



Safer Recruitment Policy;
application of DBS and training policy as relating to
safeguarding (revised 2022)

*A Policy for the Diocese of Lichfield; its churches and
Parishes.*



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1) Introduction and context.

This policy was written by Neil Spiring (Diocese Safeguarding Advisor). As such it pulls in relevant knowledge of diocese trainers, Kim Hodgkins (Diocese Safeguarding officer), and existing national church directives and policies relating to safer recruitment, DBS checks and existing contractual relationships within the Diocese.

This Policy recognises that the Christian faith embraces learning and teaching as well as honesty and transparency. It is recognised that with this comes commitment to the safety of our church and its users, and that this requires a commitment in terms of time and transparency. In this document we will explore how the diocese has committed to achieving the above via commitment to training and the undertaking of appropriate checks when these are applicable

This document is an open document - to be developed and improved over time by the amendment and contributions of our stakeholders in the diocese and beyond. We welcome suggestion, debate and engagement in development to ensure organic improvement. To this end should you have any queries, ideas, suggestions or additions relating to this or any other Diocese Safeguarding Policy - we would like to hear from you.

Neil Spiring – Diocese Safeguarding Advisor. 19/06/2017 (revised 2022)

2) Working Principles of this Policy:

Safeguarding vulnerable Adults, Children and Young people is always a significant concern and responsibility of all those associated with church activity. As a consequence, Safeguarding is everyone's concern and no one person's.

As a result of the above we commit to the principle of 'No More Secrets', and in so doing will be transparent in our responsibilities, interests, behaviours and concerns. We will be open to scrutiny without defence and admit mistakes openly. We will challenge each other in appropriate ways and work together to ensure we consider all issues from as wide a range of perspectives and views as possible. We will be forgiving but hold ourselves and others to account.

3) Who is covered by this policy?

Persons undertaking activities on behalf of the church with vulnerable persons on a paid or voluntary bases. This includes vulnerable adults (adults with poor health, mental health conditions or other circumstances that may leave them open to abuse by virtue of vulnerability), as well as children; ***hence not working with children does not negate the need for the training and checks discussed within this policy.*** For further information on the categories and nature of abuse please see the Diocese Safeguarding Policy and Guidance (2021)

Section 1

4) Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS check).

4.1 National legislation sets down the need for organisations working with children and Adults who may be at risk of abuse (or made vulnerable by circumstance), to perform checks with the Disclosure and Baring Service. The circumstances relating to who must be checked are outlined and codified and a local (Diocesan level) interpretation applied in this policy.

4.2 The DBS system replaces older and separate barring lists and criminal record Bureau checks. When applying for an enhanced DBS check with regulated activity a person will be checked against national barring lists that prohibit a person from working with a particular group (following previous disciplinary action or incident). In addition the process will check an individual for criminal conviction against assorted national databases. The offence will be considered against the risk to children and adults (ie- a historic caution at the age of 16 for shop lifting need not exclude a person from working with children later in life).

4.3 If employed in a position where you will be working with vulnerable adults or children you will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check. This is regardless of your position being full or part time, permanent or sessional. If you come into contact in a leadership role with adults who are vulnerable (for example the sick, those with dementia), or children, you will require an enhanced DBS check as you will be undertaking regulated activity. If you serve in a leadership role on a PCC or have a PCC post with portfolio for children and vulnerable adults – you will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.

4.4 DBS checks are undertaken against a particular group of vulnerabilities. If working only with Children or young persons you will not need a check against working with adults. If working only with Adults you will not need a check for working with children. If you are in a role where you will work in an eligible role that brings you into contact with children and adults you will need to be checked against both. When applying you will need to indicate how this applies to you based upon your circumstances and role.

4.5 You may be in receipt of a DBS check from another organisation – for example if you are a teacher you will likely have had one from your employer. However as a general rule **these are not transferable** and if undertaking an eligible role within the church you will require a check be undertaken via the church.

4.6 Under some circumstances you may have a transferable DBS check if you have paid for this addition as a result of professional need (for example an agency teacher or carer who moves between different schools and employers), this is undertaken through the DBS Update Service. Under such circumstances this may be accepted by the church – but only if the checks relate to the correct vulnerability grouping (see 4.4).

5) Who will require a DBS check?

Readers of this policy should be aware of the concept of 'regulated activity'; Meaning that if an activity (for example a Sunday school or transporting adults in cars or mini busses), comes under legislation requiring statutory regulations that legally govern how an activity is undertaken – you will require a check. As an overriding rationale, if an activity falls into this category then a DBS check will always be required.

Examples would include (but are not limited to):

- ***Personal care with adults or children***
- ***Shopping, social support in the community***
- ***Assistance with tasks around house***
- ***Regulated activities (such as learning – for example Sunday school leaders)***
- ***If an activity involves offering advice or guidance***
- ***Assisting a person with needs or nutrition or hydration***
- ***Moderation of an online group or activity involving children, young persons or a vulnerable adult group (for example those with dementia).***
- ***Any transportation of a vulnerable person involving a motor vehicle.***

This is not exhaustive and should be considered in relation to the above and below sections of this policy and if need be in discussion with the Diocese.

5.1 Anyone sanctioned by the church to undertake a ministry (ordained or licenced reader or other variant), will require a DBS check. This includes youth ministry, PTO's and other forms of work involving the leadership or lone working with vulnerable adults and children.

5.2 Licenced ministers, readers and those with Permission to Officiate (PTO's), must maintain current DBS certificates. Failure to do so will invalidate them from practice until this is rectified. Deaneries and the Bishops office where licences or PTO's are issued from need to be informed when renewing DBS certificates.

5.3 You will need a DBS check if working in a leadership or unsupervised role with children, young persons or adults with vulnerabilities. You may be in a role where you are working under supervision with these groups – under such circumstances you may not require checks and this will be determined by your safeguarding officer, minister in consultation with the Diocese DBS administrator.

5.3 **Home Communion**; the advice currently provided to the Diocese from national church is that as an activity in itself, home communion does not require the completion of a DBS check. This said if a person undertaking home Communion is also assisting with shopping, giving advice, making drinks, sandwiches or providing some other care related act or assistance – this will require the checking of said person under rules of regulated activity. In such cases this needs to be detailed on the DBS application and the job title of the person concerned needs to reflect these additional tasks. Thirty One:Eight who undertake checks on behalf of the church request that a person delivering home communion involved in such tasks should be given the position title of 'Pastoral Visitor' or 'Pastoral Worker' on application for DBS checks, to reflect additional tasks and roles undertaken.

5.4 **PCC membership**; From 2022 all serving PCC members will be required to undertake a DBS check. Although not related to the safeguarding of adults and children it should also be noted that convictions for fraud and theft will exclude a person under church rules from serving on a PCC. In addition, any convictions under Schedule One of the Children's Act 1933 (and subsequent amendments), will likely exclude an individual from service. Individual churches and congregations should consider this factor when appointing PCC members. The incumbent and PCC leadership should ensure that it is happy those who serve are of 'good character', in line with canon law.

5.5 **Persons serving as Churchwardens**; Due to the nature of this role and its responsibilities all persons serving as Churchwardens or assistant wardens will require DBS checks.

6 Local DBS arrangements and processes for Diocese of Lichfield.

6.1 The diocese has contracted responsibility for DBS checks out to the **Thirty One:Eight who operates an electronic application service for use by the Diocese**. As such the process is now undertaken online. As a result the Diocese is no longer able to undertake paper applications for DBS checks.

6.2 Parishioners who do not have access to the internet at home should speak to their church based safeguarding officer or minister in order to arrange access to a computer via your parish offices.

6.3 The Diocese offers assistance with DBS checks via a DBS administrator who can be contacted at St Mary's House on 01543 306223. The DBS administrators name is *Helen Scheven* and she can advise on specific questions raised during application.

6.4 **The DBS process can broadly be broken down into 3 stages;**

One

- Applicant comences online application - applicant will need to state what role this is in relation to and give a description of duties.
- Application should be made using address <https://thirtyoneeight.org/dbs-service/apply-for-a-dbs-check/>
- Applicant will need to contact their local deanery to get there area's application and organisation codes.

Two

- The applicant will provide requested identification to their safeguarding officer who will check this and confirm with their local deanery that this is legitimate.
- Once verification of this proces is confirmed by the deanery the application will be released to Thirty One:Eight to run a DBS check.

Three

- Result is returned by post to applicant. This should be seen by minister and or safeguarding officer at church.
- If the result returns a blemish the Diocese will be informed by Thirty One:Eight and the applicant will be asked to show the diocese their certificate. A decision will then be made as to if this will exclude the applicant from the role concerned.

6.5 The Diocese DBS administrator who has access to the appropriate computer database can track and advise on applications throughout the process and will ensure that the Diocese Safeguarding advisors are aware of any applications returning blemish.

6.6 If a blemish is returned under a DBS check, the impact will depend upon the nature of the conviction. For example whilst a conviction for shop lifting many years ago may not result in a person being prevented from undertaking a specific role with children or adults, it is likely that an offence relating to mistreatment or abuse of a child or adults will negate the applicant from working with these groups.

6.7 Any blemished certificate is required to be submitted to a Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser for risk assessment before the applicant undertakes any duties relating to the role applied for.

Section Two; Training and safeguarding

7.0 Safeguarding training for those working with children, young persons and adults.

Training in relation to safeguarding has now been centralised across the Church of England (since 2017). As a consequence the training that must be completed, the level of training that must be undertaken and who must undertake it, are now the same across all diocesan areas.

7.1 Training; ground rules, behaviours and expectations.

Training is delivered according to Church of England national policy and guidance. The training is compulsory and is delivered via online modules or face to face training using zoom. Candidates are asked to respect that our trainers are delivering national church materials and that in so doing they are complying with national guidance's. Hence any concerns of candidates in relation to the material, its delivery or its status as a requirement for a candidate's role should not be addressed to our trainers but rather addressed to national church authorities. Inevitably any attempt to discuss candidate views and concerns in relation to these issues with trainers during training will delay the delivery of material required and extend the length of the training session for all in attendance.

Our trainers are volunteers or staff to give up time outside their normative working pattern. As such we rely upon their good will and commitment in undertaking this role. As a consequence we must request that all those attending training commit to maintain a polite and respectful attitude to fellow candidates and trainers at all times.

It should be noted that some of the material covered may be distressing to some people. Should this be the case please make our trainers aware and we will facilitate a discussion privately away from the training.

Safeguarding training provided by a candidates employer or other voluntary/charitable organisation is not accepted by the church - all persons working with vulnerable adults or children must complete the relevant church training modules relating to their role (please see section 7.2 to 7.5 below).

Training undertaken within the Church prior to January 2017 will not meet new national church training requirements and you will need to complete the new relevant training.

7.2 Training is broken down across specific modules. Please select the training that applies to your role from the descriptions below. .

7.3 Basic Awareness Module;

Delivery: Online eLearning Module

Target: All Church Officers

Anyone going on to complete any other safeguarding learning modules.

Duration – ***Approx. 1.5 hours online eLearning module which can be taken at own pace and at a convenient time.***

Learning Outcomes:

- Connect the core principles and practices of safeguarding to the Christian faith.
- Recognise issues of power and abuse as they present themselves in a range of contexts, including the Church.
- Identify the barriers (emotional, psychological & theological) that can prevent the promotion of healthy Church communities.
- Apply a clear process in the handling of concerns / safeguarding information whilst recognising the boundaries of their own role.

7.4 Foundations Module:

Intake requirement: ***Candidates will need to have undertaken Basic Awareness module.***

Target:

- Anyone holding the Bishop's licence, commission, authorisation, or permission (clergy, PtO, Readers, LLMs).
- Anyone in a role which involves work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Churchwardens.
- Anyone going on to complete any other safeguarding learning pathway.
- Pre-ordination or license students, prior to BAP or selection Panel.
- Vergers.
- PCC Members / Lay Chapter Members.

Duration: ***Approx. 1.5 hours online eLearning module which can be taken at own pace and at a convenient time.***

Learning Outcomes:

- Connect an understanding of good safeguarding practice to their own role and responsibilities.
- Recognise commonalities and differences arising from the age or circumstances of those affected, and how this informs appropriate action.
- Identify wider support, accountability, and governance arrangements relevant for safeguarding in their context.
- Analyse and respond appropriately to variety of safeguarding scenarios whilst recognising the boundaries of their own role.

7.5 Leadership Module;

Intake requirement: *Candidates will need to have undertaken Basic Awareness and Foundations Modules.*

Target:

This is designed for those people who play a lead role in shaping the culture of the Church body concerned. This will always include:

- All clergy holding the Bishop's licence, commission, authorisation, or permission (including PtO where exemption has not been given) including Honorary/Assistant Bishops and Chaplains.
- All Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers holding the Bishop's licence (under Canons E6 & E8), together with all others who hold the Bishop's commission, authorisation, or permission to carry out similar ministerial functions (including PtO where exemption has not been given).

(Ordinands need to have completed the Leadership Pathway before their diaconal ordination and lay ministers in training before they are licensed.)

- Non-executive members of Chapter (unless their role in the diocese requires a higher level).
- Safeguarding Officers / Leads in all Church bodies.
- Churchwardens leading a church in interregnum.

Duration: 2 1.5 hour face to face sessions delivered via zoom, with additional reflective work to complete outside of the sessions.

Learning Outcomes:

- Connect the Church's mission and theological foundations with what good leadership behaviour looks like in a safeguarding context.
- Evaluate aspects of their own leadership practice and identify changes required which they then take forward with confidence.
- Analyse what healthy Christian communities look like, how healthy communities keep people safe, and their role as leaders in shaping Christian communities that are healthy and safe.
- Reflect on the impact that abuse and trauma have on individuals' lives, relationships, and interaction in a community setting.
- Integrate their own faith, beliefs, and values with those underpinning good safeguarding behaviours.

7.6 Safeguarding Coordinator Induction Module;

Intake requirement;

Target; *Those new to the Safeguarding Coordinator Role*

Duration; 3 hour face to face session delivered via Zoom.

Description; This is an Induction module aimed to give those new to the role of Safeguarding Coordinator an overview of the role and the resources available.

Senior Leadership Training is for designated senior clergy and is by invitation from National Church Safeguarding Team. E.g:

- Archbishops
- Diocesan and Suffragan Bishops
- Provincial Episcopal Visitors
- Archdeacons, including Associate Archdeacons
- Deans
- Executive Chapter Members / Residentiary Canons (non-executive Chapter members are trained at Leadership level unless their role in the diocese requires a higher level)
- Bishops' Chaplains

7.7 Permission To Officiate and DBS.

Permission to officiate (PTO), is valid only if you hold a current unblemished DBS certificate that has not expired. *Permission to officiate will lapse automatically if DBS expires without renewal.* PTO's must maintain a valid DBS check in line with the requirements of this role, seek renewal in such a way as to avoid a lapse in validity and ensure that the Diocese is kept informed of new checks as expiry date approaches. When DBS renewals are required, any new expiry date needs to be given to the Bishop of Lichfield Office. PTO's should ensure that the incumbent at any Parish where they officiate has site of these details and can satisfy themselves of compliance with these terms. PTO's may be revoked by the bishop or his successor at their discretion at any time **or** laps automatically without notification if not conforming to section 7.6 of this policy.

7.8 Permission To Officiate and Leadership Safeguarding training/ Application for Bishops exemption.

Recent amendments to Canon C8 require that a PTO who officiations must ensure that they have completed the national churches Leadership safeguarding training as per section 7.5 of this policy (this covers working with Children and adults). Safeguarding training undertaken with another organisations does not qualify under PTO terms of service. In extreme cases (as agreed with the Bishop of Lichfield), where health is an issue to accessing training an application may be made by Diocese Safeguarding Advisor to the Bishop of Lichfield's office for training exemption. This will only be made after health impact assessment has been completed and all other considerations of access to training have been discounted.

The minister in a parish where a PTO officiates must now seek confirmation of compliance (or plan and intention to seek compliance in a timely manner) of sections 7.5 and 7.7 of this policy, to satisfy themselves that you are in 'good standing'.

As a consequence of the above, the PTO process will require relevant information be shared as appropriate between Parishes and the Diocese. The Diocese will undertake to ensure that information is factually limited to the subject of PTO terms compliance and that disclosure will not involve any information that is not relevant to the terms defined within this policy.

8) **Application and enrolment on training.**

8.1 Location and reasonable adjustment to meet candidate's needs.

We now deliver any face to face meeting mainly by online zoom sessions. We have limited staff available to deliver training and for this reason we are unable to attend individual parishes or churches to train. We will also provide the occasional physical face to face session for those with particular needs that make online accessibility difficult or impossible.

Should a candidate have specific needs relating to disability or long term illness that limit their attendance and present specific needs and access to facilities whilst attending training, they should complete the form below in section 9 and return it to Neil Spiring or Kim Hodgkins at St Marys House. We will attempt to make all reasonable readjustments feasible to permit those with legitimate needs to engage with training. It should be noted that specialist facilities are available at specific venues and travel may be affected.

8.2 Attending a training course.

Basic Awareness and Foundations Modules are available on the National Church eLearning Portal <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/> and can be accessed as convenient. Leadership module is delivered on zoom and cohort places are filled by invitation to attend based on the expiration date of current safeguarding training.

9) **Disability inclusion and long term illness risk assessment for candidates:**

Should a candidate have specific needs relating to disability or long term illness that limit their attendance and present specific needs and access to facilities whilst attending training, they should complete the form below in section 9 and return it to Neil Spiring or Kim Hodgkins at St Marys House. We will attempt to make all reasonable readjustments feasible to permit those with legitimate needs to engage with training.

Please note in order to ensure the best outcome from this process we would ask that those wishing to apply for training using this route provide us with as much notice of their needs as possible.

Once completed this form should be returned to Neil Spiring or Kim Hodgkins at:

**The Safeguarding Team
St Mary's House
The Close
Lichfield
WS13 7LD**



The Church of England around Staffordshire, northern Shropshire and the Black Country

Safeguarding training; Disability inclusion plan

(for completion by candidate or representative)

Candidates name: _____

Your Address _____

Date of Birth: _____ / _____ /20_____

Event to access: _____

Date of event if known _____ / _____ /20_____

Outline of your role or intended role and duties in within the church:

1) What disabilities or long term health conditions do you feel you need to disclose to us that impact upon your training needs?

2) How would this likely impact upon your participation in a formal training session? (This includes classroom work with audio visual aids, group activities and debate).

3) Are there any specific requirements you have that must be met in order to enable you to participate in training effectively?

(Please be specific – for example do you require an interpreter, disabled changing or toileting facilities, a loop system etc).

4) Are you able to participate in training if the requirements in point 3 are not met?

5) Do you receive any formal assistance from statutory agency or a provider of such an agency to facilitate access to the community (for example a personal assistant, mobility vehicle, personal assistant, direct payment? If so are there any requests in relation to formal care in order to help maximise effectiveness of your provision?

6) Who should we contact in the event of an emergency?

(Please include, name, address and contact telephone number).

Name:

Address:

Contact Telephone number:

7) Are there any dietary or allergy based requirements or needs that we should be aware of?

9) Is there anything else you wish to make us aware of or that you feel we should know in relation to your training needs?

Name of person completing: _____

Signature of candidate; _____

Date _____ / _____ /20_____

For Diocese Office Use Only:

Is reasonable re-adjustments required to facilitate inclusion and access to training – include rationale and proposed method for meeting this if applicable.

If decision is that no readjustment is required, please outline why this is.

Staff member completing; _____

Date Completed _____ / _____ /20_____

Diocese Continuation: