



Safer Recruitment Policy

Document history

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1 Introduction

1.1 Scope of this policy

This policy applies to the appointment of all roles at St Barnabas that involve substantial contact with children and/or vulnerable adults: both volunteers and paid workers.

Elected roles (Churchwardens and PCC members)

Appointment to an elected office is not conditional upon the receipt of satisfactory criminal record checks or references. Nevertheless, prior to election, any candidates for churchwarden or PCC are required to make a declaration as a 'fit and proper person'. This declaration must be properly scrutinised by the designated responsible person (see Section 2). In addition Church Representation rule M68 (Safeguarding cases: disqualification and vacation of seat) also applies.

1.2 Purpose

This policy is designed to help St Barnabas fulfil our commitment to promoting a safer church by setting out a safer recruitment/appointment process and ensuring continued vigilance once someone is in role.

This policy aims to help our church:

- Adopt a proportionate yet thorough recruitment process.
- Attract gifted individuals to all roles through an inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent process.
- Identify individuals who might be capable of a role, but whose appointment should be conditional on completing further developmental activity, before they are appointed.
- Identify and deselect individuals who are unsuitable for a role, by following a fair and balanced selection process.
- Ensure there is suitable induction, oversight and supervision, for those working and volunteering with children and vulnerable adults.

Reinforcing the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults throughout the recruitment process, enables all our volunteers/workers to thrive and have the best experience of Christian life through the work of St Barnabas.

Note: we are not always recruiting into a single role: sometimes we are recruiting into a role where an unspecified number of people hold the same role (i.e. the process is not competitive). In such cases the safer recruitment process needs only to identify whether the person is suited and capable of fulfilling the role.

1.3 Process overview

The following points summarise our Safer Recruitment process, for the appointment and continued oversight processes for roles within the scope of this policy:

1. **Assessment of the role** . Here the level and nature of contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults is assessed, so there is a clear understanding of the safeguarding dimensions, issues and risks. There shall be a written role description

(more complex roles may also require a person specification). This assessment can then be used to:

- Confirm the level of DBS check required in compliance with the DBS eligibility criteria.
 - Decide what other pre-appointment checks are required before someone starts a role (usually just DBS, but may require checks for personal insurance, qualifications, etc.).
 - Update the role description, if necessary.
 - Ensure appropriate safeguarding messages are present in any advertising / recruitment process.
 - Ensure the selection process does explicitly explore safeguarding issues with applicants to the role, including people's understanding and experience of safeguarding, and motivation for wanting a role involving contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
 - Determine the level of training requirement.
2. **Selection process** . This will include an interview as a minimum, with some roles requiring other assessment procedures (practical exercises, meeting with other leaders, etc.)
 3. **References** . Written references (usually two) are taken up.
 4. **Confidential Declaration** . Where an enhanced/enhanced + barred list/s DBS is required, a Church of England Confidential Declaration form is completed by applicants.
 5. **Decision** . Appointment decisions are made by someone with the relevant level of safeguarding expertise for the role (i.e. they must have at least the same level of training or higher).
 6. **Acceptance** . Once appointed:
 - It must be clear to whom the appointee is accountable.
 - There are arrangements in place for the continued support and oversight of the appointee which ensure the safeguarding dimensions of his/her role are kept in view and actively discussed.
 - Arrangements are made for the person to receive the level of safeguarding training relevant for the role.

2 Responsibilities

The Vicar (incumbent) is the person responsible for activities involving children/vulnerable adults at St Barnabas church, and therefore responsible for recruitment into roles which fall within the scope of this policy. They must be up to date with their safeguarding training and have been safely recruited themselves. Responsibility for certain stages of recruitment may be delegated to others (e.g. Churchwardens, Parish Safeguarding Officer) who have received required safeguarding training.

3 Role descriptions

All roles involving children or vulnerable adults must have a written role description (and person specification if necessary) with our commitment to safeguarding outlined in it.

4 Advertising a role

All advertisements for roles must include access to the full role description, with reference to our Safeguarding Policy.

5 Application process

Applicants must be given access to the St Barnabas Safeguarding Policy, Safer Recruitment policy, and our Privacy Notice. Applicants should apply using the [Volunteer Application Form available here](#).

Applicants for paid roles should provide their full education, employment and volunteering history. The volunteer application form may be tailored/enhanced with specific additional questions for paid positions, for example to check alignment with the person specification.

6 Confidential Declarations

A Church of England Confidential Declaration form must be completed by all applicants in roles which require an enhanced DBS check. [This is available here](#).

7 Shortlisting

When recruiting for a specific individual role, this is carried out by at least two people including the person responsible for the appointment. Applicants must be shortlisted based on the evidence provided and any gaps/queries explored at interview.

8 Interviews and assessment

All posts under the scope of this policy will require a face to face interview with a panel of at least two people. Particularly when interviewing for roles where there are an unspecified number of role-holders, this should not be regarded as a 'selection' interview, rather a conversation to understand/confirm the suitability of the applicant and identify any concerns or possible developmental activity or support the applicant may need should they be appointed.

At least one member of the panel must be up to date with their safer recruitment safeguarding training. Interviews must explore issues related to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Interviewees can use questions from the [Interview Questions template available here](#) and adapt these as necessary to the role.

9 Pre-appointment checks

All pre appointment checks must be confirmed in writing to the applicant and documented when completed. All applicants must provide proof of identity (if not already providing for DBS check), two written references (who are over 18 and not relatives). Volunteer roles must provide one reference from outside the current church

body and one reference must comment on the applicant's ability to work with the group with whom they will be volunteering.

For paid positions, a minimum two year referencing period must be applied and at least one references must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer and/or voluntary position. If a DBS check is required for the role, an application at the appropriate level for the role must be made. If an applicant has lived outside the UK for a period of six months or more in the previous 10 years, an overseas criminal record check must be carried out. If applicable, candidates must be able provide proof of qualifications, professional status and health information. References are requested using the [Reference Request Form here](#) that can be adapted as required for the role.

10 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

All roles which meet the established criteria, must have an enhanced DBS (with/without a check of the barred list/s). DBS certificates obtained in previous employment/volunteer positions must not be used unless the applicant is registered with the 'DBS Update service' and the workforce and level of check meets the requirements for the role. A recheck of DBS's must be carried out every three years as a minimum.

11 Criminal records

Any concerns which arise from a confidential declaration or DBS certificate are discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor for the Reading/Berkshire area.

12 Acceptance

Acceptance and a start date must only be confirmed once all pre-appointment checks and actions are satisfactorily completed. All volunteers must be issued with a [Volunteer Appointment Letter template here](#) amended as necessary, and Role Description.

For paid employees, an offer letter is sent, together with the Role Description and a contract of employment.

13 Induction and probation/settling in period

These points are essential for any paid positions, and may be reduced as appropriate for voluntary roles:

- An **induction** process must always be considered, to ensure the role holder is familiar with all the information (policies, processes, codes of practice, etc.) they need to carry out their role.
- A **probationary period** may be appropriate, to include direct observation as well as regular meetings. Safeguarding should form a core part of these meetings. For employees their contract must detail grounds on which the probation period can be extended/terminated, which must include failure to complete Safeguarding training or comply with the Safeguarding policy.

14 Ongoing Support , Supervision and Training

All volunteers and paid employees should have regular meetings which offer ongoing support. These may take the form of team or group meetings, where at least part of the agenda is allocated to reviewing recent work, continually improving our work and safeguarding matters in particular.

All role holders should have at least one 1:1 support meeting annually with their team leader or the responsible person. An [agenda for a volunteer support meeting is available here](#). Any volunteer or employee can ask for a 1:1 meeting if they need support outside the regular meetings or reviews.

In addition to keeping up to date with prescribed safeguarding training, all role holders should engage in ongoing training from time to time, to update and grow their skills and knowledge. St Barnabas will encourage such development either by individuals or in small groups.

14.1 Development for Recruiters and Supervisors

All those involved in the recruitment, appointment, management and supervision of these roles must undertake training on Safer Recruitment and People Management. All those who manage/supervise roles must ensure and be able to evidence that all relevant training for themselves and those they manage/supervise has been undertaken.

15 Record keeping

All pre-appointment checks for individuals successfully appointed must be maintained. Particular attention must be paid to the details of the DBS, including its date of issue/level/unique reference number. For those employed, particular attention should be paid to recording the checks carried out to establish the individual's right to work in the UK. Ongoing records of individuals DBS rechecks and safeguarding training refreshers.