



Diocese of London Parish Safeguarding Checklist

At the London Diocese we all have a role to play in creating a safer Diocese – thank you for all that you have done and continue to do. We need to create a culture of informed vigilance, taking our safeguarding responsibilities seriously. To this end we are working to ensure that everyone has up to date safeguarding knowledge appropriate to their role, so that we can carry out our responsibilities with thoughtfulness, commitment and care.

We will try to keep the guidance in this Checklist, including the templates, up-to-date, and notify parishes as and when changes are made.

To assist with the creation of a safeguarding culture each PCC (or equivalent body) must:

Resolve to:

- Adopt**, and keep updated, its [Parish Safeguarding Policy](#) in line with text recommended by the National Church or Diocese from time to time.
- Appoint** at least one Parish/Church Safeguarding Officer (PSO/CSO) to work with the incumbent and PCC. This PSO/CSO should be a lay person. You can use the model role description [here](#). The PSO/CSO may also be the DBS administrator for church officers or members who work with children or vulnerable adults but if not, the PCC should appoint another individual. The PSO/CSO should be supported and trained. As part of this, they should be given a copy of, and asked to familiarise themselves with, the [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#) ('PSH'), the Parish Safeguarding Policy and this Checklist.
- Appoint** a [Lead recruiter](#), one or more [Evidence Checkers](#) and a [Children's Champion](#) (bottom of the page opened by this link).
- Adopt** the [Code of Safer Working Practice](#) and other guidance at PSH 11.1-4 and 12 (Social Media) and arrange for this to be 'rolled out' to all volunteers working with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- Adopt** a policy statement on the **recruitment of ex-offenders**. You can use the template at **Appendix 1** below, pending provision of definitive text by the National Church.
- Ensure** the parish has procedures for responding to **complaints and grievances**: see [Appendix 3 of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy](#), on page 5 under Churchwardens' responsibilities, 5th bullet.
- For each activity associated with children or vulnerable adults run in the name of the Church, **adopt** an **Activity Risk Assessment**, review it regularly (at least annually) and use appropriate **Registration and Consent Forms**. You can download templates from the [Safeguarding Parish resources](#) pages for Risk Assessment, Registration and Consent for Activities and Trips and Consent for transport.
- Delegate** to the General Secretary of the London Diocesan Fund the reporting of safeguarding serious incidents to the Charity Commission. Guidance and templates are available on the Parish Resources [serious incident reporting](#) webpage (scroll down to the foot of the page).

Safely Recruit, Support and Train:

- Be clear about who is responsible for **appointments** (see [the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance](#) at paragraph 2.2): it is recommended this is addressed by a resolution recorded in the minutes.
- Ensure that all church officers or members who work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults:
 - Are **safely recruited** following the [House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance](#); see PSH Section 5 for more information. **Appendix 2** below (1) **explains what you need to do** and (2) **gives links to templates of the documents you'll need**.
 - After appointment, attend **Safeguarding Training** at least every three years. **Appendix 3** below explains what courses are available, who needs to take them and when.
- Provide appropriate **insurance** to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the PCC which involve children and vulnerable adults. Ecclesiastical Insurance's Parishguard Policy does this.
- Ensure that for all roles (volunteer, employed, officer lay and ordained) requiring a DBS check, that repeat checks are carried out every three years. In addition to individuals regularly working with children/young people or vulnerable adults, if your parish sponsors and approves, in its own name, children's work or work with vulnerable adults, DBS checks are also required for all PCC members and PSOs. You can adapt this [DBS and Safeguarding tracker](#) spreadsheet template to help you keep track of when DBS renewals and training updates are needed.

Display:

in a way which is easily accessible for children:

- A formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops '[Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding policy statement](#)'. This will be your current Parish Safeguarding Policy, signed by the Incumbent and Churchwardens on behalf of the PCC.
- The [safeguarding poster](#) (version with space for parish logo) or [safeguarding poster without space for a logo](#) can be downloaded from the Safeguarding web pages. Either this or a separately displayed document should include:
 - Contact details of the PSO/CSO, Churchwarden and any other local leaders.
 - Contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Team – including phone, email and website details.
 - Information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, domestic abuse and key helplines e.g. ChildLine.
- How anyone can access a hard copy of the PSH.
- Where the parish has a website, ensure that safeguarding information is displayed clearly on the home page. Download the safeguarding information that should be [displayed on parish websites](#).

Respond:

- Create an environment which is welcoming and respectful and enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently.
- Have a procedure in place to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance and in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser within 24 hours.
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Ensure proper records of safeguarding and safe recruitment matters are (1) made and (2) retained in a GDPR-compliant way. You can access advice on the [content of records](#), including an Appendix with suggested Model Templates for Safeguarding Records. As to **retention**, Files relating to (a) appointments and (b) concerns need to be kept securely for the appropriate period of time, and then securely destroyed. For details, see Table in paragraph 8.5 of [Keep or Bin](#). In particular, a 50-year retention period is recommended for:
 - Personnel records for workers (including volunteers) with contact with children and vulnerable adults
 - Records of any children’s activities, Sunday school/junior church/youth club registers and related general safety risk assessments
 - Risk assessment recommendations and management plan in the event of an unclear or blemished CRB disclosure
 - Records of other safeguarding adult or child protection incidents

Review and Report Progress:

- The PSO/CSO should regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting.
- At the APCM the PCC should provide an annual report in relation to safeguarding. The Report must include a statement whether the PCC has sought to comply with its duty under section 5 of the [Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016](#) to have “due regard” to the House of Bishops’ guidance in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Complete the annual [Parish Safeguarding Self-Audit for 2022](#) accessible via the Diocese’s website under [Parish Resources/Useful links](#), to assess your compliance and plan any improvements required. Ensure that this is forwarded to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team so that we also can prioritise improvement activity and parishes requiring additional support.

Other points to consider:

Are you working in an LEP?

- If working within Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding policy to follow, including where to seek advice in urgent situations in line with the practice guidance. This decision should be ratified both by the bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership and shared with the DSA; in the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified.

Irrespective of this choice all abuse cases arising in Church of England settings must be notified to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Hire out your church premises?

- Any hire agreement with any person/body wishing to hire church premises must contain a provision whereby the person/body hiring the premises agrees to comply with the relevant safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops and the Diocese. A model safeguarding provision can be found on the [Church of England safeguarding resource](#) webpage under the heading **Key roles and responsibilities of church office holders and bodies**.
- The hire agreement should also contain a provision whereby all those hiring church premises are required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, relevant staff have had appropriate DBS checks and that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring.
- Ensure that all those hiring church premises carry full public liability insurance for this or are covered through the church insurance (for example hire for a children's party).

Do you have a clergy vacancy?

- During an interregnum the PCC must, working with the churchwardens, ensure that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing the information on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent must give the safeguarding information to the Parish Safeguarding Officer who can pass the information on to the new incumbent when he/she takes up his new role.

Support & Compliance

The measures identified in the list above will be checked during parish visitations.

If you have questions or need support to complete the steps on this Checklist you can look at the resources on the Diocesan Safeguarding Team's website or contact them for further support and advice:

Telephone: 020 7932 1224

Email: safeguarding@london.anglican.org

Website: safeguarding.london.anglican.org

Appendix 1: Template Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders

[Parish Name]: Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

The PCC's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is that any information about a conviction or caution revealed by the safer recruitment process in relation to any candidate for appointment to a role involving contact with children, young people or adults at risk is referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team ('DST') for advice.

It is understood that in giving such advice the DST applies the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Regulations thereunder and applies the following criterion: whether, having regard to the offence disclosed (e.g. conviction or caution), and all other available information about the circumstances giving rise to it, we can either (1) safely and reasonably conclude that the candidate, if appointed to the post, will pose no material risk to children, young people and/or adults at risk or (2) put in place any, and if so what, measures to eliminate that risk.

Appendix 2: Safer Recruitment

Each parish, through whoever the PCC appoints for this purpose (normally its PSO) should review and update its safer recruitment processes. For each appointment these should now include:

- (1) Everyone involved in the recruitment process should complete the online [Safer Recruitment and People Management](#) course from the Church of England training portal
- (2) Volunteer role description (template here: [Model volunteer job role](#), or for drivers [Model Volunteer Driver Agreement](#)), to include provision about Training (see Appendix 3 below) and Probationary/settling in period (see (10) below).
- (3) Advertising unpaid roles within parish notices and paid roles more widely.
- (4) Application form (template here: [Application form template](#)).
- (5) Confidential Declaration, to be available before interview (template here: [Church of England confidential declaration form](#)).
- (6) 2 references, to be available before interview (template reference requests here: [Reference form template](#)).
- (7) Interview (template here: [Model interview discussion template](#)): In particular, candidates should always be asked if they know of any reason why they should not be working with children or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect, or if there are any pending cases/issues which could affect them or their ability to carry out the role.
- (8) DBS disclosure: This should now only be processed after candidate has successfully completed the above steps.
- (9) Letter or e-mail of appointment (template here: [Letter of appointment template](#)).
- (10) Foreign applicants: *'If a candidate/applicant etc. for a position that is eligible for a DBS check is coming from overseas who either has never lived in the UK or spent a period of time (i.e. lived abroad), the person making the appointment should request an additional check and ask the applicant to obtain criminality information (also known as a certificate of good conduct/character) from his/her relevant embassy/high commission (or police force)'* (see [the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance](#) at paragraph 2.10) and <https://www.london.anglican.org/kb/dbs-overseas-criminal-record-checks/>.
- (11) Probationary/settling in period, supervision and regular review: see [the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance](#) at paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14).

For more templates, visit the Church of England [Templates and Resources](#) page.

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Training

The Parish Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring and monitoring delivery of Safeguarding training to all who require it. The courses do not need to be taken by individuals separately but can be done by groups as part of in-parish training.

Basic Awareness and Foundation Safeguarding training

The Basic Awareness and Foundation courses can be completed by any member of the congregation, to support awareness raising and a culture of support and vigilance in the Church. They can be accessed online at the [Church of England Safeguarding training portal](#).

Although it is only guidance, we do suggest that everyone completes at least Basic safeguarding training and it is particularly recommended that those in the following roles are encouraged to complete them:

- Vergers
- Servers
- Welcomers
- Choir/music group members (including Sound/AV technicians)
- Caretakers
- Refreshment helpers
- Shop staff
- Sidespersons
- Flower arrangers
- Administrative staff
- Bell-ringers

The Safeguarding Basic Awareness course takes approximately 75 minutes to complete.

Safeguarding Foundation training takes approximately two hours to complete and is required for anyone with safeguarding responsibilities/contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. It should be completed by everyone required to take Safeguarding Basic Awareness, *except for* PCC members.

Leadership Safeguarding training

Leadership Safeguarding training, if required (see table below), takes approximately three hours over two sessions and can be booked via the Diocesan [Safeguarding Training webpage](#) and lasts for three years.

Updating training

All safeguarding training should be taken every three years at the highest level required for those with applicable roles.

This means that if someone is required to do Leadership level training, they do not need to refresh their Basic or Foundation training, if they just require Foundation training then they do not need to renew their Basic training etc.

Role	Basic	Foundation	Leadership
Incumbents and clergy, including those that hold PTO	✓	✓	✓
Licensed Lay Ministers e.g. Readers	✓	✓	✓
Parish workers with children/vulnerable adults*	✓	✓	✗
Leaders/Supervisors of work with children/vulnerable adults*	✓	✓	✓
Parish Safeguarding Officers	✓	✓	✓
Church Operations Managers	✓	✓	✗
Churchwardens	✓	✓	✓
PCC Members	✓	✗	✗
PCC Safeguarding Leads	✓	✓	✓
Youth and Children's Pastors	✓	✓	✓
Music Group Leaders/ Choir Leaders	✓	✓	✓
Bell Tower Captains	✓	✓	✓

*paid or volunteer

Everyone who has a front facing role, coming into contact with people should also complete the Church of England's [Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse](#) training so they are equipped to see any signs of Domestic abuse, including coercive control.