



Safeguarding Policy Part F: Safer Recruitment & People Management

St Peter's, Colchester

Revised: February 2026

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St Peter's is committed to promoting a safer environment and culture within the church for everyone, and with particular attention to the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults with care and support needs. One way in which the church aims to fulfil its commitment is by following safer recruitment/appointment processes and ensuring continued vigilance once someone is in the role. We recognise that safer recruitment goes beyond simply obtaining a DBS Certificate. The reality is that many people who have abused or will abuse in positions of trust do not have a criminal record.

For a more detailed explanation regarding the policy of safer recruitment please review the Church of England Safer Recruitment and People Management guidance [here](#).

The requirements in this guidance must be followed for the appointment of all roles within St Peter's that involve regular contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults as well as trustees and those who supervise people in those roles. This therefore includes employees, associates, youth and children's workers, volunteers within youth and children's ministry (including creche helpers, Tiny Tots) and PCC members. It would not typically be used for areas of general service within the church eg serving at services, PA & projection and other roles that do not involve substantial contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

All the following steps should be carried out as part of the recruitment process even if the person is already 'known' (eg. as a member of the congregation).

1. Responsible person

The responsible person would typically be the Ministry Area Lead (MAL) who would then become the applicants line manager or supervisor should they be successful in their application. The administration of the application process is managed by the Safeguarding Administrator who manages the process. The responsible person oversees aspects of the recruitment/appointment process not managed by the Safeguarding Administrator. The responsible person must be familiar with the requirements of this guidance and have up-to-date safeguarding training and DBS check (both of which are refreshed every 3 years). If responsibility is delegated at any stage, the responsible person must ensure that the individual they are delegating to is capable, competent and has received all required training. The PSO is available to support the process as required and will consult with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor as required.

2. Role description and person specification

The responsible person, supported by the Safeguarding Administrator, should ensure that they have an up-to-date role description and person specification for the role they wish to recruit for. The role description should define the level and nature of contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults so that there is a clear understanding of the individual's safeguarding responsibilities.

3. Advertising the role

If the role involves working with children or vulnerable adults, advertisements for the role must include the following details, or clearly indicate where they can be found:

- The following statement: 'St Peter's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment. All appointments to this role are subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check with barred list.'
- The essential elements of the person specification required for the role.

4. Application

Application forms facilitating assessment of a candidate's suitability for a role are used. For roles that involve working or volunteering with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the application form includes information about a candidate's:

- Experience of working or volunteering with these groups and
- Motivation for working with these groups.

5. Confidential declarations

The church recognises its legal responsibility to check whether a role is eligible for an Enhanced DBS check, and whether this should include checking of the barred list/s and must be able to explain which parts of legislation support the application. It is the responsibility of the St Peter's Safeguarding Team to check if a DBS check is required for the role applied for.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA) allows certain convictions and cautions to be considered 'spent' (ie. legally ignored) after a specified period of time. However, some roles fall under an 'ROA Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended', these include those that involve working with children, young people and vulnerable people.

If the role is exempt, the individual will be eligible for an Enhanced (with/without barred list) DBS check.

Applicants for exempt roles must be asked to complete a confidential declaration. This gives the individual the opportunity to disclose details of any convictions, cautions, final warnings and reprimands which are not protected and will be displayed on a DBS certificate. The information declared by the applicant, as well as that provided on the DBS certificate will be considered when deciding on an individual's suitability for the role for which he/she applied.

A candidate should be made aware that information will be used only to inform the overall assessment as to a candidate's suitability for the role, where it is relevant. If an applicant does not wish to complete his/her confidential declaration, the application must not proceed further and must be terminated.

6. Shortlisting applicants

Even if there is only one applicant to be considered, their application still needs to be assessed to ensure it meets the essential selection criteria.

Candidates should be shortlisted by comparing the information provided on their application form against the person specification requirements. It is good practice to record shortlisting decisions.

7. Interviews and assessments

Interviews for all shortlisted candidates for employed roles should be conducted face-to-face. In exceptional circumstances interviews can be carried out online, for example for candidates outside the UK.

The interview process aims to gain as full a picture as possible of a candidate. It may be that some supervised interaction with the groups with which they will be working is appropriately included in the interview process.

Interviews for voluntary roles are usually less formal than an interview for paid employment, however, they are still structured to help decide whether the person is suitable for, and has a good understanding of, working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

All candidates will be asked if they know of any reason why they should not work in such a role, or if there are any pending issues which may affect their ability to carry out the role.

8. Pre-appointment checks

All appointments to posts that fall within the scope of the safer recruitment & people management policy must be subject to the completion of satisfactory pre-appointment checks and procedures. All pre-appointment checks, including references are essential and should be sought directly from a current employer alongside a personal referee, ideally in a Christian context, when an applicant is applying for a paid role; and a senior church representative, alongside a personal referee, when the position is voluntary (including overseas, where relevant). The responsible person should consider what else can be done to build up as true and rounded a picture of the applicant as possible. This may include references and a police check from the country in which they have been living.

9. DBS checking

It is the responsibility of the St Peter's Safeguarding Team to process DBS applications and ensure confidential declarations are completed.

10. Criminal record

Criminal record information may come to light at any stage of the safer recruitment process, as well as during the ongoing employment or volunteering relationship. Having a criminal record does not necessarily prevent an individual working or volunteering with children, young people or vulnerable adults - this will depend on the exact nature of the position applied for and the details and circumstances of the offence(s).

Criminal record information needs to be considered in a fair, effective and robust manner, focusing on the need to safeguard people and, where necessary, exclude individuals with particular forms of criminal record.

Information disclosed in the confidential declaration and DBS certificate will be considered by the Parish Safeguarding Officer in conjunction with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

Please consult the 'Safeguarding Policy Part H: PCC Statement on Recruitment of Ex-offenders' on the St Peter's safeguarding page.

11. Appointment

Once all the pre-appointment checks have been completed and given their final sign off on the file by the St Peter's Safeguarding team, a start date can be confirmed.

An email or letter of appointment should be sent, along with the contract or volunteer agreement which should be sent by the St Peter's Safeguarding Team in liaison with the responsible person. This should include information about safeguarding.

12. Induction

The induction process aims to:

- Provide relevant safeguarding training and awareness.
- Set clear expectations of acceptable behaviour and the boundaries of the role.
- Ensure staff have all other relevant training.
- Ensure that the volunteer is competent to fulfil the role.

For employees and volunteers, induction is organised by the St Peter's Safeguarding team.

13. Probation/settling in period

During the settling in period, there should be regular conversations between the responsible person and the individual. A formal probation period generally lasts between 3-6 months by which time a review interview should be conducted by the responsible person, with the final decision made by the team leader and feedback should be recorded on the person's file.

For volunteers a settling in period should be observed, with an informal review conducted by the lead recruiter or supervisors to assess how the individual is progressing.

14. Ongoing support, accountability, and supervision

Staff receive one-to-one supervision and support on a regular basis as the role requires, overseen by the team leader. Volunteers receive group supervision and oversight. Pastoral support is also provided to any member of staff or volunteer via the church's established pastoral care provision.

15. Safeguarding learning and development

Staff and volunteers receive regular formal safeguarding training and engage in a range of other awareness raising activities on an ongoing basis. Responsibility for the ongoing development and support of staff and volunteers is shared between the safeguarding team and the MALs who together ensure that staff and volunteers maintain an up-to-date skill set.

16. Record keeping

Records will be kept for all individuals (employed or volunteer) successfully appointed, whose role falls under the scope of the 'Safer Recruitment & People Management Policy'. Records will be kept in secure electronic folders under the responsibility of St Peter's Safeguarding team.