

Disclosure and Barring Service and Safeguarding

BRIEFING PAPER 4/16

All DBS applications are now done through the on-line system provided by CCPAS, and every parish/benefice should have a Lead Recruiter. This paper should act as a reminder of the processes and requirements. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Nick Harding

1. Who does DBS and Safeguarding in the Diocese?

Donna Bernard-Carlin (Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser) deals with all cases where disclosures or allegations are made in relation to safeguarding children/young people and vulnerable adults. She and Nick Harding work closely together on training and policy. Donna is based at Family Care (0115 960 3010).

Nick Harding (Children's Ministry Adviser) is the DBS Policy Leader for the Diocese, and oversees the DBS work. 01636 817234. nick@southwell.anglican.org

Gill Wahlers should always be contacted in the first instance if you have queries about the DBS process. She is usually in the office every day except Friday. 01636 817249, dbs@southwell.anglican.org

2. What is 'Recruitment and Checking'?

It is a legal requirement that all applicants for a role with children/young people or vulnerable adults must be appointed by following a clear procedure, whether they are a **paid worker or volunteer**. This procedure includes application form, interview (or discussion about the role), role description, references, confidential declaration, and DBS check if appropriate. (see 2. below)

Each parish/benefice should process DBS applications for **all** volunteers and staff involved in frequent or intensive youth and children's work throughout the Diocese. New staff and volunteers who hold a Bishop's licence (Clergy, Readers and Chaplains) are processed on appointment. **No paid staff or volunteers who are eligible for a DBS check should start their work with children or young people until the church has been informed that the DBS disclosure contains no information of concern, and they have shown the paper copy to the church.**

People working in churches as leaders and helpers of children's and youth work regularly, frequently or intensively, as well as choir leaders, bell-ringing team leaders (who work with under 18's) and anyone else who is in charge of groups of young people under 18 should be checked through DBS. This currently includes all **churchwardens** and those who have regular and direct contact with children through mixed groups. The **eligibility criteria** used by our DBS on-line agency,

CCPAS, is available as a download from the Safeguarding page of the diocese website.

Clergy and Readers' DBS checks should be renewed every three years, and are organised centrally by the diocese.

People working frequently with **Adults at risk** (vulnerable adults) need to discuss their work with Nick Harding before they apply for a DBS clearance for them. This is due to the Disclosure and Barring Service specific definition of 'vulnerable adult'. It is not possible to check an applicant aged under 16.

3. What Identification information is required?

It is essential that photo identification (Passport, UK Photo Driving Licence, or UK Biometric Residence Permit) or original UK birth certificate issued at the time of birth **MUST** be seen when checking the applicant's ID for the on-line check. This is made clear on the 'Identity' section of the CCPAS on-line procedure.

4. What check does DBS do?

The Disclosure and Barring Service checks the applicant's identity details first. It then checks lists held by the Police and Government departments connected with education and health. In addition an Enhanced Disclosure could contain 'soft' information about warnings, suspicions, investigations and unproven allegations.

5. Do I need to be checked more than once for different organisations?

Yes. It is simply easier and quicker to apply for another full DBS Disclosure, as the exchanging of confidential information is outside the DBS Code of practice that we are required to follow. It is possible for an individual to register with the DBS Updating Service, and therefore allow other agencies to access their DBS information. However, this often costs an annual fee and must be done by the individual within 21 days of getting their renewal.

6. What is the 'Children and Young People First' policy?

Most churches have the Diocesan Policy and a policy of their own based on the Diocesan policy 'Children and Young People First', a blue file, and should only be working from the 2004 edition. All churches should follow the policy guidelines for appointing workers by meeting with them, taking up references to their suitability, and so on. The DBS check fills the loophole of providing each person with a thorough check on their past, if they are in an eligible role. It is most important that the DBS check is seen as an **addition to the proper and careful current selection process** rather than a replacement for it. The national Safeguarding team is working on new policies and procedures which will be distributed when available in 2016.

7. What happens once the DBS check is made?

The DBS disclosure certificate comes back to the individual applicant only. The church is informed through the on-line system if it is clear, or if there is information on it. Most disclosures will be clear, but the individual must show it to the church in order to take up their role. Applicants should not **start their work or volunteering role** until the DBS has come back to them and they have shown it to the church.

The church must keep a record of the name, date, and disclosure number in order to be ready when the renewal is due after 3 years.

Disclosures that are 'unclear' may contain information about cautions, offences, warnings, reprimands, and information from the local police about non-conviction matters and safeguarding concerns. If this happens the Disclosure **must be sent** by the church directly to The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer who works with a team following strict criteria and following the Diocesan Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders. Details of this can be made available on request to the incumbent or other relevant person only when a risk assessment is being undertaken.

8. How long does it take?

The DBS on-line check can take as little as one day, but receipt of the certificate through the post takes longer. Checks rarely take longer than two weeks.

9. How much does it cost?

A DBS check is **free** for all volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The diocese pays the £5 per application to CCPAS to access their DBS on-line system. For paid staff the check now costs £44 which is initially paid by the Diocese who will invoice churches once the check has come through. Other organisations and denominations are charging for every DBS check to cover the costs of central administration as well as professional risk-assessment intervention when necessary. In Southwell and Nottingham Diocese we are currently providing all the advice, access to the on-line system, and administration free of charge.

10. Who do I contact?

For all enquiries regarding DBS on-line process with queries contact Gill Wahlers: 01636 817249, dbs@southwell.anglican.org. Alternatively you can ring the our DBS Account Manager at CCPAS for help and support on 0845 120 4549. For more complex enquiries contact Nick Harding: 01636 817234. For specific concerns and issues about individuals: Donne Bernard-Carlin: 0115 960 3010.

10. How long does a DBS check last?

The DBS Disclosure comes to the individual in the form of a certificate which belongs to them. Within the Diocese we have decided that **the DBS check lasts 3 years**. The diocese does not keep records of parish DBS checks – it is vital that the church keeps good records and initiates renewals when due.

11. What is the complete process?

This is the system that will be followed:

- Each parish/benefice is registered with the diocese to use the CCPAS on-line DBS system.
- When the parish records say that a renewal is due, or a new person is applying, then the Lead Recruiter in the parish does the DBS application on-line. **Experience tells us that it is much easier if the applicant and Lead Recruiter sit down together and do the whole application in one go.**
- Once the application is sent, the parish will receive information about the disclosure (clear or not clear), and the certificate will be sent to the individual.

- The individual presents their certificate to the church who keep records of name, date and number. If clear: they continue their work or the appointment is made, process completed. If not clear: Family Care informed (see 7.)

12. Does this really mean every Church?

Yes, it is required that all churches have a DBS Lead Recruiter and are ready to check those who work with children and young people frequently in accordance with the eligibility criteria (see 2. above) regardless of how long they have been working, or how trustworthy they are, as well as those who work frequently with adults at risk. This is now an expectation for all organisations involved with children, young people and adults at risk. The policy and practice of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham is currently in line with DBS Code of Practice and the Church of England safeguarding advice.

13. What happens when someone changes their role?

It is very important that the church considers whether a new DBS check is required if a person changes role. For instance, if they have a check for children's work but are now about to work with adults at risk then a new check for the relevant age-group would probably need to be made.

14. What is a 'Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator'?

This is the title for the 'named person for safeguarding' that each parish should have in place. This person is appointed by the PCC, and is required to keep up to date with training, make sure the Parish Policy and Procedures are in place, and deal with any issues or allegations by consulting and seeking advice from The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. The Co-ordinator will receive information direct from the Adviser as long as they have given their address (and change of address) to him. If the Co-ordinator for a parish changes it is important that the Adviser is informed. This person may also be the DBS lead Recruiter.

15. Does our church need a Safeguarding policy?

Yes. All churches should have a Safeguarding Children / Young People Policy in line with the Diocese policy (Children and Young People First) 2004 revision, and a policy for working with Adults at risk. The policy should be revised by the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and PCC annually. Two 'model' policy frameworks are available as a download on the safeguarding page diocese website, or from the Adviser.

16. What Safeguarding training is available?

Training is offered regularly at different levels depending on the needs of a church or individuals. Clergy and Readers are required to attend some training every three years. From September 2016 a new modular training programme will be coming into place, and will include many more people being required to attend training.

For more information please see 'Safeguarding Training' and 'Safeguarding Training Dates' on the diocese website or e-mail nick@southwell.anglican.org