

St John's Church Kenilworth

Safeguarding Report, Action Plan and Risk Assessment Update

Document History

Previously Approved by PCC: 17th March 2021

Updated and extended: 10/11/21

All Recommendations Approved by PCC: 23/11/21

Further report August 22 approved by PCC: 15/11/22

Updated Mar 23, May 23, Sept 23

Presented to PCC: 28/9/23

Recommendations for PCC

1. PCC members make a further commitment to undertaking DBS checks and Basic and Foundation Safeguarding Training
2. PCC requires nominees for PCC to complete a Confidential Declaration to be considered by the Parish Safeguarding Officer before nomination is confirmed
3. PCC confirm the [Procedure for Responding to Concerns or Allegations](#)
4. PCC confirm the current or other [Social Media Policy](#)
5. PCC agrees how a responsible person for each SRPM appointment is agreed and actions the issues raised by the SRPM training and audit.
6. Note that the Incumbent and PSO are aware of the need to manage and monitor known offenders and others who may pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
7. Note that our Warden is aware of his safeguarding responsibilities.
8. PCC updates the list of church activities.

Introduction

This Action Plan has been developed to guide Safeguarding work in the church over the period Sept 2023 to August 2024. It is based on:

- Information from the Parish Safeguarding dashboard
- Discussion with PCC and Vicar and Warden
- Requirements derived from Diocesan training courses and advice

In 2017, the Church of England published a safeguarding policy statement entitled [Promoting a Safer Church](#). This requires all Church bodies to ensure that they:

"...have a 'Promoting a Safer Church' action plan in place that sets out, in line with national and local priorities, how the policy is being put into action and is reviewed."

The policy also contains six commitments, giving an overall framework for safeguarding activity in Parishes:

1. Promoting a safe environment and culture.
2. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with safeguarding responsibilities.
3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
4. Caring pastorally for victims/ survivors of abuse.
5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse.
6. Responding to those that may present a risk to others.

Current Numbers

These numbers were correct at 11/9/23

Number requiring a DBS check	Number of those with up to date DBS check.	Number with up to date Safeguarding Training
43	41*	29

*New checks are in progress for the others.

Issues to Consider

Safer Recruitment and Personnel Management (SRPM)

In June 21, the House of Bishops produced new guidance on [Safer Recruitment and Personnel Management](#).¹ The guidance applies to roles working substantially with children or vulnerable adults. The guidance includes an [assessment tool](#) that has been completed by the PSO. All stages of the recruitment process are affected, and a new local [recruitment guidance](#) document is available. A new requirement in the guidance is that DBS checks must be completed [every three years](#) rather than five years currently (more detail below). This change is being phased in from Jan 22-Jan24. However, the guidance generally applies from January 22. The only outstanding issue from completing the assessment tool for PCC to decide who will need SRPM training (those involved in recruitment and those who lead recruiters). Details about SRPM training are available [here](#). The SRPM training raised several issues: ensuring that a Responsible Person is appointed by the PCC to oversee each recruitment; ensuring confidential declarations are done prior to shortlisting; requiring a volunteer agreement to be provided in place of a contract of employment; and the need for all involved in a recruitment process to have completed the SRPM training. Again, these requirements only apply to those roles with substantial contact with children or vulnerable adults.

¹ The status of the guidance is discussed [here](#).

PCC members should particularly note that the level of awareness of this guidance in the church is low. All church leaders need reminding that it applies to all recruitment of leaders and helpers to activities involving children or arranged for Vulnerable Adults.

Parish Dashboard

The [Dashboard](#) helps Parishes to plan and review Safeguarding procedures and policies. For example, it prompts us to ensure PCC adopts and approves our Safeguarding policy and Action Plan each year. It's scope is gradually being increased; it now asks for all activities with children and young people and Vulnerable Adults² to be recorded, and for each one:

- Date of PCC Authorisation and age group (U14, 14-17 or Vuln Adult)
- Risk Assessment completed
- Insurance cover has been confirmed
- Safer recruitment: Role descriptions for leaders and helpers agreed, and recruitment to roles follows Safer Recruitment Guidelines
- DBS checks and training are up to date
- Safe Environment guidelines (Section 11 of [Handbook](#)) are being followed.

For non-church activities on the premises involving children or vulnerable adults, the dashboard asks for:

- Confirmation that the Hiring Agreement includes a Safeguarding Addendum
- Confirmation that the PCC has approved the activity

The Parish Safeguarding dashboard was updated again during September 23. Red items (urgent), currently comprise:

- None

There are also several yellow (for action items):

- Incumbent and PSO confirm they are aware that the management and monitoring of offenders and others posing a risk to children and vulnerable adults must be done in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
- Some people need to complete safeguarding training
- Some information about church and non-church activities needs completing

Learning and Development Framework

Other new Guidance from the House of Bishops and the CofE National Safeguarding Team concerns new training requirements The [Learning and Development Framework](#) published in April 21 by the CofE National Safeguarding Team repeats the new requirement that DBS checks must be completed every three years.³

² An activity for Vulnerable Adults is defined as one specifically planned for and targeted at Vulnerable Adults. A more generally targeted activity, such as Drop In, which some Vulnerable Adults attend, is not included, for Safeguarding purposes.

³ This is required from 4th January 2022. All new appointments (a) and those whose enhanced DBS is due a recheck from that point onwards (b) should have their DBS recheck carried out and then be put on the new 3 year recheck cycle.

Also by 4th January 2022, Church Bodies must have assessed all other individuals who do not fall into categories a & b above, but whose DBS is more than 3 years old and put a plan in place to ensure that all those individuals have a DBS no older than 3 years by 3rd January 2024 and after that, ensure they are also on the new 3 year recheck cycle.

There are further changes to who needs to undertake Safeguarding Training:

Basic training is required by –

All church Officers

Foundation is required by –

Clergy, readers, and those with permission to officiate

Anyone in a role which involves working with children, young people or vulnerable adults

Churchwardens

PCC members

Parish safeguarding Officers

Leadership is required by –

Clergy, Readers, and those with permission to officiate

Parish Safeguarding Officers

Churchwardens (only if the church is in vacancy)

Basic Awareness and Foundation Courses will be online while Leadership Courses will be face to face or Zoom.

DBS Checks for PCC Members

DBS checks for PCC members were recommended in my previous report to PCC. Previously, PCC members were eligible, but they were only required for Church Wardens. A number of PCC members had questioned this with me, leading to my recommendation. As mentioned above, the new guidance in the Learning and Development framework also requires all PCC members to complete Basic Awareness training, and Foundation level training.⁴

DBS Annual Updates

The annual update service is an automatic DBS renewal service. The service is now free for volunteers. Guidance on the service is at: <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service> .

Information for applicants is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-update-service-applicant-guide> .

The service prevents the need to renew checks every three years, reducing the amount of work for both volunteers and PSO!

The update service can be applied for only in the first 30 days after your DBS has been renewed.

This means all Church Bodies have a 2 year period from 4th January 2022 to 3rd January 2024 to carry out the rechecks needed. By 3rd January 2024 all those requiring enhanced DBS (with/without Barred List) checks have a DBS certificate that is 3 years or less and will be on a 3 yearly re-check cycle.

⁴ See [here](#). Also, discussion of DBS requirements for PCC members [here](#). Members of PCC working with children or vulnerable adults are eligible for Enhanced DBS checks because the PCC undertakes activities with children and vulnerable adults. However, the role does not constitute regulated activity which would enable an enhanced check with barred list check. The barred list check cannot therefore be undertaken with PCC members. PCC members are now required to complete a confidential declaration before standing for PCC election- see [here](#). There is a fuller discussion in the FAQ document [here](#).

I started emailing DBS applicants about the service as part of the DBS renewal process, in February 23. The Diocese have confirmed that the form for consenting to an Annual Update check is [here](#).

Leadership Training

I attended the Safeguarding Leadership training course in May 23. In the reflection after the course, I identified three action points which have been added to the action plan:

1. Add a photo of the safeguarding officer to the info in church so that people know who to approach.
2. Add info about creating a safe place to the general info about safeguarding.
3. Introduce a Pastoral Concerns folder for low level case discussions.

Website Security Review

A review of the security of safeguarding information on the parish website was undertaken in July 23. A risk was identified around there being no independent check on material to be uploaded to the website. An independent reviewer of material has been identified, and will be asked to review all material before it is uploaded to the website.

Action Plan

Safeguarding Area	Actions to be taken	Timescales	Progress
DBS Checks	<p>Contact church members whose DBS check lapses.</p> <p>Complete new checks as needed</p> <p>Email new DBS holders with details of the update service</p> <p>Confirm checking process for update service</p>	<p>Every month</p> <p>Prior to activity start</p> <p>From March 23</p> <p>November 23</p>	<p>First email sent 7/2/23</p>
Training	<p>Maintain automatic emailing to those needing to update training</p>	<p>Monthly since 2022</p>	<p>Numbers with up to date training increased from 9 to 28 (22-23). Last email sent 11/9/23. Previous last: April 23</p>
Safer Recruiting	<p>Establish list of leaders of activities with children or vulnerable adults</p> <p>Check list of activities with DBS database</p> <p>Ensure safer recruiting guidance is available to all church leaders</p> <p>Complete SRPM Assessment Tool and update Action Plan as needed.</p> <p>Safeguarding Officer to complete SRPM Training</p> <p>Refresh Templates and local Guidance for Jan 22</p>	<p>Every year following activities list</p> <p>Every year following above Dec 21</p> <p>Email to church leaders every 6 months Nov 21</p> <p>Jan 22</p>	<p>Done in 21</p> <p>Done in 21</p> <p>Guidance updated Aug 22</p> <p>Completed Aug 22</p> <p>Completed 2/8/22</p> <p>Completed Aug 22</p>
Parish Safeguarding Dashboard	<p>Maintain dashboard</p>	<p>Safeguarding Officer to Check</p>	<p>Last check: 11/9/23</p>

		contents monthly	
Actions from Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance Checklist (Oct 21)	PCC to agree those involved with recruiting and their leaders who will need SRPM training. Establish Job Descriptions and Risk assessments for roles needing a DBS	Sept 22 Dec 23	Noted by PCC Nov 22
Information	Create hard copies to be kept in office of: Parish Safeguarding Handbook Diocesan Safeguarding Manual Display sources of Help Info on Toilet doors in church and Hall	November 23	
Leadership Training	Add a photo of the safeguarding officer to the info in church. Add info about creating a safe place to the general info about safeguarding. Introduce a Pastoral Concerns folder for low level case discussions.	Sept 23 Oct 23 Oct 23	

Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood (1-4) x Seriousness (1-4)	Mitigation	Revised Likelihood (1-4) x Seriousness (1-4)
Church members without DBS checks work with Vulnerable adults and children	2x4=8	Maintain safeguarding arrangements in line with Church Policy	1x4=4
Established church members have lapsed safeguarding	2x2=4	Email church members to make them aware of the	1x2=2

training.		need to attend further training	
New church members do not have current safeguarding training	2x4=8	Ensure that recruitment processes emphasise the need for training Basic and Foundation	1x4=4
Safeguarding incidents are badly handled	2x4=8	Ensure procedures and paperwork and training of safeguarding officer are all up to date	1x4=4
SPRM and Learning and Development Guidance is not implemented	2x4=8	Guidance document completed Aug 22	1x4=4

Risk Assessment updated: 5/7/23

Charlie Palmer
Parish Safeguarding Officer
11/9/23