



Pantygwydr Baptist Church
Safeguarding Procedures –
Children and Young People
November 2018

Part 2: Safe Recruitment, Support and
Supervision of Workers

Pantygwydr Baptist Church, Ernald Place, Swansea, SA2 0HN

Charity Number: 1126593

2. Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

Recruiting Volunteers

The process for recruiting volunteers is not intended to only allow people with previous experience to serve in a particular area, or to limit the number of volunteers serving with children and young people in the church. As a church we are committed to encouraging people to explore and identify their gifts. These procedures are designed to ensure volunteers understand the role they are applying for, gives group leaders the opportunity to get to know the new volunteer and their skills and experience. It also ensures we are doing all we can to ensure the children and young people we work with are properly safeguarded.

The following elements will always be part of any recruitment process for volunteers who work with children/young people within the Church:

- Write a role description;
- Ask the candidate to complete an application form;
- Meet with the relevant member of pastoral staff;
- Take up 2 references, one of whom must be external to the church, if possible from a previous church;
- Carry out an Enhanced DBS check;
- Appoint for a 6-month probationary period;
- Candidate to sign an undertaking to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures;
- Provide an induction programme and initial training.

Recruiting new workers

When recruiting a new worker to any organization within the church the leader of the group will generally determine the need for a new member of the team. The need may arise from the loss of an existing worker member or the enlarging of the group. Once the need is identified a call for a new worker can be made within the church with the agreement of the relevant staff member. This call can be made in a number of ways, such as in the weekly news sheet, monthly magazine, during the notices in a service or by posting a request on the notice boards. A staff member may choose to approach specific individuals. If doing this, they should speak to the DPS first to ensure there are no safeguarding issues.

Alternatively, someone from within the church may offer to be involved in a particular ministry, when no call for new workers has been made. In this situation the group leader should consider whether there is a need for more volunteers or whether the prospective volunteer could be pointed towards other ministries in the church where there is a greater need. If the group leader decides there is room for another volunteer, the following procedures should still be followed.

If any applicant has been attending the church for less than 3 months authorisation to proceed with the application should be given by the diaconate or Minister.

If one does not already exist the group leader should draw up a role description for the post and ensure that there are application forms available. Role Description forms should be stored in the church office. Model

Role Description Forms and Application forms for the church can be obtained from the Church Office or Church Website.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding should be told who has volunteered. If they are aware of any safeguarding concerns at this point they will, at this point, inform the group leader of the suitability, or unsuitability (but not the reasons), of each applicant, or of any specific working practices which may need to be followed for that applicant.

If the Designated Person for Safeguarding is not aware of any reasons why the person could not be appointed, the prospective volunteer should be given the role description and application form, which will explain Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks and have a self-declaration section for any relevant convictions. The completed application forms should be returned to the group leader. The candidate may be invited to attend the group at this point, but should not be left alone with the young people or counted in the ratio of adults required.

Once the forms have been returned those applicants deemed suitable should meet with the relevant staff member. The meeting does not have to be formal but should be in sufficient depth to determine the suitability of the candidate. The candidate and they should also be given scope to ask questions.

Once the leader has determined who he/she feels is the most suitable candidate(s) The DBS Coordinator will also arrange for the candidate to complete a DBS application. All DBS responses will be returned to the DBS Coordinator who will inform the group leader of the suitability, or unsuitability (but not the reasons), of each applicant. Any appointment to the post(s) can now be made.

The Staff member, Elder or Deacon responsible for the ministry or the Church Administrator / Church Secretary must write to those specified by the applicant for their references. *Model Requests for a Reference and Reference Forms* are available from the Church Office. The references must be received by the group leader before any appointment is made.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding should be made aware of any safeguarding issues identified by the DBS checks or references obtained. They will then inform the group leader of the suitability, or unsuitability (but not the reasons), of each applicant, or of any specific working practices which may need to be followed for that applicant.

The candidate is allowed to attend the group prior to DBS checks or references being returned, but should not be left alone with the young people or counted in the ratio of adults required.

The group leader will be responsible for the induction of successful candidates, during the induction the new worker member will be issued with a Safeguarding Children or a Adults at Risk policies when appropriate. The candidate should sign the Policies and Procedures Register.

The group leader will also be responsible for undertaking the review of the new worker member at the end of the probation period, for assessment of the worker member through the period of working with the group and ensuring that all workers are trained appropriately. Updates on safeguarding procedures and legislation should be provided by the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee.

Completed application forms, references and the Policies and Procedures Register and a Training Register should be kept in the church office.

Appointing and supporting young leaders

The young leaders of today are the adult leaders of tomorrow. They can be valuable members of any youth or children's team in our church, providing valuable time, energy and ideas for the group.

If we are going to encourage young leaders we need to ensure they are kept safe, that the children and young people in their care are safe and that they are well supervised and cared for. Often young leaders are from a similar peer group to those with whom they are working, so boundaries become blurred.

Young leaders under 18 years of age

In law young leaders under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. However, neither should they be managed in the same way as the children or young people with whom they are working.

Careful judgements will need to be made regarding the appointment of young leaders who are under the age of 18. Some may need to be appointed under the full procedures of the church's Safeguarding Children Policy, including applying for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. For others this will not be appropriate.

Young leaders under the age of 18 will not need to be appointed under these procedures and therefore will not require to apply for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure if:

- They are asked to take increasing leadership responsibility in a group in which they are a member; and
- They are always exercising leadership by assisting the adult workers and leaders of that group.
- They are part of a peer led group and emerge within that group as one of the leaders.

Young leaders under the age of 18 will need to be appointed under these procedures and therefore will need to apply for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure if:

- They are appointed to work in a regulated activity with children and young people in a group to which they do not belong.

Each group leader will have to make a judgement about how involved the young leader will be in planning, running and evaluating the various aspects of the programme. This will depend on how much (or little) they want to do, what they are capable of, and how many other adult helpers you have. It may be best to adopt a step by step approach to their involvement, perhaps beginning with some closely supervised activities, and then progressively increasing the amount of involvement and responsibility they are given.

Training and mentoring should be encouraged, to ensure that the young leader is helped to develop skills, attitudes and experience. We have a duty to make their time as young leaders both enjoyable and rewarding – they must never be “just another pair of hands”.

Some practical issues we will consider when working with young leaders are:

- A young leader must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of young people or children;
- When considering ratios of staff to children or young people, the young leader needs to be counted as a child, not a leader;
- The Safeguarding Children Policy applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person;
- The permission of parents or carers needs to be sought for the young leader just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age;
- If the young leader accompanies you on a residential activity ideally they should have separate sleeping accommodation to both the adult leadership team and the children or young people they are working with. If this is not available the young leader may share a room with either the adult leaders or the other children and young people. One young leader should never share a room with one adult leader, or with a member of the opposite sex.

Young adult leaders 18 years and over

Leaders aged 18 years and over are adults. They will therefore need to go through the full appointment procedures agreed by the church. Care will need to be taken when a young leader turns 18 that their new status is recognised and that the appropriate procedures are followed, including a DBS Disclosure, references and training in the church's safeguarding policy and procedures.

However young adults should still be treated with special care as they develop their leadership skills and learn new responsibilities.

If they are part of a peer group within the church, the boundaries can become blurred if sometimes they are leaders and sometimes they are a member of that peer group. Ideally young adult leaders should not be given supervisory responsibility for the age group to which they belong or directly below them.

The Election of Deacons and Elders

Deacons and Elders are also volunteers within the church and their appointment still needs to be as thorough as with other volunteers, however, their election process means that a different procedure is required.

Candidates can be suggested by Church members or the leadership. The Church Minister should be consulted before approaching someone to ask if they would be prepared to stand as a candidate. The Church Minister should inform the Designated Person for Safeguarding of the suggestions. They will inform the Church Minister of the suitability or unsuitability (but not the reasons), of each person, or of any specific working practices which may need to be followed for that person.

If the Church Minister and Designated Person for Safeguarding are not aware of any reasons why the person cannot be approached about their willingness to serve, they can be approached by the Church Member who suggested them. Candidates need to be proposed by two church members. The proposers can be seen as referees who should state on their proposal forms why their candidate is suitable for the post. The Designated Person for Safeguarding should be informed of any issues raised.

When the prospective Deacon or Elder accepts the nomination the Church Secretary will give him/her a role description outlining a deacon's duties and responsibilities and an acceptance of nomination form which they must complete and sign. The nomination forms will have a self-declaration section for any relevant convictions. The Safeguarding Trustee will give copies of the most recent Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policies to the prospective Deacons and Elders, if they have not previously received them.

Prior to announcing the candidates for election, prospective Deacons and Elders should complete an Enhanced DBS application. The Designated Person for Safeguarding should be informed of any safeguarding issues identified by the DBS checks or references obtained and they, along with the Church Minister where appropriate, will make the final decision on whether the elected person can stand for election, or of any specific working practices which may need to be followed for that person.

A reference should also be obtained from someone external to the church, for example an employer or personal reference, commenting on the prospective Deacon or Elders suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults. The Designated Person for Safeguarding should be informed of any issues raised.

At the discretion of the leadership, a person may be announced as standing for election if the DBS check has been applied for, but the results has not been received, or if referees have been contacted but are yet to reply.

The election of Deacons or Elders is held at a church meeting and they are elected if they receive the appropriate number of votes. Their appointment is therefore made by the church membership.

Appropriate training of Deacons and Elders will be held if and when it is necessary. This will include annual Safeguarding Training.

Appointing paid workers

The appointment process for paid workers should contain all of the elements of the process described for volunteers, but will inevitably be more formal and will contain additional elements. Guidance on this is covered in the Staffing Policy.

If any of applicants for a post are already church members, the Designated Person for Safeguarding should be notified of their interest in the role. They will inform the Church Minister of the suitability or unsuitability (but not the reasons), of each person, or of any specific working practices which may need to be followed for that person. If any safeguarding issues relating to current Church Members are identified during the recruitment process, the DPS should record these on a Safeguarding incident form, which should be stored securely in the church office and the DPS should take appropriate steps to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults in the church are adequately safeguarded.

If any safeguarding issues arise during the appointment of external candidates, consideration should be given to informing that person's current church. BUGB should be contacted for advice in this situation.

Supervision of workers

One of the marks of an organisation that is able to respond well to concerns about the welfare of children and young people is that there is a well-defined structure of supervision of those working with children and young people.

Please note that the word 'supervision' is used here in the general sense of defining a working relationship in which one person is accountable to another rather than literally being present while the person is undertaking their task.

An essential element of any job description will define:

- Who the post holder will be accountable to; and
- Who and what the post holder will be responsible for.

All new workers will need to be supervised more closely until you are sure that they are working safely and within the code of behaviour that you have adopted.

Safeguarding issues should be regularly on the agenda of meetings of children's and young people's leaders in the church so that all workers are constantly reminded of the need for vigilance. It is good practice that regular meetings of all workers take place to share thoughts about the children and the activities that they are running. This helps to give encouragement and to exchange concerns about individuals. It may be appropriate for the Designated Persons for Safeguarding or the Safeguarding Trustee to attend these meetings on occasion.

All workers should attend annual Safeguarding Training.

A well-defined structure of accountability will help to ensure that if one of the workers is behaving inappropriately that behaviour will be identified and reported promptly to the Designated Person for Safeguarding. All workers will know who they should speak to in the first instance when they see someone behaving inappropriately.

Records to be kept

The following records should be retained:

- Application Forms for successful Candidates;
- Reference Forms;
- Record of any Safeguarding issues;
- Register of Policy and Procedures;
- Copy of DBS Certificates;
- Deacon & Elder Nomination forms.
- Safeguarding Training Register.