

The role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer

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Who Should Do It?

We strongly recommend that each parish appoints a minimum of two people to this role. They may carry joint responsibility for children and adults who may be vulnerable, or prefer to separate these roles according to their particular expertise. It can be helpful for the role to be shared between a man and a woman.

The role will require working closely with the incumbent of the parish, but is usually best undertaken by lay people with experience of work with children or adults who may be vulnerable, although not always currently involved in such work in the parish. The role has frequently fallen on people with professional experience in the field - for instance, social workers, teachers - but this is not required. Training and support is offered from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the Criminal Records Bureau Administrator.

The following job description and person specification can be treated as required for each person; alternatively the duties can be divided between more than one officer to suit the needs of the parish and the skills and experience of individuals.

All Parish Safeguarding Officers must be available for a minimum of one day's Diocesan training at least every 2 years.

Job description

- Accountable to the PCC
- Working co-operatively with the incumbent and the PCC.

Duties

1 Policies` and procedures implementation

- be familiar with the contents of A Safe Church: Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Safeguarding Children, Adults who may be vulnerable and responding to Domestic Abuse (the Diocesan manual)
- work with the incumbent and the PCC to ensure that Diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and reviewed in all parish activities which involve children and young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

2 Recruitment of voluntary and paid workers

- contribute to the appointment of all voluntary and paid workers with children and adults who may be vulnerable by ensuring that necessary safeguarding recruitment procedures are followed
- in particular, be responsible for obtaining Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Enhanced disclosures for all those with direct unsupervised contact with children or adults who may be vulnerable, in co-operation with the Diocesan CRB Administrator.

3 Administration of activities

- compile and update annually a list of names of paid and voluntary workers with children and adults who may be vulnerable
- monitor activities which involve children and adults who may be vulnerable, ensuring that they are working within Diocesan guidelines, and that risk assessments are carried out routinely and at

Section 10 Forms and templates

the start of any new piece of work

- keep a log of incidents, allegations or concerns which arise
- keep records safely and securely in a locked cabinet.

4 Parish training

- ensure relevant training and information on the Diocesan manual 'A Safe Church' and its implementation is available to all voluntary and paid workers in the parish.

5 Allegations or observations of abuse or mistreatment

- listen to concerns or allegations regarding a child or young person or adult who may be vulnerable, or the behaviour of an adult, in the parish, and follow Diocesan procedure in responding
- inform the incumbent of all concerns and allegations made; in the case of an allegation against the incumbent, inform the archdeacon.

6 Liaison with the diocese

- maintain contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, to keep abreast of Diocesan policies and procedures, and ensure the parish is informed of changes and developments
- attend Diocesan training in Safeguarding Children and Adults who may be vulnerable at least every two years
- ensure that the DSA is informed and advice sought on all allegations, concerns and management of those who may pose risk.

7 Management of those who pose risk

- contribute to the effective management of those in the community who pose risk because of offences or concerns relating to children and adults who may be vulnerable, including setting up agreements with the DSA.

Person Specification

Knowledge/Experience

- Ideally Safeguarding knowledge and experience
- An awareness, or willingness to learn about the particular safeguarding issues which present to churches
- Experience of working with children or vulnerable adults, in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Skills

- Administrative skills
- Able to be objective
- Aware of his/her own limitations, willing and able to seek advice/refer on appropriately.

Personal qualities

- A mature person, approachable, discreet and trustworthy
- A good listener
- Able to keep confidentiality, and to know when information needs to be shared
- Non-judgemental
- Time and commitment for Diocesan and other training in the field.