**PARISH SAFEGUARDING**

**DIOCESAN GUIDELINES**

**Version 5**

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**Version Control**

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Amendment** | **Who by** |
| 2 | May 19 | Serious Incident Reporting – new guidance | SD |
| 3 | 18/07/19 | PCC responsibilities added* Link to PCC summary
* Role of PCC
* DBS requirements
* Policy adoption and PCC reporting
 | SD |
| 4 | 28/02/20 | * Website guidance clarified (page 5)
* Safer Recruitment – clarification about confidential declaration form (page 8)
* Parish Safeguarding Officer terminology and form updated (page 6)
 | SD |
| 5 | 15/12/21 | * Contact details updated (page 3)
* Safer Recruitment updated to reflect current SRPM guidance (page 7)
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**Introduction**

In order to ensure that we are all working in line with the most recent guidelines and policies, the diocese adopts wherever possible the national Church of England safeguarding policies and templates.

This document outlines the diocesan specific guidance that supports the Parish Safeguarding Handbook and as such should be read in conjunction with the handbook.

**The numbered headings below link directly to the handbook; where there is no numbered heading there is no local guidance.**

**Queries and urgent referrals**

For general safeguarding queries, contact a member of the safeguarding team on 01872 274351 or safeguardingqueries@truro.anglican.org.

For safeguarding concerns contact safeguardingconcerns@truro.anglican.org.

The Safeguarding mobile number is available for any situation you feel can’t wait. **Safeguarding mobile number** is 07591 203589 for urgent concerns**. MARU** 0300 1231 116 and **Police** 101 or 999 for emergencies**.**

The Parish Safeguarding Handbook is complemented by a number of model templates for parishes to use. For consistency it is recommended that parishes adopt these templates wherever practical to do so. However it is recognised that parishes may wish to use additional resources or adapt the resources to suit their needs; for example to have pictures of their safeguarding representatives.

**1. Parish Roles and Responsibilities**

Parochial Church Council (PCC) Members

The PCC[[1]](#footnote-1) is the main decision maker of a parish. Its members are clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. Its powers and duties are defined by legislation and can principally be found in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956[[2]](#footnote-2).

The PCC has the responsibility, along with the incumbent, to promote the mission of God in its parish.

Legally, the PCC is responsible for the finances of the parish. It also has ultimate responsibility for the care and maintenance of all church buildings and their contents. Although these responsibilities are executed by the churchwardens, all PCC members **must** share in the oversight. It has a voice in the forms of service used by the church and may make representations to the bishop on matters that affect the welfare of the parish.

All PCCs are charities; most do not the need to register with the Charity Commission, unless their annual income is over £100,000. Therefore, **every member** of a PCC is also a charity trustee. If a PCC is a charity it must comply with the Charity Commission guidance and legislation in relation to charities.

A summary of the PCC safeguarding responsibilities can be found on the diocesan website ([link](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/guidance/parish-safeguarding-handbook-resources/)).

Adopt and Display (the Safeguarding Policy)

PCCs are required to **review their parish safeguarding policy annually** and, if there is work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, receive an annual report from the Parish Safeguarding Coordinator. Most PCCs undertake this review as part of the APCM process.

The model safeguarding policy template on the safeguarding section of the Church of England Safeguarding website refers to the Church of England Safeguarding Policy whereas the Handbook refers to the House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy – for clarity these are the same thing. This should be signed on behalf of the PCC.

Additional information that should be displayed:

* Contact details of the PSC, churchwarden and any other local leaders;
* Information about where to get help with child and/or adult safeguarding issues

e.g. local authority contact details, domestic abuse and key helplines e.g. Childline;

PCCs should ensure that a link through to a page detailing safeguarding arrangements is **clearly visible** on the homepage of the parish website (if one exists). Alternatively, the safeguarding arrangements and safeguarding statement can themselves be displayed on the homepage.

*Example website statement*

Ensuring that children and young people, as well as adults, are kept safe while in our care is an integral part of our church life. If you have any concerns about safeguarding please contact:

In the parish: (insert name), Parish Safeguarding Officer, telephone (insert number - this can be an office number).

In the diocese: Sarah Acraman, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, telephone 01872 274351

Out of hours social care number for evenings and weekends: 01208 251300

In an emergency situation:

Local Authority Children’s Social Care: 0300 123 1116

Local Authority Adult Social Care: 0300 123 4131

If anybody is at immediate risk of harm, please contact the police on 999.

It is recommended that PCCs identify and keep a record of all of the **areas where they work** with children / vulnerable adults and list all the **people in the parish who work** with children / vulnerable adults.

**A copy of the policy should be sent to the safeguarding team.**

Appoint (a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)[[3]](#footnote-3)

These roles are important, illustrating how seriously the diocese takes all issues of safeguarding. The parish coordinators are there to support the priest with these issues and provide an independent person to whom members of the parish may turn.

* The PSO should be a lay person;
* The PSO cannot be the incumbent and should not be a member of the priest’s family;
* The PSO may also be the DBS administrator for church officers who work with children or vulnerable adults but if not, the PCC should appoint another individual;
* The PSO should be supported, trained and given a copy of the parish safeguarding policy and procedures.

The team at Church House needs to know the **names and contact details of the officers** linked to your parish so that they are able to communicate with them at various times throughout the year. A form on which you can fill in the name/s of the safeguarding co-ordinator should be completed and returned to Church House, and regularly updated. (The form can be found [here](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/guidance/parish-safeguarding-handbook-resources/)).

Safer recruitment, support and training (Insurance)

Failure to pay due regard to safeguarding could invalidate your insurance cover and could potentially expose vulnerable people to harm which could have been avoided.

It is essential that all church work with children and vulnerable adults is adequately covered by insurance. Parish policies do not necessarily cover all the types of activities that may be undertaken by churches. A check should be made with the insurance company concerned. All activities should be approved by the PCC and this must be minuted.

Review and report progress

The PSC should attend the PCC as and when required, as a minimum this should be to present the regular safeguarding report. Regularly reporting on safeguarding to the PCC is clarified in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook as a minimum of twice a year

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 progress and a statement as to whether or not the PCC has complied with the duty to have “due regard” to the House of Bishops’ guidance in relation to safeguarding.

Hiring out church premises

This guidance is only for long-term bookings and/or where work is being undertaken with children and/or vulnerable adults. Therefore, one off bookings such as parties are not included.

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.

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 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).

**2. What can a Parish Expect from the Diocese?**

Safeguarding advice and support

The parish must report safeguarding concerns within 24 hours of becoming aware of a concern. In office hours PCCs should contact the safeguarding team on 01872 274351 or safeguardingconcerns@truro.anglcan.org.

If it is out of office hours and in the case of an emergency that cannot wait, you should phone Social Care direct on 0300 1234 131 or 01208 251300 (out of hours), and let the safeguarding team know so that they can support you. If anybody is at risk of immediate harm call the police on 999.

External scrutiny of safeguarding

The group responsible for overseeing the implementation of safeguarding arrangements is the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel.

Complaints procedure

The diocesan complaints procedure can be found on our website - [click here](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/?s=complaints)

**5. Safer Recruitment**

As outlined in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook all those involved in recruitment must be trained in safer recruitment. Information about training courses in the Diocese can be found [here](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/training-safeguarding/).

Eligibility for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (see below) is ‘activity’ specific, therefore it is crucial that you have a job / role description that identifies where you require employees / volunteers to work with children and/or vulnerable adults; otherwise it will be unclear who is eligible for a check.

*DBS administration*

Safer Recruitment and administering DBS checks is the responsibility of the PCC. Each parish has a nominated **DBS Recruiter** who is responsible for handling DBS checks. The diocese uses an **online system** (ThirtyOne:Eight) for everyone, as it provides a more effective and efficient way of processing the checks.

Your Parish Safeguarding Officer or DBS Recruiter will be maintaining a Parish Information Log that will track your renewal.

The flowchart on our [website](https://trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/guidance/safer-recruitment-and-people-management/) provides an overview of how to apply for a DBS check.

If you have a query about whether a role require a DBS check, or the DBS process, you should contact your DBS Recruiter in the first instance.

*Who is the DBS Recruiter in my Parish?*

The DBS Recruiter is usually the Parish Safeguarding Officer, although this does not have to be the case. Your PSC or parish priest will know who your DBS Recruiter is. Some larger parishes or clusters appoint more than one DBS recruiter.

If your parish does not have a DBS Recruiter or wishes to appoint a new DBS Recruiter you should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Administrator on safeguardingqueries@truro.anglican.org.

**6. Safeguarding Training**

We have a range of core safeguarding training modules developed by the Church of England which aim to promote a safer environment and culture.

Completion of safeguarding training is an expectation and for some it is a mandatory requirement for their role (e.g. LPM, PTO). Where training is mandatory your licence or commission will not be renewed if you are not up to date with your safeguarding training.

Each person, according to their role, would normally have to attend the highest level safeguarding course required. For details of this please see pages 16/17 of the parish safeguarding handbook – [click here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf)

Safeguarding training is required to be renewed at least every three years.

For more information about our training courses and to book your place on a course please follow see the training page on our [website](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/training-safeguarding/)

**7. Responding Promptly to Every Safeguarding Concern or Allegation**

In the event of a safeguarding issue within your church “what to do in the event of a concern flowchart” on our website ([documents, forms and links](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/documents-forms-links/)) provides advice on how to respond.

**The DSA must be informed within 24 hours of a concern/allegation**.

The Church of England model parish recording template ([Church of England templates](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding/templates-resources)) must be used to record the concern/allegation and advise the DSA.

If the concern is considered to be a serious **safeguarding** incident then the DSA / diocese is obliged to report to the Charity Commission (see [serious incident reporting guidance](https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/guidance/serious-incident-reporting/)). Note – this is different to non-safeguarding serious incidents which are reported by the PCC.

1. Any reference to the responsibilities and duties of the PCC applies to each member of the PCC, “all PCC

members must share in the oversight… every member of the PCC is the trustee of a charity… The PCC… have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable [children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect] within their church community [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/Eliz2/4-5/3/contents> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The requirement is to have a named PSO. If appropriate, in rural parishes or parishes held in plurality, consider joining together to share a PSO while remembering that legal responsibility will continue to rest with the individual parishes. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)