

ISSUE
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Safeguarding Matters

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Welcome to another summer edition of Safeguarding Matters. How time flies! We hope you find these newsletters helpful, but please do give us your suggestions and feedback in order that you continue to receive updates that are relevant to your parish roles.

In this edition, we bring you details of the Protection of Freedoms Bill which received Royal Assent on the 1st May 2012, thus becoming the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This legislation will have an impact upon parishes as the Act encompasses safeguarding vulnerable groups and criminal records checks. As a result of this, we have also included guidance and advice in respect of the appointment of workers and volunteers in parishes. Safer recruitment is a greater task than simply doing CRB checks and we have included some safer recruitment principles that all parishes are encouraged to adopt and apply to anyone who is being considered for a role involving work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

In the meantime, we would like to thank all of our readers for the work you do and the support you give in respect of safeguarding and we look forward to continuing to work with you in providing a safe environment for everyone.

Happy Holidays!

From the
Diocesan Safeguarding Team



Parish Policy Statements

Please could you provide us with a copy of your Parish Policy Statements every year. Currently only about 25% of parishes have sent in their 2012 statements, and about 9% have not provided us with a copy since 2010!

Every PCC should adopt, implement and review annually their safeguarding procedures in respect of children and vulnerable adults, accepting as a minimum the Portsmouth Diocese safeguarding policy. The Policy Statement is part of this process and provides details of the designated Parish Safeguarding Representative which we require for our records.

The purpose of safeguarding policies and procedures is that they foster and encourage consistency of practice across parishes in relation to standards for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. They apply to all parishes across the Diocese, and it is a condition of most parish insurance policies that the parish takes all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring to children and adults who may be vulnerable. To satisfy this condition, parishes have a duty to adopt 'best practice' by following the Church of England current and ongoing guidelines in safeguarding, as interpreted by the Portsmouth Diocese safeguarding policy and procedures.

THE PROTECTION OF FREEDOMS ACT 2012

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 is a wide ranging piece of legislation which encompasses the safeguarding of civil liberties and the reduction of government intrusion into the lives of individuals. Key areas of the Act include:

- * A new framework for the retention of fingerprints and DNA samples
- * The introduction of a code of practice for surveillance camera systems and CCTV
- * Restrictions on the powers of officials to enter private homes and other premises for investigations
- * The outlawing of wheel-clamping on private land
- * The introduction of a new regime for police stops and searches under the Terrorism Act 2000.
- * The removal of time restrictions on when marriage or civil partnership ceremonies may take place.
- * Extending Freedom of Information rights and strengthening the public's right to data
- * Enabling those with convictions for consensual sexual relations between men, aged 16 or over, to apply to have them disregarded
- * Restricting the scope of the Vetting and Barring Scheme for protecting vulnerable groups, resulting in changes to the system of criminal records checks.

Whilst the majority of this Act will not have a significant impact upon parishes in respect of safeguarding, there will be changes to the current vetting requirements, which PCCs and Safeguarding Representatives need to understand and start preparing for in relation to checking volunteers and workers who have contact with children and vulnerable adults in their parish. These include:

- * Scrapping registration and continuous monitoring
- * Scrapping controlled activities
- * Reducing the scope of regulated activity (that is, an activity which people on a barred list cannot do).
- * Making changes to the criminal records checking process, including the introduction of a new system for the continuous updating and portability of criminal records.
- * Issuing certificates to the applicant only
- * Merging the work of the CRB and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to form a new single organisation called the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Some of these changes will not happen straight away, and we will continue to update you about what these mean and when they will come into effect.

However, the identity checking process changed at the end of May and will become compulsory from 1st September 2012. All Safeguarding Representatives and/or CRB Identity Validators should begin to familiarise themselves with the new process which will have three routes and incorporate a new external ID validation check for applicants who are unable to provide the required documentation at route one. To help you make more sense of the new guidance, we have produced a flowchart to help you, and this is included with this newsletter.

THE PROTECTION OF FREEDOMS ACT 2012

What should you be doing now?

- * Continue to complete your CRB checks using the new CRB Identify checking process
- * Continue to refer any individuals to the Safeguarding Team who you suspect have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.
- * Wait for further updates and information from us and you can also look on the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crb

For further queries in respect of CRB checks please contact Theresa Winship on Tel: 02392 899665 or e-mail theresa.winship@portsmouth.anglican.org

TRAINING DATES 2012

- * Saturday 7th July Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Adults
Diocesan Offices, Peninsular House, Portsmouth: 10 - 12 noon
- * Saturday 28th July Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Children
St John's Church Hall, Newport, PO30 1EQ: 10 - 12 noon
- * Saturday 28th July Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Adults
St John's Church Hall, Newport, PO30 1EQ: 1.30pm - 3.30pm
- * Saturday 15th Sept Designated Safeguarding Representative Induction Training
Diocesan Offices, Peninsular House, Portsmouth: 10 - 12 noon
- * Monday 17th Sept Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Adults
St Nicholas Church, Battenburg Avenue, PO2 0SN: 7pm - 9pm
- * Tuesday 25th Sept Managing Offenders in Church
Diocesan Offices, Peninsular House, Portsmouth: 7pm - 9pm
- * Saturday 29th Sept Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Children
*St Peter's Parish Hall, St Peter's Road, Petersfield GU32 3HX
10-12 noon*
- * Saturday 29th Sept Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Adults
*St Peter's Parish Hall, St Peter's Road, Petersfield GU32 3HX
1.30pm to 3.30pm*
- * Saturday 13th October Essential Awareness & Response to Safeguarding Children
Diocesan Offices, Peninsular House, Portsmouth: 10 - 12 noon

To book on any of the above training workshops please contact Theresa Winship on Tel: 023 92 899665 or e-mail her at theresa.winship@portsmouth.anglican.org

SAFER RECRUITMENT PRINCIPLES

Safer recruitment and selection is key for safeguarding. All parishes should recognise the importance of implementing safer recruitment and selection processes to ensure that those who are unsuitable from working with children and vulnerable adults are prevented from doing so. These should be incorporated into your parish safeguarding policy, and implemented on each occasion a person is employed or volunteers to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Whilst this subject is no more important than any other aspect of your child and adult protection procedures, we have identified many parishes who are continuing to only use CRB checks when appointing children and pastoral volunteers and workers. However, current legislation and statutory guidance indicate that all organisations including voluntary and faith communities must have appropriate recruitment arrangements in place. The Children's Workforce Development Council's twelve steps to safer recruitment demonstrates that the CRB vetting process is in fact Step 12 in safer recruitment practice, and there are many other steps that precede this. Furthermore, the Charity Commission have also recently issued their Strategy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in Charities which states that trustees have a duty of care to take all necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for children and vulnerable adults. Therefore, we encourage all parishes to adopt the following minimum standards when selecting and appointing individuals:

- Application Forms and Confidential Declaration Forms are provided to every worker or volunteer who applies to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- At least one reference is undertaken, verified and recorded in the person's file
- Applicants should not undertake work with children, young people or vulnerable adults until references and CRB check results have been received.
- All new workers or volunteers should be made aware of the Diocesan and parish safeguarding procedures as part of their induction, provided with information about who to report any concerns to and given details of appropriate relevant training to attend.
- Staff involved in recruitment and selection should attend relevant safeguarding training provided through the Diocese

CRB checks only identify people with convictions, so it must be borne in mind that there are people without criminal records who still may pose a risk, and therefore setting up thorough recruitment procedures will ensure that a small minority of people will not be placed in positions where vulnerable groups may be at risk.

Also, good, fair selection procedures recognise that volunteers especially deserve your best efforts to find suitable opportunities for them, and will also make it easier to reject unsuitable individuals, especially if you use a job description and person specification as evidence to support your decision.

Getting the right person in the right role with the right skills can be time consuming, but rather than taking the first individual who comes along, or who is willing to help, adopting consistent and effective selection procedures for all will minimise risks and protect the users, workers and volunteers of parish groups, activities and events.