

**Parish of St David's Church, Moreton-in-Marsh with St Mary's Church,  
Batsford**

**Safeguarding Reference Documents**

1. Diocesan policy statement for working with children and young people
2. Safe From Harm – home office document
3. Guidelines for safeguarding co-ordinator
4. Policy for recruitment of ex-offenders

**Gloucester Diocese  
Diocesan policy statement –  
working with children and young people**

1. Scripture teaches that all people are special because they are made in the image of God. This is therefore true for children and young people, who should be respected and protected. Jesus warned that those who exploited or abused children deserved profound condemnation. Within the Kingdom of God, children matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously.
2. The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Clergy and laity who work for the Church in a paid or voluntary capacity need to exercise the greatest care when working with those for whom they have been given responsibility.
3. The highest standards should be maintained therefore in all pastoral, counselling, educational, worship and recreational circumstances. The exploitation of any relationships for any purpose will not be tolerated.
4. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to creating a culture of informed vigilance which takes children, and adults who are vulnerable, seriously – and will work closely, and in partnership with, the local authority and statutory authorities to ensure that we offer best practice advice and guidance.
5. The Diocese of Gloucester accepts the principle of The Children Act (1989) that the welfare of the child is paramount, and will follow the Home Office Code of Practice: "Safe from Harm", and the House of Bishops' "Protecting all God's Children" and "Safer Recruitment" advice and guidelines.
6. If allegations of abuse are made, then the Diocese of Gloucester will respond without delay and collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with investigating such allegations of child abuse. It will not conduct investigations on its own and will work in partnership with the police, local authority, and others to follow legal compliance, and to ensure we are able to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person, or adult who has suffered abuse.
7. It will be standard practice in the Diocese of Gloucester to require completion of a common declaration form in accordance with guidelines of the Children Act 1989, from the following categories of people prior to selection or appointment for work within the Diocese:

- all candidates for ordained ministry and accredited lay ministry
  - all clergy and accredited lay ministers moving into and within the diocese
  - employees of the Diocesan Board of Finance who are likely to have opportunities for contact with children and young people
  - volunteers who support the work of the Diocesan Advisory Boards and Committees on a regular basis
8. It is Diocesan policy that all PCCs should have in place a policy for Safeguarding/child protection – and that this is reviewed annually and a copy supplied as part of the requirements of the Archdeacon’s Visitation.
  9. The Diocese will ensure that clergy and nominated local people are kept informed of changes in law, process etc – and that training is available for those who are responsible for/oversee local parish safeguarding practices.
  10. The Diocese of Gloucester will seek to ensure that each paid post or volunteer position for which it is asked to act in the disclosure process is assessed for the appropriateness of a DBS disclosure. That any advertisement or other indication of an employment or volunteering opportunity will indicate where appropriate the level of disclosure that will be sought, and that the conditional nature of any offer of employment or volunteering role until the receipt of satisfactory disclosure information is clearly indicated.
  11. The Diocese of Gloucester will seek to ensure that a candidate for a paid post or volunteer position for which it acts is asked in writing to list any convictions, or other disqualifying behaviour, that might be revealed in the disclosure process. This is in order to assist the recruitment decision process and in the knowledge that it will only be taken into account when relevant to the post in question. Also, that the candidate should be invited to submit any conviction or related information in writing prior to interview in an envelope clearly marked ‘Private and Confidential’ which should be handed to the person specifically identified for this purpose in the recruitment process.
  12. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to a process of five-year rechecking of employees and volunteers for whom this is appropriate, as part of its ongoing strategy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
  13. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to the safe storage and disposal of disclosure information in line with such guidance as may from time to time be provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service and in line with Data Protection requirements.
  14. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to the fair and sensitive use of disclosure information and will take every step to ensure that it, and those for whom it acts as an umbrella body, seek to achieve and maintain models of best practice. Where an applicant feels that disclosure information has not been handled in a fair and sensitive way an appeal process will be available, details of which can be obtained in writing from the Diocesan Human Resources Manager at Church House, Gloucester.
  15. The Diocese of Gloucester will work closely with local churches to care for and supervise through appropriate contracts of behaviour, any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.

## **Safe from harm (1993)**

This is a Code of practice giving 13 guidelines for the protection of children and young people. It also protects all those who work with them from unfounded accusations or from behaving in a way that may be well intentioned but inadvisable. The Code supports and reinforces existing legislation such as the Children's act (1989).

### **Guidelines.**

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
2. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise the situations where the abuse of children may occur.  
e.g. Adequate staffing, no less than two leaders per group or outing.  
Avoid situations where an adult takes a single child to the toilet away from the group or ensure another adult is informed.  
Never arrange to meet a child off the premises without a parent or another adult being present.  
When transporting children, try to arrange to have more than one in the vehicle.  
Access to premises – consider dark paths that may need lighting  
Discipline procedures – it should be made clear that no physical punishment is allowed.
3. Introduce a statement whereby children may appeal to an independent person e.g. Display "Childline" or "NSPCC" numbers.
4. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.
5. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
6. Use supervision as a means of protecting children. e.g. Regular opportunities should be given for workers to meet together with a named leader
  - review and plan work
  - share experiences
  - receive training
  - talk about relationships with the children and young people.
7. Treat all would be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
8. Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid or voluntary work with children.
9. Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
10. Find out if an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.
11. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
12. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse (Appendix 3).

13. Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.

### **Guidelines for Safeguarding Co-ordinator for child protection**

The reason for having a Safeguarding Co-ordinator in each parish is to ensure that another person shares with the parish priest the responsibility for child protection. It is not intended that it should be an arduous or very time consuming appointment, but its importance should not be underestimated.

Protecting children and vulnerable adults requires continuing vigilance and ensuring the Safeguarding Co-ordinator's identity is well known to all children and parents in the parish. He or she will be a person to whom the children's and youth leaders may turn for support and advice, particularly if they have concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator in each parish:

- should be familiar with the contents of the policy and be jointly responsible with the parish priest for the implementation of these guidelines.
- Shares in the responsibility with the parish priest and PCC for the protection of children who come into the care of the church.
- should take an interest in the work of his/her church with children and young people so that he/she knows the children and youth leaders and is familiar with the type of activities undertaken by children's and youth groups
- should be involved with the careful selection and appointment of children's and youth leaders and should be one of the interviewers of prospective volunteers or paid workers.
- should ensure that the PCC have a full list of volunteers working with children and young people in the settings appropriate to that church/benefice
- should be alert to any unusual behaviour or inappropriate relationship on the part of any church worker with a child or young person.
- should, in the event of suspicion or an allegation of abuse, know when to seek advice from one of the Diocesan Advisers and when it is necessary to inform Social Services immediately.

#### **General**

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator in each parish:

- should be known in the parish and especially to those who are working with children.
- should understand, and question, how church activities can ensure that children are best protected.
- should develop their activities with the PCC to monitor good practice and suggest better ways of doing things.
- should ensure Children's Workers know who to talk to if the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is not available.

- should seek appropriate advice and keep up to date on best practice.
- may phone Diocesan Human Resources Manager to explore answers to any questions.
- must be clear about the insurance cover for the church, so that appropriate and proper action can be made.

### **Allegations**

- You need to know the appropriate telephone numbers:

Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO)  
Jane Bee – 01452 426994

The Safeguarding Children Service Child Protection Unit  
01452 583638 (office hours 9am to 5pm)

Police Child Protection Unit (24 hrs)  
01242 261112 (if no reply 01242 276086)

Social Services Child Protection Unit  
01452 425144  
(office hours 9am to 5pm)

The Diocesan Human Resources Manager is:  
Judith Knight, Church House,  
01452 835526/01452 410022

- If an allegation is made then the Safeguarding Co-ordinator must immediately get in touch with one of the investigating agencies (The Safeguarding Children Service or Police) and inform the Diocesan Human Resources Manager that this has been done being clear of the difference between an allegation and a suspicion or concern. (Social Services can be phoned to give advice about a suspicion or concern, so that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator can be clear about the way forward).
- If an allegation is made against an authorised minister, then the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should immediately be in touch with the Diocesan Human Resources Manager (who will inform the Bishop of Gloucester or the individual should contact the Bishop or Archdeacon directly), after they have spoken to The Safeguarding Children Service or the Police.

A confidential record must be kept of any accusation and this will include a record of phone calls, letters and conversations about the allegation. These records will be sent to the Diocesan Human Resources Manager, using a reliable and confidential means, ideally delivered by hand to Church House.

# **GLOUCESTER DIOCESE POLICY STATEMENT ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS**

## **1. Background and introduction**

- 1.1 It is a requirement of the DBS's – and now the Disclosure and Barring Service's (DBS) Code of Practice that all Registered Bodies must treat applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 1.2 It also obliges Registered Bodies to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; a copy of which can be given to applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

## **2. Policy statement and practice**

- 2.1 The Diocese of Gloucester as an organisation using the DBS service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- 2.2 We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 2.3 We are committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- 2.4 We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- 2.5 We encourage equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- 2.6 A DBS check is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- 2.7 Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within the relevant organisation and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- 2.8 Unless the nature of the position allows us to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

2.9 We will help ensure that all those in parishes and organisations who are involved in the recruitment processes have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances or any offences.

2.10 We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

2.11 At interview, or in a separate discussion, we will encourage open and measured discussions take place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

2.12 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before advising on or withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.