

The **Parish Safeguarding Handbook** brings together the safeguarding responsibilities for parishes that are outlined in the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. The handbook is aimed at all those who have a key role to play with children, young people¹ and adults in a parish.

This is envisaged to be predominantly the **incumbent** and the **Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)** but will be dependent on the size of the parish and the number of other roles it may have.

In relation to safeguarding, **churchwardens** work with the incumbent, PCC and PSO to:

- Ensure that in the period of a vacancy (during an interregnum), that the incumbent's safeguarding roles and responsibilities are fulfilled, in consultation with the PCC, PSO and the area dean;
- Pay attention to the specific needs of children and vulnerable adults when undertaking health and safety inspections and risk assessment;
- Ensure that risk assessments are carried out before new activities are undertaken;
- Ensure that all parish activities with children and vulnerable adults are adequately supervised and insured;
- Ensure that the parish has procedures for responding to complaints and grievances;
- Answer questions regarding safeguarding as they arise in the archdeacon's visitations, and respond to any specific safeguarding advice, which may be given from the archdeacon.

Churchwardens maybe disqualified or suspended from office if they are placed on a barred list or are arrested for certain offences.

KEY SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES

Adopt and implement

- The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy 'Promoting a Safer Church'.

Appoint

- An appropriately experienced, named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC or join with other parishes to share a named PSO.

Safer recruitment, support and training

- Have a policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders and ensure all those responsible for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults on behalf of the church are safely recruited.
- Ensure all church officers are aware of the safeguarding policy/guidance and are trained appropriately for their roles.
- Provide appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the PCC which involve children, young people and adults.

Display

- A formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement'. This should be signed on behalf of the PCC.
- Ensure information is displayed about how to contact the DSA(s), PSO and how to get help outside the church with child and adult safeguarding issues.
- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are

clearly visible on the front page of the parish website.

Respond

- Have a procedure in place to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations including those against church officers to the PSO / incumbent and the DSA.
- 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 DSA.
- Comply with all data protection legislation especially in regard to using (e.g. storing) information about any church officers and any safeguarding records.
- Ensure an 'activity risk assessment' is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults and run in the name of the church.

Review and report progress

- The PSO 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. In the PCC's annual report will be a statement which reports on 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' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Hire out church premises

- Ensure an addendum to a hire agreement is always used when any person/body hires church premises (i.e. a church building or a church hall) for activity that involves children, young people or vulnerable adults, for example a pre-school, youth group or mental health support group.

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.

During a clergy vacancy

- The PCC must, working with the church wardens, 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 PSO who can pass the information on to the new incumbent when he/she takes up his/her new role.

MORE INFORMATION

See the safeguarding pages on the diocesan website for a link to the **Parish Safeguarding Handbook** and Safer Environment & Activities documents and templates.

You will also find further information and diocesan guidance to help you in your role.

<https://trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/guidance/parish-safeguarding-handbook-resources/>

Please also refer to safeguarding information in the **APCM information pack** and **PCC Secretary guidance notes** which are sent to all PCCs annually (usually in January)

Or contact the safeguarding team on safeguardingqueries@truro.anglican.org

PARISH SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK - SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

