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# St Peter's Filton

*Serving God by serving you, your family and the community*

## Safer Recruitment Policy

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December 2025



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Date adopted by the PCC	
Date to be reviewed	December 2026
Signed, PCC Chairperson	

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## Introduction and Terminology

### What is Safer Recruitment?

Safer Recruitment is the practice of ensuring that all paid and volunteer staff are recruited in a way that ensures those individuals have the values and skills to do the work we ask of them, and that people who present a risk to children or vulnerable adults do not work with them.

By recruiting safely we ensure that those who lead, guide and work with the most vulnerable people are there to do good rather than to cause harm.

The policy statement of the Diocese of Bristol is as follows. We will:

*“Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church”*

St Peter’s Church is answerable to the Diocese and therefore adheres to this policy statement. St Peter’s Church complies with guidance from the Diocese, available to view on their website, excerpts of which are in this document.

The Diocese of Bristol is committed to implementing safer recruitment practice in the recruitment of all licensed ministers, volunteers and employees.

The relevant vetting scheme is that of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

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## Safer Recruitment Policy

St Peter's Church is fully committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, religion, gender or background, whilst at the same time maintaining excellent standards of safety for those within the church community, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

In line with the Diocesan Policy on Safer Recruitment, St Peter's is committed to implementing safer recruitment practice in the recruitment of all licensed ministers, employees and volunteers.

Whilst the Disclosure and Barring Service is used within the recruitment of volunteers/employees, the suitability of an applicant to work with children or adults at risk is never solely dependent on the outcome of a DBS check and the full safer recruitment process will be used to determine suitability of the candidate for the role.

Where a position becomes available, St Peter's Church is committed to implementing the policy of the diocese within its own recruitment process. This involves an informal discussion with applicants, as well as an application form to fill in, references to be sought, and a DBS check where necessary. In certain cases, and in consultation with the applicant, St Peter's Church reserves the right to make any further character enquiries considered necessary.

It is the responsibility of the Rector and the PCC to employ all parish staff and volunteers.

Those who work with children and/or vulnerable adults, and those who supervise workers, who are eligible for a DBS check, will be required to undertake that check prior to starting any role, whether employed or voluntary.

DBS checks are co-ordinated via the Parish Safeguarding Officer (see contact list). Details of DBS checks are saved electronically, and only the Rector and the Safeguarding Officer have access to this.

DBS Disclosures will be reviewed as a matter of course every 5 years.

The minimum age for a worker is 16, as this is the minimum age for obtaining a DBS disclosure. St Peter's Church regards it as essential that the level of maturity and experience of a person aged 16-18 are assessed during the recruitment process. Such applicants would also be closely supervised in order for them to work well and safely whilst they build this knowledge and experience.

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Where people under the age of 16 assist in activities as helpers, they will always be supervised by another named worker and never be in a position where they are providing unsupervised care of children. They are not included in staff/ children ratios.

Appropriate recognition of an individual's experience and qualifications will be given, throughout the Safer Recruitment process, for both paid and volunteer positions.

Volunteers will work a probation period of one month, unless otherwise agreed based on discussions prior to starting work.

All volunteers will be given an appropriate information pack, which has been approved by the Standing Committee in conjunction with the leaders of the relevant group/ activity. All procedures contained within are applied consistently to all those who hold the same position.

Appropriate training will be offered at the start of any period of employment (paid or unpaid) and where necessary / appropriate throughout the duration of employment.

Any individual, who is offered a position (paid or unpaid) will be given a clear description of their roles and responsibilities. This will be confirmed with them verbally prior to the start of the employment, and supplied in writing with the offer letter, inviting them to take up the position applied for.

For each position, paid or volunteer, every effort will be made to fulfil as far as is practicable, the requirements of the Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures.

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## Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

St Peter's Church, Filton is committed to the fair and sensitive use of disclosure information, and where an applicant feels that this has not happened an appeal service will be available. Details of such process can be obtained in writing from the Diocesan Office (Hillside House, 1500 Parkway North, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8YU).

Any individual seeking to volunteer directly with children, or in close relation to children &/or vulnerable adults (as defined in St Peter's Safeguarding policy) shall, without exception, be required to enter and follow the DBS procedure.

St Peter's Church will ensure that all positions, paid or otherwise, will be assessed in terms of the need for DBS requirements to be fulfilled.

Where an individual is interested in applying for a position (paid or otherwise) they will be notified, before the application goes any further, whether there is a DBS requirement and the level of that requirement.

Where the DBS procedure is deemed necessary the offer of that position will be subject to receipt of satisfactory disclosure information.

All individuals applying for positions within the church (paid or otherwise) will be asked to sign a confidential declaration to assist with the recruitment process. This will be kept strictly confidential and seen only by the Parish Safeguarding Officer(s) and Rector.

Where the DBS procedure is followed the Parish Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for updating these every 5 years.

If an individual feels that they have not been treated fairly or sensitively at any point in the recruitment process, or thereafter, they should notify the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Rector. Recourse can also be sought through the Diocesan Secretary from the address above, by submitting an appeal/complaint in writing with their name and address, the nature of the appeal/complaint, the date of the disclosure document and the identity of the body responsible for making the decision, namely the PCC of St Peter's Church, Filton.

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## Obtaining Disclosure from DBS

All applicants of paid posts or volunteer positions within the Parish of Filton where the position is seen to be in authority within the Church Community, whether or not the position requires direct responsibility for the care of children, under direction from the Diocese, a disclosure will be required from the DBS. Such positions include but shall not be limited to Rector, Licensed Lay Minister, Churchwardens, Musical Director, Verger, Tower Captain, Parish Safeguarding Officers, Treasurer, Administrator, as well as all youth workers.

Under direction from the Diocese, a rolling programme will be started to check existing post holders.

1. The applicant contacts the Safeguarding Officer, and a form is completed electronically
2. The DBS sends the completed form to the applicant via email.
3. The applicant signs the form electronically and takes it to the Priest in Charge with two pieces of identification, one of which should show photographic evidence and the other confirmation of the applicant's current address (typically passport, driving licence, recent utility bills). In their absence this would be sent to the PCC Secretary.
4. The countersigned form is returned to the DBS.
5. The DBS send a copy of the Disclosure to the applicant and the Counter-signatory.
6. The Counter-signatory notifies the suitability of the appointee.



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# Recruiting Ex-Offenders

## Purpose and Commitment

St Peter's Church, Filton, is committed to treating all individuals with dignity and respect and to implementing fair recruitment practices in line with the Diocesan Safer Recruitment guidelines and the DBS code of practice. We believe strongly in showing the love and forgiveness of God, and affirm that having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from working or volunteering within the church. Decisions will depend on the nature of the role and the circumstances of any offences.

## Use of DBS and Disclosure

- We use the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust.
- A DBS check will only be requested after a thorough assessment confirms that it is proportionate and relevant to the position.
- All application forms and recruitment materials will state when a DBS check is required.
- Where a DBS check is not required, individuals will complete a Self-Disclosure Form.

## Disclosure of Convictions

- Applicants are encouraged to disclose any unspent convictions (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) early in the recruitment process.
- For roles requiring full criminal history disclosure, applicants will complete a Confidential Declaration Form before applying for a DBS check. Guidance on what needs to be disclosed will be provided, including reference to the DBS Filtering Guide.

## Confidentiality

- All disclosed information will be treated with strict confidentiality and shared only with those who need to see it for safeguarding and recruitment purposes.
- Information should be submitted under separate confidential cover to the person responsible for processing DBS applications.
- Consent will be sought before sharing information with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA).

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## **Risk Assessment**

- If a caution, conviction, or other relevant information is disclosed, the DSA will review the details, may contact statutory bodies (with consent), and provide a written Risk Assessment to the PCC.
- The Risk Assessment will include a recommendation:
  - Safe to proceed
  - Proceed with amendments to role
  - Not safe to proceed
- The individual will receive a copy of the Risk Assessment.

## **Decision and Consequences**

- The PCC will communicate the final decision to the applicant.
- Failure to disclose relevant information or to consent to the risk assessment process will result in withdrawal of any offer of employment or voluntary work.

## **Appeals Process**

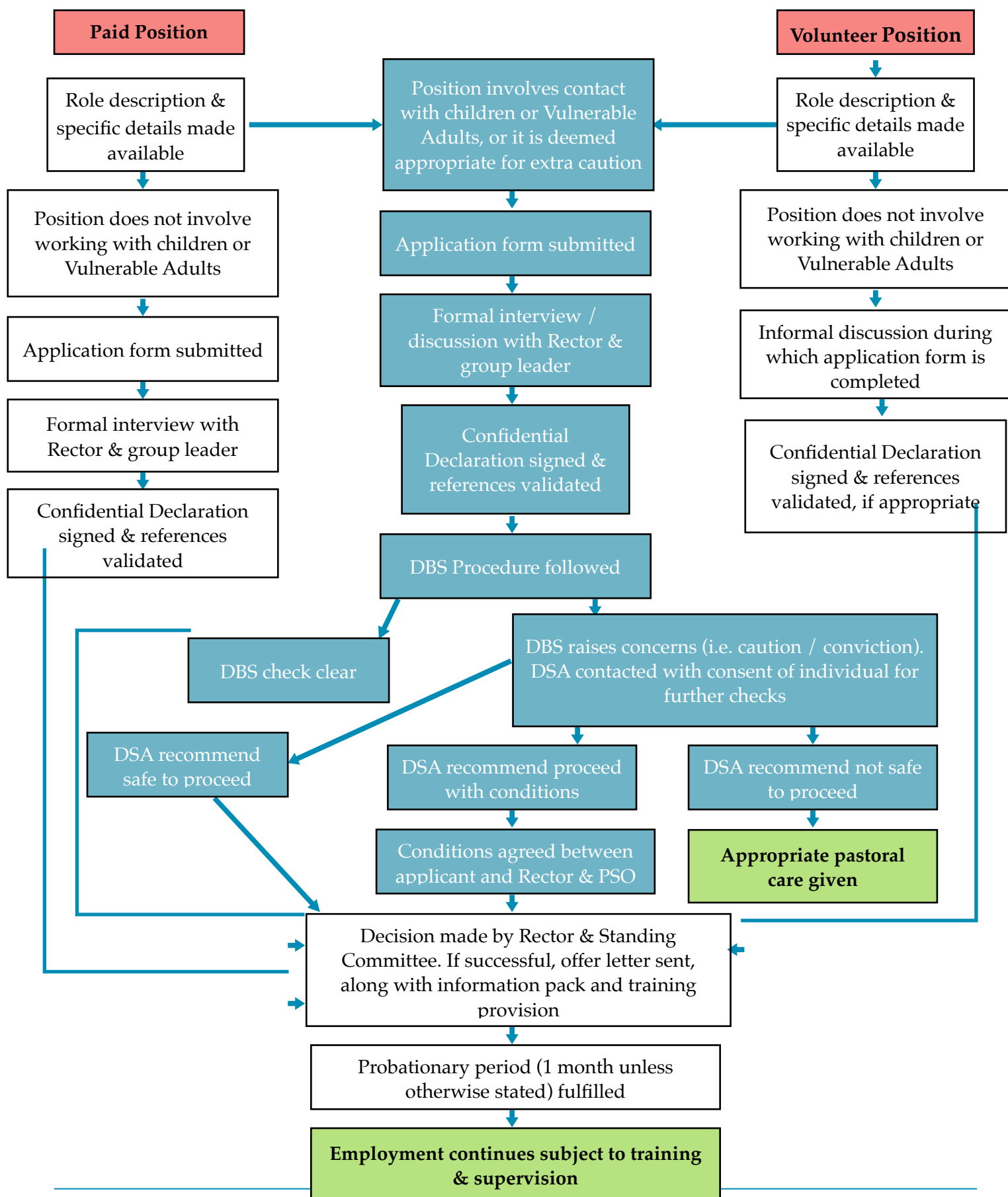
- If an individual believes they have been treated unfairly or the process contradicts Church of England guidance, they may appeal in writing.
  - Appeals will be reviewed by an Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Steering Group (DSSG), who will convene a panel to consider the case in line with national safeguarding guidance.
  - The panel may uphold, dismiss, or recommend changes to the process. The individual will be informed in writing of the outcome.

## **Quality Assurance**

- All risk assessments will be reported to the Deputy Diocesan Secretary as Bishop's Staff Safeguarding Lead to ensure compliance with national Church of England safeguarding guidance.

**This policy applies to all paid workers and volunteers recruited by the Rector and PCC on behalf of St Peter's Church, Filton.**

## Safer Recruitment Procedure



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## Safer Recruitment Contact List

Position	Name	Contact details
Interim Priest in Charge	Revd Rod Cosh	<a href="mailto:rodcosh@icloud.com">rodcosh@icloud.com</a>
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Anne-Louise Pam	<a href="mailto:safe.stpeterschurchfilton@gmail.com">safe.stpeterschurchfilton@gmail.com</a>
Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	Adam Bond	01179 060 100 <a href="mailto:adam.bond@bristoldiocese.org">adam.bond@bristoldiocese.org</a>
Diocesan Disability Adviser	Revd Alice Kemp	07709 767 647 <a href="mailto:alice.kemp@bristoldiocese.org">alice.kemp@bristoldiocese.org</a>

Further information on Diocesan Policy & Guidelines on Safer Recruitment can be found at <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/aboutus/safeguarding/safer-recruitment-dbs-checks/>

For help or information regarding the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) visit their website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service> contact their helpline on 03000 200 190 or email [customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk)

NOTE: Please consider the method of communication used, ensuring as far as possible it is done so securely and in line with best practice including the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. For example:

- Classified information not left in a Voicemail
- Use initials rather than full names in emails
- Mark letters 'Confidential'