.

## REFER

In reviewing the reported concern the Parish Safeguarding Officer must decide to whom the report should be referred. The Parish Safeguarding Officer may:

- Refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child or adult is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation.
- Refer the concern to others who work with the child or young person in question asking for continued observation.
- Speak directly to an adult potential victim to ascertain their wishes in relation to further referrals or speak to a child parents or carers to seek their consent for further referral. **This should never be done if parents or direct carers may be the alleged abusers and physical or sexual abuse is suspected or if seeking such consent or discussion would cause unreasonable delay or increased risk prior to appropriate referral to appropriate agencies.**
- A referral should always be made where a child has been or is at risk of harm.
- A referral should always be made where an adult without capacity has been or is at risk of harm.
- A referral should always be made where other children or adults may be at risk of harm.
- Where an adult has capacity and does not wish a referral to be made, advice may be sought from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Make a referral to the local police, Social Services Department.

- Where the allegation is about someone in a position of trust within the church the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be contacted and the Diocese of Bristol Allegations Management Procedure followed.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer must keep a written record of all actions taken and all original reports should be retained safely and securely. These will be retained in line with Church of England record retention guidance.

## **SUPPORT**

- Consideration should be given to pastoral support for the child or adult the concern is about, the potential or alleged abuser, the church staff and volunteers managing the process and where needed the wider church community.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Safeguarding concerns must only be discussed with those who have a need to know or with those who are effected or whose advice is being sought. Disclosing information to those who do not need to have it including a worker disclosing to their spouse or friends may be a disciplinary issue.

However, the Data Protection Act 1998 specifically allows confidential information to be shared to safeguard or prevent or detect crime. Therefore anyone with safeguarding concerns is able to share that information so long as they share with the appropriate people e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Social Service or Police.

## **DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SAFETY**

It is paramount that all workers are aware of the boundaries of safeguarding as well as their duty to record and report any concerns they have regarding a fellow worker.

**This policy should be read alongside the Good Practice Guidelines for the relevant age group: all workers are expected to have read and be conversant with the guidelines relevant to the age groups they work with i.e. under or over 18's.**

Due to the fluid nature of relationships and ministries within the church, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between those workers who have inadvertently and innocently forgotten best practice and those who seek to harm a child or adult. As such, all workers should:

- Be aware of all practices that are prescribed by the church as best practice.
- Work together as a team within the church structure to develop a culture of accountability. This will encourage workers to challenge each other where appropriate in order to meet best practice in all situations.
- Leave time for a de-brief at the end of every session in order to allow the opportunity to highlight any inappropriate behaviour and to make note of such items. This level of

transparency and reporting will be helpful if any behaviour turns out to be part of a recurring pattern.

- Be held under the responsibility of their Group Leader and understand the potential need for closer supervision or disciplinary action if a worker consistently ignores or forgets best practice.
- Know who to contact about their concerns.

## **MINISTERING TO THOSE WHO MAY PRESENT A RISK**

Every person who chooses to be part of church has a different background. Some will have been convicted or received a caution at some point in their lives, others may have been alleged to, or have actually, caused harm to a child or vulnerable adult but not been charged with an offense. Everyone is welcome in Church. But because such a broad cross section of people comes together, there are times when particular arrangements are needed to ensure that everyone is as safe as they can be.

The Church of England Safeguarding policies call for 'an agreement' to be formed where someone has a background that indicates that they could present a risk to others and they wish to become a part of church or to remain a part of a church were the allegation arises where they are already part of a congregation.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be contacted where a person in or wishing to join the congregation is identified who may present a risk. The Diocesan guidance "Ministering to those who may present a risk" will be followed in these cases. See [www.bristol.anglican.org/parish-resources/safeguarding/policies-and-procedures/](http://www.bristol.anglican.org/parish-resources/safeguarding/policies-and-procedures/) for the guidance.

### **What should trigger a report to the Parish Safeguarding Officer?**

- All workers should feel able to report any behaviour which makes them feel uncomfortable.
- All occasions where a worker causes harm to a child or adult or where the actions and behaviour of a worker poses a risk of harm to others.
- All occasions where anyone has a concern that a child or adult is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Where a person is identified in the congregation who may present a risk to others.
- When a worker repeatedly breaches the code of conduct, whether or not it is thought to be willful.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

These contact details relate to St Aldhelm's Parish.

### **Church Office**

Tel: 0117 9639121

### **Parish Safeguarding Officer for Children**

Victoria Rees (contact via the church office / at church)

### **Parish Safeguarding Officer for Adults**

Victoria Rees (contact via the church office / at church)

### **Lead Recruiter**

Juliet Wynne (contact via the church office / at church)

### **Local Authority Children's services**

First Response Bristol team 0117 903 6444

### **Local Authority LADO**

Nicola Laird 0117 903 7795 or 07795091020

### **Local Authority Adults Safeguarding**

Bristol Care Direct 0117 922 2700

### **Local Authority Out of Hours**

### **Police**

### **Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser**

0117 9060100

## SAFER RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION OF WORKERS

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### Recruitment Procedure

All staff and volunteers recruited within the Church of England must be recruited according to the Church of England Safer Recruitment policy. It is the responsibility of those recruiting and ultimately the PCC to ensure that this happens without fail.

The following is a summary of the procedure, anyone new to recruitment within the church must read the Church of England Safer Recruitment Policy before recruiting anyone:

1. The need for a new staff member/ volunteer is identified
2. The PCC or delegated person or group agrees to recruit
3. A role description/ profile is written
4. The post is advertised- including that a DBS disclosure is required if relevant
5. An application form is completed and reviewed
6. Those who are potentially suitable are interviewed.
7. Reference requests are made, a confidential self declaration completed and a DBS disclosure application made where eligible.
8. Once references received and DBS application completed- the information is reviewed and the candidate confirmed in role.
9. Induction, training and supervision are arranged

These procedures must be followed for all recruitments, even those with members whom the church has known over a long period. Be aware that recruitment into one role does not mean that the person is suitable for additional roles. Be aware that DBS and other procedures differ dependent on role.

#### **Step 1: This is self-explanatory**

**Step 2: Complete this for your parish. The PCC needs to agree who has responsibility for agreeing to recruit.**

**Step 3: A job description/profile is written** - The details of this document should be worked out by the person recruiting. This should include whether the role is eligible for a DBS disclosure. This job description should be given to anyone who is interested in the role.

**Step 4: The post is advertised** -This may involve a notice on the noticeboard, in the parish magazine or other forms as appropriate. The advert in whichever form must make clear that the role is eligible for a DBS check if this is the case.

**Step 5: Application form** - An application form should be completed and then reviewed by the recruiter.

**Step 6: A face to face meeting** - Since there is a lot to cover in this meeting, the recruiter should be pre-prepared with relevant questions.

- The purpose of the interview is not just regarding safeguarding but is about discerning with the applicant whether they are called by God to serve in this way.

- Notes should be kept of the interview and retained on file with the other documents relating to that applicant.

**Step 7: Reference requests are made, a confidential self-declaration completed and a DBS disclosure application made where eligible.**

- The CCPAS Self declaration form is completed by the applicant.
- The form may be provided and completed at the application stage but should not be reviewed until the decision has been made to accept the candidate subject to DBS disclosure and references.
- After the form has been filled in, it should be returned to the DBS Lead Recruiter and reviewed by that person.

Where the role is eligible for a DBS check the Lead Recruiter must be given a copy of the role profile. They will then email details to the candidate regarding how to complete an application using the CCPAS DBS Ebulk system. The Lead Recruiter or ID Checker will need to complete an ID check with applicant and complete section Y. The Lead Recruiter will be notified of the outcome of the check electronically. Where a disclosure contains information the parish 'Fair Recruitment of Ex Offenders Policy' must be followed. Further information on who is eligible for a DBS check is available within the CCPAS guide for recruiters- if in doubt advice can be sought from the CCPAS DBS team.

Two names for references should be noted on the Application form. Please see the following rules regarding who can/should be asked for a reference:

- At least one of the referees should be from outside the church and from current or last employer where applicable.
- Neither can be related by blood or marriage.
- Both must be over 18.
- At least one of the referees should be able to talk about the applicant's ability in working with the relevant age group.
- If the applicant has come recently from another church, that church must be asked for a reference.
- References must always be written and a reference form used. Where additional information would be useful or there is any doubt about the veracity of a reference the referee should be contacted to discuss.

For those adults or young people who are helping on a one-off (not including overnight events or multi-day event), please note that while they will not be eligible for a DBS check, they must never be left alone with any children or young people and they should still be recruited safely.

**No one should ever start in role until the full process has been completed.**

**Step 8: Information reviewed and candidate confirmed in role where deemed suitable.**

The recruiter must review and confirm that a satisfactory DBS and references have been received. If there is any doubt about the candidate's suitability for the role they should not be confirmed. The PCC should then be informed of the persons name, role and that they were safely recruited.

### **Step 9: Induction, training and supervision**

- Every worker should be provided (electronically or in paper form) with a copy of the full safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance, which they should have read.
- The worker must be inducted into the role by their supervisor/ line manager
- Supervision sessions arranged- to enable the worker and their supervisor to discuss the role. This should start in a probationary period during which the workers suitability for the role will be further assessed. If the worker is not working appropriately or wishes to step down this should be discussed and actioned during the probationary period.
- As soon as is practical (and to be refreshed at least every three years), the new worker must undergo full training in safeguarding (see Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Training Framework for modules to be completed).
- Other elements of training as appropriate e.g. health and safety, 1<sup>st</sup> aid, practical training arranged at this point.

## **RECRUITMENT: SPECIFIC GROUPS**

### **Young Leaders**

It is important that young leaders (those under the age of 18) are both given the responsibility of leadership and also cared for as children. In view of this, the following guidelines should be followed:

- All young leaders should be given a progressive amount of leadership which grows with their skill and confidence.
- Under no circumstances should young leaders be seen as 'just another pair of hands'. We have a responsibility to ensure their time is both rewarding and enjoyable as well taking extra time for them to hone their skills, attitude and experience.
- Young leaders, as they are under 18, cannot count towards ratios and therefore must not be left on their own with responsibility for a group of children or adults.
- The Safeguarding Policy applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person.
- Permission must be sought from parents for their leadership as well as for any activities that group partakes in
- If a young leader accompanies a group on a residential activity ideally they should have separate sleeping accommodation to both the adult leadership team and the children they are working with.
- The appointment of young leaders should follow the full guidelines stated in this policy (including the DBS check). This includes an 18 year old leader of a peer group.
- Young leaders (and young adults) will need to be especially aware of the danger of blurring boundaries. This is especially true concerning the issues of electronic communication.
- Those under the age of 16, while they cannot undergo a DBS check, must be covered by all the other points above.

## **Volunteers from overseas or on short-term mission**

As far as possible, the same guidelines should be followed concerning overseas leaders, or short term volunteers visiting the church (for up to a month), as it does to leaders from the home church. The following should also be noted:

- If an adequate one is not provided (judged by whether it covers the necessary items of information) the volunteer should be sent beforehand, and return, a copy of the application form.
- The sending church or organisation should seek declarations from the local authorities and organisations that there is no known reason why the applicant should not work with children or young people.
- If not provided by the sending organisation, the volunteer should supply two relevant and appropriate references which should be followed up by the church.
- Once the team has arrived, they should be made fully aware of the guidelines regarding safeguarding.

## **Paid workers**

The appointment process for paid workers should contain all of the elements of the process described for volunteers, but will inevitably be more formal and will contain some additional elements:

- A full job description and person specification should be drawn up.
- The post will be advertised appropriately.
- There will be a need to shortlist applicants.
- The interview process will be more formal.
- It is important to ensure that there is an exploration of the candidate's understanding of and commitment to safeguarding procedures within the interview.
- It is essential that the candidate's right to work in the UK is checked.
- A contract of employment should be issued.

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## **Joint church and ecumenical activities**

Where activities are planned alongside other churches or groups not covered by this policy, there must be clear agreement from the outside regarding which organisation's safeguarding policy is to be followed, how recruitment will work and who is the insured party for the activity.

## **FAIR RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure Service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, (name parish) undertakes to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. It will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any unspent criminal record at an early stage in the application process.

Unless the nature of the position allows St Aldhelm's to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Where the nature of a position does allow us to ask questions about your entire criminal record excepting any "protected" information we will ask you to complete a "Self Disclosure Form" before asking you to apply for a DBS disclosure. (Further information about what information should be disclosed is available from DBS in their 'DBS Filtering Guide', [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/266123/Filtering\\_guide\\_v2.3.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266123/Filtering_guide_v2.3.pdf)). This enables us to discuss with you at an early stage any information which may cause you to be unable to progress to confirmation in role. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to the person within the organisation who is responsible for processing your DBS disclosure application and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of a recruitment process.

Where a caution, conviction or additional information is disclosed by you or on a DBS disclosure your consent will be sought to forward a copy of the document to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA).

The DSA will make contact with you to discuss the information and the circumstances in which the caution, conviction or concern arose. The DSA may need to speak to statutory bodies or individuals and will seek your consent to do so. The DSA will provide a written risk assessment to the recruiter which includes a recommendation of safe to proceed, proceed with amendments to role or not safe to proceed. You will be provided with a copy of that assessment.

The recruiter will then communicate to you a decision regarding whether they are able to continue with the appointment process.

Failure to reveal information that is relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work. Failure to consent to risk assessment will result in any offer of employment or voluntary work being withdrawn.

This policy stands for all staff and volunteers recruited by (name parish).

## **HANDLING OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION**

**Storage and Access:** DBS Disclosure Certificates must never be kept on an applicant's personal file. They must be stored separately in a secure, lockable, non-portable cabinet, with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

**Handling:** In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. A record should be kept of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

**Usage:** Disclosure information must only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

A disclosure certificate must be for the correct workforce only and at the correct level. i.e. a person recruiting for a role in the child workforce at enhanced level should not ask to see a certificate for child and adult workforce at enhanced plus level as the certificate may include information that the recruiter is not entitled to see.

**Retention:** Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, a disclosure certificate should not be kept for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, consultation should be made with the umbrella body CCPAS. Advice can then be given regarding the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual. The above conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access would still apply in these circumstances.

**Disposal:** Once the retention period has lapsed, Disclosure certificates must be suitably destroyed by secure means, i.e. shredding, pulping or burning. Whilst awaiting destruction, Disclosure certificates must not be kept in any insecure receptacle (eg waste bin or confidential waste sack). No copies of the Disclosure certificate may be kept, in any form. However, a record can be kept of the date of the issue of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure requested, the position for which the disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

## **OTHER GROUPS USING CHURCH PREMISES**

- Any group working with children, young people or vulnerable adults using the church premises or associated buildings should have their own Safeguarding Policy if relevant. This needs to be stipulated on the hiring agreement.
- All such user groups should be provided with a copy of the churches safeguarding policy and sign to confirm receipt.
- It is not the church's responsibility to ensure that the group is following their policy but if they are found in serious breach of their policy (decided by the PCC), the church should consider terminating their rental agreement.
- One-off private hirers need not have a policy but should be encouraged to show due care and attention.
- Church workers must take care not to disrupt user groups by entering the hired space unnecessarily during use. Particularly where children's groups are running all church workers must follow the churches code of behaviour and ensure that they make themselves known to the group leader and remain only whilst necessary e.g. carrying out an urgent repair or delivering a message.

## **POLICY REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy was last reviewed date: June 2017

Periodically reviewed.