

ISSUE
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Safeguarding Matters

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WELCOME

Welcome to the summer edition of Safeguarding Matters.

The last six months have brought some changes to the Safeguarding Department and we are pleased to be able to share these with you. In March we said goodbye to John Marshman, our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and we wish him well in his retirement. We would also like to introduce to you his replacement, Ian Berry, who joined the team in March.



Ian will act as the contact point for child and adult safeguarding alerts and referrals for both the Portsmouth and Guildford Dioceses.

We are always looking at different ways to communicate information about our work, including this newsletter, our website and through training workshops held throughout the year. Please ensure that this information is passed on to the volunteers and workers in parishes who would benefit from it.

Have a great Summer!

Mary Daisy
Assistant Safeguarding Adviser



Diocese of
Portsmouth

NEW TRAINING DATE!

There will be a Safeguarding Children in Church Training Workshop held on Saturday 22nd October 2011 from 9.30 until 1.00pm at St Paul's Church, Barnes Lane, Sarisbury, Fareham.

Please confirm to Theresa Winship if you wish to attend this workshop on 023 92 899665 or e-mail theresa.winship@portsouth.anglican.org

REFERRALS AND ALERTS

We have a new Database within the Safeguarding Office, which will enable us to input and store concerns and referrals more effectively.

We encourage Safeguarding Representatives and/or Incumbents to discuss any queries or concerns with us in the first instance. In most situations, a general discussion is sufficient to resolve the matter. However, sometimes, the information received requires further investigation or a referral to outside agencies. In this instance, we will require a Referral Form to be completed. Forms can be found on the Diocesan website or are available on request through e-mail or post.

THE PROTECTION OF FREEDOMS BILL

In February of this year the government published the Protection of Freedoms Bill, which will bring many changes to the current CRB process and Vetting and Barring Scheme. We report below on the scope of the proposed changes.

One of the key messages coming out of the reports that fed into the Bill is that safeguarding should not be managed on a national level, but on a local level, with the onus to be put back on the employer, and this includes parishes.

CRB checks will remain a key part of the safeguarding plan, however, there are proposed changes to the way that this is currently being undertaken, including scrapping the registration scheme. 'Regulated activity' is to remain, although it has been reduced in scope, with estimates suggesting that the numbers eligible for a CRB check will drop from around 9 million to nearer 5 million.

The legal duty to refer conduct to the ISA will stay with no change. This duty is set out in law and it will remain a criminal offence if a regulated activity provider (such as a parish) fails to refer conduct to the ISA when the duty is triggered. (This should always be done in liaison with the Diocesan Safeguarding Office).



There is still a long way to go before the Bill becomes law, (the date for the Royal Assent has already been set back to May 2012). As such significant changes have been proposed, it is unlikely that this Bill will be in force before summer 2012.

In the meantime, we are encouraging all parishes to ensure that they start preparing by developing safer recruitment strategies and training, as the responsibility is going to be far more on them to make sound and safe recruitment decisions about the suitability or unsuitability of those joining their workforce. This includes using application forms, gaining references, having an interview, ensuring there is a probationary period in place and providing good support and supervision. It is also important that all Safeguarding Representatives, and those who work regularly with children or vulnerable adults attend Diocesan Safeguarding training in order that they keep up-to-date with the latest developments, and they know how to respond well to people who have been harmed or are reporting harm.



CRB APPLICATION FORM IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

Please DO NOT fill in Section Y. To ensure that forms are not rejected it is essential that only the Diocesan Countersignatories sign within this box. Evidence checkers should not sign the form as it will lead to a delay in processing the application.

More tips for filling in the CRB application form can be found on the CRB website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb/publications/guidance/>

DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING PANEL



Whilst the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers are specifically responsible for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults throughout the Diocese, a multi-disciplinary approach to this work is essential, and the Portsmouth Diocesan Safeguarding Panel was created in 2005 in order to support this strategy.

The Safeguarding Panel currently consists of nine members, including the Bishop's Chaplain, the Safeguarding Advisers, and representatives from relevant disciplines across Hampshire, including the Police, Probation and local Adult/Children Services. The Panel's main aim is to oversee the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements for children and vulnerable adults in the Portsmouth Diocese and is accountable to the Bishop, who carries the ultimate responsibility for Safeguarding within the Diocese.

The Panel meets quarterly, and the content of the agenda will vary from meeting to meeting, however a summary of the main issues for discussion are below:

- ⇒ Reports of current safeguarding alerts and referrals
- ⇒ Review of Diocesan policy and procedures, including training and development
- ⇒ To consider specific cases where the Safeguarding Adviser requires the Panel's advice
- ⇒ To act as an Appeal Panel for other Dioceses as necessary

For more information about the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel, please contact Ian Berry or Mary Daisy, or refer to the Diocesan website.

PARISH POLICY STATEMENTS

Some parishes may have received a letter recently from the Bishop's office chasing them for their policy statements. It is our policy to provide details to Bishopsgrove of those parishes who we have not received a Parish Policy Statement from for at least two years.

It is important that we receive these forms annually, as we can then keep our records up-to-date as to who the Safeguarding Representatives are within each parish. This prevents us sending out correspondence to individuals who may not be undertaking the role any more.

It is also the legal responsibility of each PCC to fulfil their duty of care towards children and vulnerable adults during worship and in all church sponsored activities and events, and we recommend that the Safeguarding Representative gives a brief overview to all PCC members at least once a year about safeguarding issues. At this meeting, the Policy Statement should be signed, one copy placed on the church notice-board and another copy sent to the Safeguarding Office at Peninsular House.

ADULT SAFEGUARDING

Over the last year, we have seen an increased focus on the abuse of vulnerable adults in the press and on the television, including the disturbing Panorama documentary about Winterbourne View, a private hospital in Bristol where an undercover reporter filmed patients being physically and mentally abused by their carers.

As a result of this, there has been increasing pressure on the government to implement measures that protect vulnerable patients. In May of this year, the Department of Health issued a statement of policy on adult safeguarding, and the Law Commission's final report was published, setting out their recommendations for the reform of adult social care. The Government has announced that it will introduce legislation in 2012 to implement the recommendations it accepts in this report.

As a result of the continuing progress to develop and establish a framework for adult protection work with the same influence as child protection, churches should take the opportunity now to look at their procedures in respect of adult safeguarding. Areas to consider include:

- Parishes should have a Safeguarding Adults Representative, who ideally has knowledge of the issues related to safeguarding adults, and can take the lead in implementing a Vulnerable Adults Policy within the church.
- Parishes should identify where they may encounter adults who may be vulnerable, including Sunday worship, on outings, in groups, or through specific visiting, befriending or pastoral care schemes.
- Thought should be given as to how individuals within the parish would define a vulnerable adult. Within any church congregation there are probably a number of people who would be considered vulnerable, but it cannot be assumed that all of these are at risk. Also there is not one age at which elderly people should be categorised as vulnerable, and many would rightly resent such an allusion. Similarly, those with physical or other disabilities should not be categorised in this way either. Also some people experience periods of vulnerability, and it is important that a church responds appropriately to individuals in these circumstances too.
- Parishes need to have robust procedures in place for the recruitment of volunteers or employees who are appointed to roles with vulnerable adults. Also good practice guidelines need to be in place for those working with vulnerable adults including working alone, or when someone is offered a gift, etc.
- All those involved in the care, supervision and/or transport of adults who may be vulnerable should be trained in good practice and be involved in developing a code of conduct.
- Parishes need to be aware of how allegations of abuse will be dealt with from within the church, and who will offer pastoral care in these instances to the parties involved.

The guiding principle for any policy should be that vulnerable adults have a right to be treated with dignity and respect. Churches also have a duty to ensure that their premises and serving areas are accessible and welcome in order that vulnerable people can feel involved and can engage with regular worship and other activities.

Parishes who have pastoral visiting teams can order 'calling cards' by contacting Theresa at the Diocesan Office, 023 9289 9665 or email theresa.winship@portsmouth.anglican.org

