

Working together



to make our communities safer

10 Steps Procedure for All Recruitment

Taken from:

Safer Recruitment Policy
JUNE 2013

for the Church of England
and the
Methodist Church of Britain

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/885641/Safer%20Recruitment%20guidance%20FINAL%202013-6-13.pdf>

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1783455/safer%20recruitment%20guidance%20final%202013-6-13.pdf>

Introduction

1. The *Safer Recruitment* policy replaces the 2010 interim policies (*Safer Recruitment* – Church of England, and *Recruiting Safely* – Methodist Church) and the supplementary guidance issued for both Churches in September 2012.
2. The policy is based on legislation which applies to the mainland of England and Wales, in particular the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended) and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. It forms part of the safeguarding framework for both the Church of England and the Methodist Church. It is the first occasion where the close working relationship between the two Churches is reflected by a single joint policy. [*Note: to avoid cumbersome language, the word 'minister' is used to apply to those who are ordained within either church.*] For further information, see:
<http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding>
<http://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/child-protection-safeguarding.aspx>
3. No diocese or district is entitled to amend the policy although additional references to local arrangements can be inserted as an attachment.
4. The policy complies with the Government requirements for 'faith communities' as for other organisations – see *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013* which sets out as one of the requirements:

<p><i>'Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check'. (Page 48)</i></p>

5. The information sheets issued May – August 2012 provide detailed information about the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. They will remain available on both main church websites.
6. The policy has been issued immediately in a pre-final format, because of the Government's short notice in bringing into force further provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. It will be updated in the autumn (2013) and considered in final format by the House of Bishops and the Methodist Council or Conference.
7. Both the Church of England and the Methodist Church provide further 'Human Resources' guidance about, for example, recruitment, management of staff, conduct and discipline. This policy is intended to supplement all such policies, and it applies to arrangements for all types of work: employment; office-

holders; volunteers; students as well as other types of activity such as internships. All this other guidance should cross-refer to this policy.

8. The policy is written to guide the appointment for all roles at local levels - parish, church or circuit. For appointments in other contexts – for example, within a Cathedral or at district / diocesan level - then the body with responsibility for the appointment must work with their lead safeguarding representative, to translate the principles and detailed provisions of this policy into their specific context.
9. Private arrangements made between families or friends are not covered by this policy, even where the people involved know each other through their church links. Only activities formally provided by the Church are covered.
10. For the Methodist Church in Scotland there is separate guidance relating to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme. For other contexts, for example in the Island jurisdictions and the Diocese of Europe, then again every effort should be made to map the principles and detailed provisions of this process into their specific context.

Joint Statement of Safeguarding Principles for the Church of England and the Methodist Church

The Church of England works in partnership with other Christian Churches and other agencies in delivering safeguarding. In partnership with the Methodist Church, the following statement of principles appears at the head of each safeguarding policy:

We are committed to:

- the care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry for all: children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and all adults
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.

To this end...

- **We will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures**
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognises the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and/or isolation.
- In as far as we can we will protect survivors of sexual abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse
- We will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- We will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

Eligibility Groups for Safeguarding Criminal Record Checks

(see diagram Eligibility Circles)

This policy addresses how to recruit people in Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4. As part of both churches' commitment to creating safety within our communities, we will check all those where it is allowed in legislation to check – that is, where the role to be done makes the person eligible to be checked.

All aspects of recruitment and of safer working practice need to be pulled together if churches are to become safer places. Only a tiny percentage of adults who abuse children get caught and still fewer get convicted, so you must never rely solely on the criminal record check which, although crucial, remains only one element of safeguarding. This was noted by Lord Bichard when first introducing the system of criminal record checking:

'The danger is that too much reliance will be placed on CRB [now DBS criminal record] checks There is a concern that many abusers do not have convictions and that no intelligence is held about them. Therefore the selection and recruitment process if properly conducted is an important indeed essential safeguard.'
(The Bichard Inquiry Report 2004 para 4.62.)

Example

In the Methodist Church in the last 3 years only 2% of criminal records have contained any additional information. For the remaining 98%, the checks represent an inconvenient bureaucratic hurdle akin to renewing your driving license or passport.

Within the 2%, a large number of offences have no safeguarding implications for example shoplifting or cannabis possession in the distant past. These cases are likely to be filtered by the new arrangements so that the information will not come through to us. (See Safer Recruitment Policy App. 6).

Within the remaining tiny percentage, the church has learned of a wide range of behaviours with serious implications for safeguarding including offences of adult and child murders; manslaughter; rape of 8 year old girl; incest; kidnap and subsequent indecent assault of an 11 yr old boy; domestic violence; driving with excess alcohol or under the influence of drugs; abuse in a care setting; theft from employer; physical violence (including stabbings) against children and adults; indecent assaults and rape of adults; gaining contact to children via the web; accessing abuse on the web; taking and selling indecent photographs.

Groups 5 and 6, where we do not do checks, are also important. (See STEP 3.) They represent the largest group of people in church; and are where people who pose a safeguarding risk to either children or adults are often located – for example prisoners who attend church on release. Enhanced criminal record checks are not available for people in the community or congregations, but there should still be close working relationships between safeguarding leads in the church and the statutory services for example the police and probation service. This is set out in the safeguarding policies of both Churches. See also *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 13* for how ‘Sarah’s Law’ can be used by the Church in some situations.

The Church is in a unique position in that as part of its mission, it welcomes all people including those who, because of their past behaviour, are deemed to pose a risk to others within the church community but are seeking help and support in turning their life around. This risk-taking activity at the core of the Church’s mission means that it behoves the Church to pay increased attention to safer recruitment, safe working practices, and general good practice in terms of safeguarding. This includes remaining vigilant in relation to people in Groups 5 and 6, particularly if they begin to take on roles from Groups 1 and 2 without a proper recruitment process.

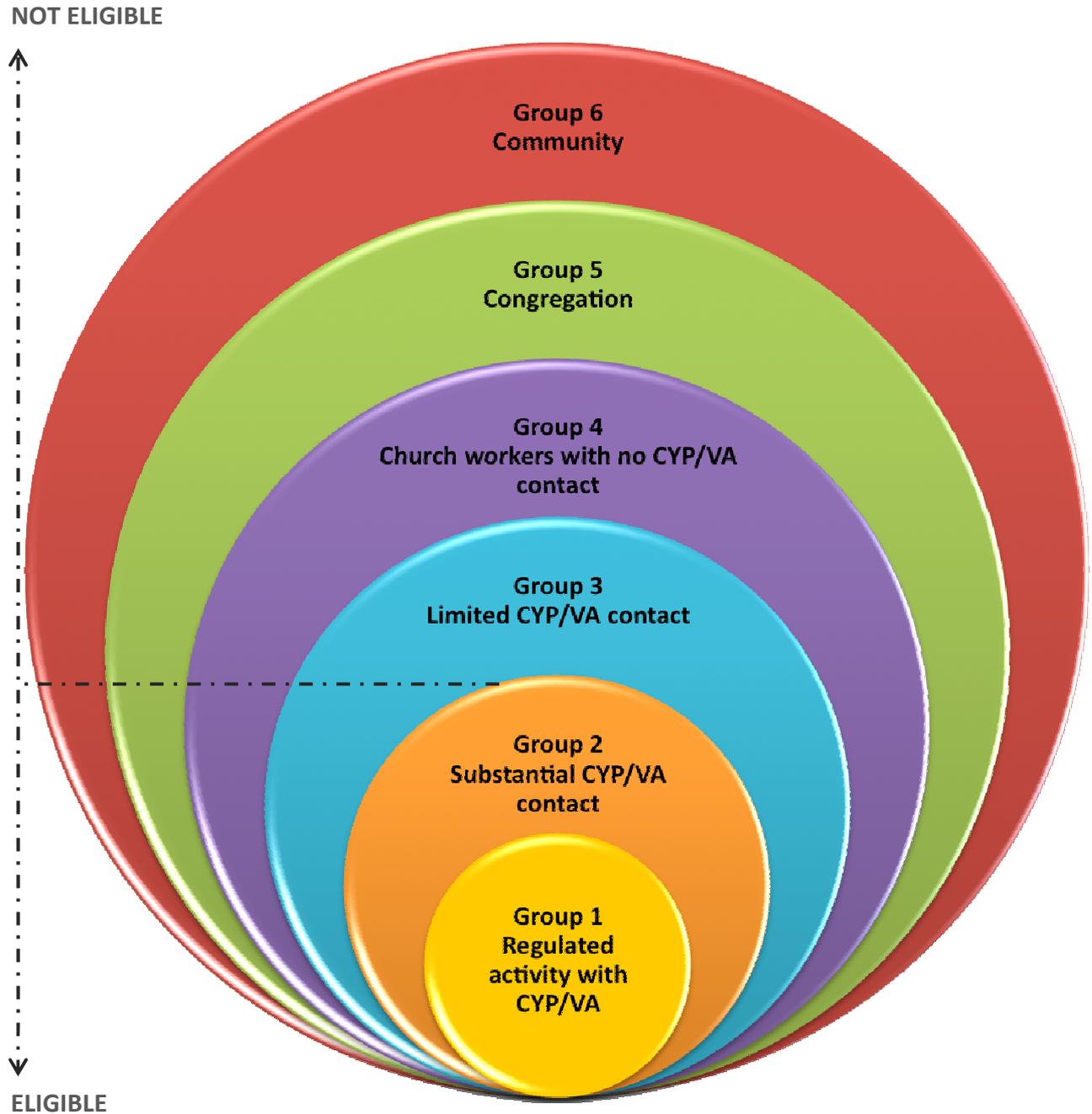
Case examples from Groups 5 and 6.

Group 5: A man was convicted of child sexual offences, many of which involved taking indecent photographs of children and selling them via the web. On release from prison, he expressed a wish to become a part of the life of a large city centre church. He was not allowed to have any role with children or vulnerable adults, but was welcomed as part of the newsletter team and his photography skills were put to good use. Some parents then notified the minister that the man had made up business cards describing his role as official church photographer and circulated them to parents from the nearby schools, offering competitive rates for photography sessions with the children. Only the prompt actions of parents, minister and then the statutory services prevented further harm.

Group 6: A minister realised that the new partner of her youth group leader had progressed from helping with laying out equipment and was staying through the sessions. The minister asked him to do a criminal record check and this revealed that there had been serious concerns about abuse of his own children in a previous marriage, although he had never been convicted of the crime because the children had been too distressed to give witness in court proceedings. The minister stopped him attending the group and also followed safeguarding advice to report his presence in the new family (where there were children) to the statutory services. Some years later, the minister heard that the man was being charged by the police with abuse of these children in the new family. Prompt and vigilant action by the minister, which she described pastorally as ‘leading the man not into temptation’, had protected the children in the church youth group albeit the tragedy still seems to have unfolded in the private family setting.

ELIGIBILITY

Criminal Record Check Eligibility Circles in Relation to Children, Young People (CYP) and Vulnerable Adults (VA)



NOT ELIGIBLE:

Groups 5 and 6 - Red and Green

People within the congregation or known through community engagement.

Enhanced criminal record checks **cannot** be carried out on these groups. Any concerns need addressing through working with the police or social care as appropriate. Specific information can be requested from the police either through normal 'Working Together' arrangements or through the Child Sex Offenders Disclosure Scheme, (commonly known as 'Sarah's Law'). See App. 13. Managing individuals who pose a specific risk is done in cooperation with the Probation Service and MAPPA (multi-agency public protection arrangements.)

Note: there could be a significant risk when a member of one of these groups becomes known and trusted within the church, and then allowed to move into Group 1 or 2 without checks, because of the sense of trust the person has engendered (this can be understood as part of the process known as 'grooming'. This is one of the main reasons for the emphasis on safer recruitment processes in all situations.

Group 4 – Purple

Those who work for the Church and where it would be useful to know about any convictions but, as their work does not relate to children, young people or vulnerable adults, safeguarding provisions do not apply.

Enhanced criminal record checks **cannot** be carried out for this group. Basic disclosures can be requested for this group (currently only available via Disclosure Scotland, but anyone can apply) and other checks could be carried out for those that are charity trustees. However, it should be noted that basic disclosures do have their limitations. Examples could include – treasurer, secretary.

Group 3 – Blue

Those who work for the Church and have limited contact with people (including children and vulnerable adults) through their role, but this contact is insufficient to cross the threshold for eligibility.

Enhanced criminal record checks **cannot** be carried out for this group. Examples include – gardener, cathedral shop assistant, church steward.

Note: the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service formerly CRB and ISA) has found that too many ineligible applications from Group 3 are being made for enhanced checks. They seek church cooperation in limiting such applications.

ELIGIBLE:

Group 2 – Orange

Eligible for enhanced criminal record checks because of substantial involvement with children, young people or vulnerable adults but not within the changed narrower definition of 'Regulated Activity', (for instance, because they are supervised).

The Government has said that work that was previously part of 'Regulated Activity' (before the change in definition) will continue to be eligible for enhanced checks.

Checks for this group will NOT include information about whether the individual is barred.

Group 1 – Yellow

Those who undertake 'Regulated Activity' with children or vulnerable adults. There is a legal requirement to check whether the individual is barred from 'Regulated Activity'. The changed definitions for 'Regulated Activity' came into force from 10th September 2012. The barred check is usually done through the enhanced criminal record check.

Note: Only people of 18 and over should do Church work within Groups 1 and 2, and so NO criminal record check to be undertaken for anyone aged 16-18.

Terminology

The procedure uses some specific terms as defined below. In each case, the day-to-day reality may be that the role is shared between a number of individuals (for example, the role of minister in a church with a group ministry). For the sake of clarity, we refer here to a single person in each role.

APPLICANT This is the person who is being considered for the role. Remember this can be an employee, a volunteer, an office-holder, or any other person appointed to a role e.g. student or intern.

APPOINTER This is the individual who is leading on the process of deciding whether applicants are suitable for a role, and of appointing them. S/he will usually be doing this on behalf of the church council, circuit meeting or parochial church council. S/he may be another volunteer, a colleague, the manager of a service, the chair or secretary of the relevant meeting, or the minister. The APPOINTER should keep a written record of all actions and decisions.

SAFEGUARDER This is the safeguarding representative at parish, church or circuit level. S/he focuses on the 'safer recruitment' part of the process. Only the SAFEGUARDER, at local church level, can approve the APPLICANT for work on receipt of a clear criminal record check. S/he should keep a written record of the actions for which she is responsible.

RESPONSIBLE MEETING This is the group which carries ultimate responsibility for the process at local level - either the church council, circuit meeting or parochial church council (PCC) or the trustees / management committee for a particular project.

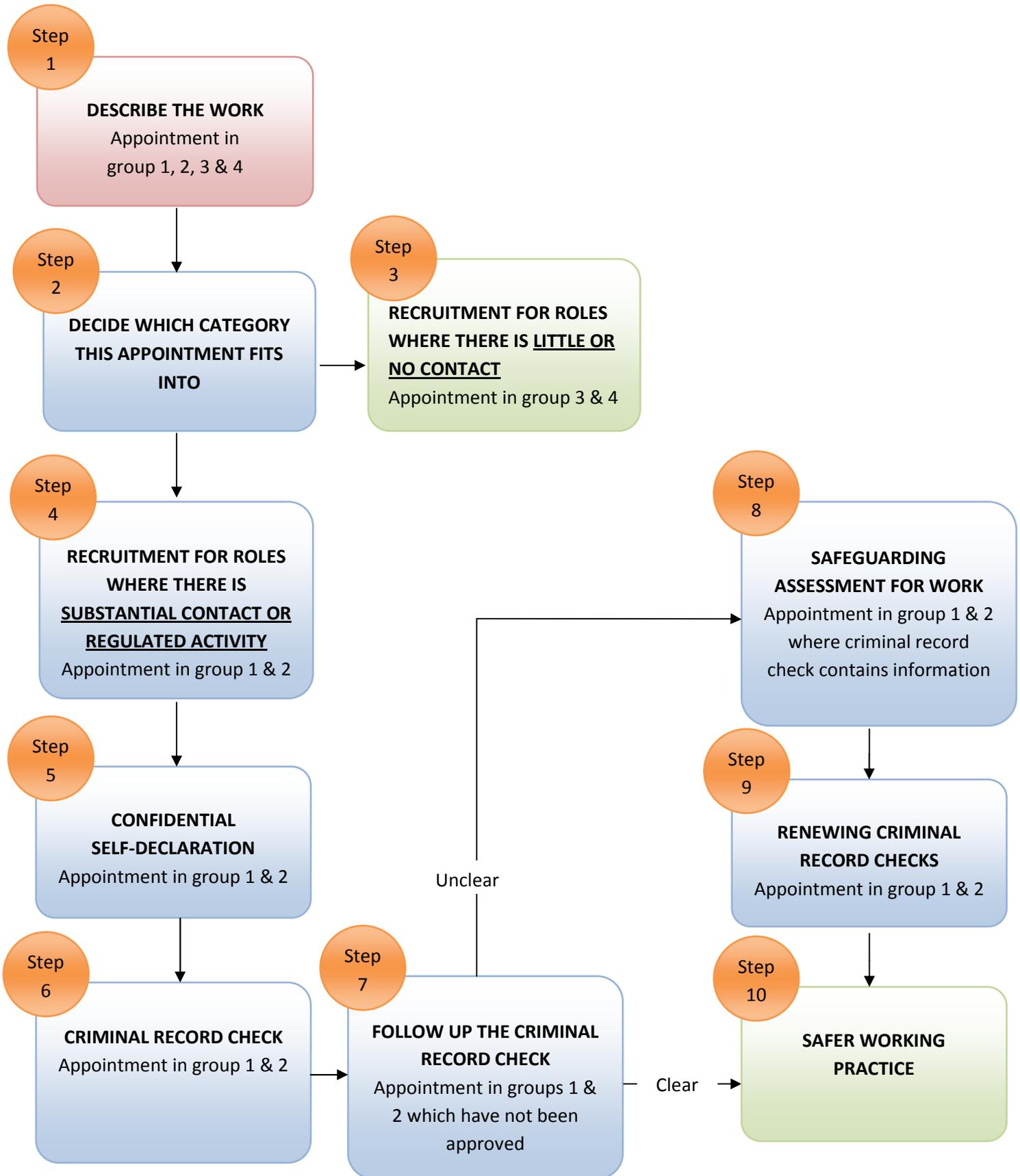
VERIFIER This is the person to whom the APPLICANT shows their ID documents when completing a criminal record check. The VERIFIER must complete the section on the form about the role and about the identity checks (Question w58 onwards.) The VERIFIER can be the same person as the APPOINTER, SAFEGUARDER, MINISTER or they may be someone without any other role in the process.

MINISTER This is the Church of England or Methodist minister who is in the leadership role for the relevant parish, church or circuit and who chairs the PCC / church council / circuit meeting. His / her specific responsibilities are: as chair, to ensure that this process is in place for all appointments; and as minister, to ensure that pastoral support is made available for all those involved where it is needed.

REGISTERED BODY This is the organisation that is registered with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to process both criminal record checks and checks on whether someone is barred from Regulated Activity. (See *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 3* for explanation of Regulated Activity.) Within the Methodist Church, the Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS) acts as the Registered Body for the whole Connexion. The CAS website is a useful source of further advice www.churchsafe.org.uk. Within the Church of England, there are different arrangements for each diocese. Sometimes the diocesan Registered Body acts as an 'Umbrella Body' in that they provide access to the DBS for other non-registered organisations - for example when the smaller organisation requires less than 100 criminal record checks per year.

DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS.) This is the newly created public body, from 1st December 2012, which combines the functions of the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Agency.

The 10 Step Procedure For All Recruitment



Step 1

DESCRIBE THE WORK

For appointment to all Roles in groups 1, 2, 3 and 4

WHO DOES THIS?

The APPOINTER

TASK

Ensure you have a written outline for the role. If it is a paid role this should be a formal job description / person specification. If it is a voluntary role, you may prefer a simple role outline (see *Safer Recruitment Policy App 1*).

For all roles in Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4, you should include in your role outline reference to the fact that the church is committed to safeguarding and that if, at any time, the person in this role sees or hears anything that could suggest a safeguarding risk, or has any other reason to feel concerned, then s/he should report it immediately - either to his / her 'manager' (you need to insert the name and role title) or to the safeguarding representative.

Step 2

DECIDE WHICH GROUP THIS ROLE FITS INTO

For appointment to all Roles in groups 1, 2, 3 and 4

WHO DOES THIS?

The APPOINTER

For Groups 3 and 4, the Appointer can take this step alone.

For all Group 1 and 2 roles, or if you are uncertain about which group a role fits into, you should always consult with the SAFEGUARDER.

TASK

On the basis of the written outline in Step One, decide into which category this role fits in terms of contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults. Add this information to the written outline from Step One.

The Group is determined by the level of contact with children, young people (under 18s) or vulnerable adults - see Eligibility Circles page 7 and also the lists in *Safer Recruitment Policy* App 2.

Step 3

RECRUITMENT FOR ROLES WHERE THERE IS LITTLE OR NO CONTACT

For appointment to all Roles in groups 3 and 4

WHO DOES THIS?

The APPOINTER, in consultation with the RESPONSIBLE MEETING.

The SAFEGUARDER does not need to be involved for Group 3 and 4 decisions unless the process raises safeguarding questions.

TASK

Decide what recruitment steps should be taken, for example written application; interview, reference/s, self-declaration form, access to basic criminal record checks (available for anyone but currently only via Disclosure Scotland only). These roles are important even though they do not include working with children or vulnerable adults.

Note: for roles in groups 3 and 4, the individual should not be asked to disclose spent convictions from the past, or other information such as findings in the family court or civil court. This is important as it offers everyone the chance to put past difficulties behind them. There is no safeguarding interest to override this right to rehabilitation, since the role has been assessed as having little or no contact with children or vulnerable adults. Both Churches fully support this belief in rehabilitation and no-one should never try to undermine the principle via unfair questioning or inappropriate criminal record checks.

On occasion, a local church has wanted to use the Confidential Self-Declaration for people who do not fit into Groups 1 or 2. This can be done provided that only information about unspent convictions is requested. We have no right to ask for information about spent convictions in these circumstances.

See Safer Recruitment Policy Appendix 6

Step 4

RECRUITMENT FOR ROLES WHERE THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL CONTACT OR REGULATED ACTIVITY

For appointment to all roles in groups 1 and 2

WHO DOES THIS?

The APPOINTER and SAFEGUARDER, in consultation with the RESPONSIBLE MEETING.

The SAFEGUARDER will be available for advice throughout the recruitment process.

TASK

Decide the details of how to recruit to roles in groups 1 and 2

Note: you should never agree to someone starting in one of these roles until the criminal record check has been received and the APPLICANT is approved for the work. This applies to both paid and voluntary roles.

Ensure that all information about the role, (the initial advert, any written material, the job description / person specification, reference questions and then the interview questions) emphasises the commitment of the church to safeguarding and safe working practice. Any information and any advert should always state that an enhanced criminal record check will be undertaken.

No applicant for any of these roles should be left in any doubt that the church sets high standards of safety and that the role will be undertaken in a culture of 'informed vigilance.'

Note: research with sexual offenders has confirmed that they can be deterred from applying for roles where this level of safeguarding activity is made obvious from the outset. It is therefore a crucial step to take in protecting our children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The guidance for recruitment methods in relation to these roles is:

Group 1 Regulated Activity (volunteer or paid position)

Always follow a formal recruitment process with application, interview and references.
Always require a self-declaration form and then a criminal record check (Steps 5 and 6).

Group 2 Substantial contact (paid position)

Always follow a formal recruitment process with application, interview and references.
Always require a self-declaration form and then a criminal record check (Steps 5 and 6).

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Group 2 Substantial contact (volunteer position)

Decide what level of recruitment is necessary dependent on the role – there should be some form of interview and taking up of references as a minimum.

Always require a self-declaration form and then a criminal record check (Steps 5 and 6).

Note: creativity and flexibility is needed in a church setting, to ensure that these processes happen without being experienced as unduly formal or rigid.

Note: where the APPLICANT seeks to use a friend from within church as referee, every effort should be made to supplement this with a reference from someone more objective – where possible, from a professional work context.

Step 5

CONFIDENTIAL SELF-DECLARATION

For all appointments in group 1 and 2 positions
(substantial contact / Regulated Activity)

WHO DOES THIS?

The APPOINTER and SAFEGUARDER should decide which of them does this with the individual. It should usually be the same person who arranges for the criminal record check, since the two things can be done at the same time.

TASK

Once you have decided who you are going to appoint to any role (either paid or voluntary) then you must always require the person to complete a Confidential Self-Declaration Form (See *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 9*) as a preliminary to a criminal record check. This asks the individual to reveal any convictions, cautions or other relevant information – although this must take into account the Disclosure & Barring Service filtering rules see guidance in *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 6*).

- This process offers the individual the opportunity to flag up for you any information that may come through on the criminal record check.
- Remember that people can be deeply embarrassed about incidents from their past even when there is no link with safeguarding.
- The process is confidential and the information should not be shared except within the recruitment process and for the purposes of safeguarding.
- Should the individual wish to discuss the information with someone, then either the minister or the diocesan safeguarding adviser / district safeguarding officer can be involved as appropriate.

See STEP 3 for using the Self-Declaration Form in other situations.

Step 6

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

For all appointments in groups 1 and 2
(substantial contact / Regulated Activity)

WHO DOES THIS?

The VERIFIER completes sections w, x and y on each criminal record check.

The Update Service should always be the SAFEGUARDER since it is only the SAFEGUARDER who can approve an individual for work.

TASK

Once the confidential self-disclosure has been completed, the APPLICANT should undertake a criminal record check. No-one can start a role with children, young people or vulnerable adults before the check has been received and the APPLICANT approved for work.

1. Criminal Record Check

This can be completed either by a paper form or on-line via your REGISTERED BODY, if the REGISTERED BODY has that facility (see *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 8.*)

When completing the form, the Disclosure & Barring Service has asked us to clarify as follows:

- Question e55 asks the APPLICANT: 'have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or received a caution, reprimand or warning?' The APPLICANT should now ignore this question and instead treat this question as if they were being asked: 'do you have any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings?' (For more information about spent convictions, see *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 6.*)
- Question x61 asks you to state your role. You should always start as follows – and then add more specific detail.
'Child Workforce'. Use this for any position that involves working/volunteering with children.
Adult Workforce'. Use this for any position that involves working/volunteering with adults.
'Child and Adult Workforce'. Use this for any position that involves working/volunteering with both children and adults.

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- Question x64 – tick YES only if this role is Regulated Activity (group 1) with children
- Question x65 – tick YES only if this role is Regulated Activity (group 1) with vulnerable adults
- Question x66 asks about homeworking. All ministers should tick this box. For other roles, decide on a case-by-case basis. The APPLICANT needs to be prepared that when they tick this box, the police may disclose relevant information about others at the same address. In order to minimise intrusion into private life, this box should only be ticked if direct work with children or vulnerable adults may take place in the home. For example, a youth worker who returns home after the session and writes up his or her notes, does not need to tick the box if this is the only work done at home.

2. Update Service

This is a new facility, provided by the Government to help with 'portability' of criminal records. It can only be used if the individual is already registered. The Church of England and the Methodist Church will decide whether to support use of this service after the first months of its operation, to enable any teething problems to be resolved. Meanwhile, if an APPLICANT is already registered to use the service via work in a different organisation, the SAFEGUARDER will need to follow the steps set out below. (See *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 7* for more information about the Update Service and about portability.)

- individuals must show you their most recent paper criminal record check, provide identity check documents as for a criminal record check, and give you their Update Service ID number for you to access the service on-line.
- If the paper check is not clear (i.e. contains any information at all) then you cannot approve – move straight to STEP NINE.
- If the initial paper check you have been given is clear and the On-line Service confirms 'No further information', then you can approve the person to take up their role - move to STEP TEN.
- If the initial paper check you have been given is clear but the On-line Service says 'More recent information is available' then you cannot immediately approve the person. They must first carry out a new criminal record check and show you the result.

Step 7

FOLLOW UP THE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

For appointments in group 1 and 2 positions (substantial contact / Regulated Activity) unless they have already been approved for work via the Update Service route (see Step 6 above.)

Note: as from 17th June 2013, the Disclosure & Barring Service will only send a single copy of the criminal record check to the APPLICANT with no second copy to the REGISTERED BODY. The aim is that the APPLICANT then has the opportunity to challenge any information, before sharing with the church. We will need to monitor how this works as it is a very different arrangement from before.

WHO DOES THIS?

As set out, above.

The SAFEGUARDER must not approve for work any applicant with a disclosure which contains information. This remains the responsibility of the REGISTERED BODY working with either the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or the Connexional Safeguarding team.

TASK

- the SAFEGUARDER should keep a record of all criminal record checks sent to the REGISTERED BODY as well as any Update approvals they have made
- the SAFEGUARDER should follow up with the APPLICANT and the REGISTERED BODY for any checks where no response has been received within 4 weeks
- the SAFEGUARDER and APPOINTER should together ensure that the APPLICANT does no work (either paid or voluntary) until approved
- once received, the APPLICANT should show the criminal record check to the SAFEGUARDER. It must be kept strictly confidential for recruitment and safeguarding purposes
- if the criminal record check is completely clear (i.e. no information on the form beyond 'personal information', 'employment details' and 'counter-signatory details') then the SAFEGUARDER can approve for work
- the SAFEGUARDER must notify the REGISTERED BODY of all such approvals so that a central record remains available as it has been to date.
- the SAFEGUARDER must send to the REGISTERED BODY immediately by Registered Post, a copy of any criminal record check which contains information. S/he must provide full contact details for him/ herself and for the APPOINTER.

Note: this is a change of practice as previously no copies of criminal record checks have been allowed without CRB / DBS permission. The change to a single certificate means that the APPLICANT can now agree to the form being copied.

Step 8

SAFEGUARDING ASSESSMENT FOR WORK

For appointments in group 1 and 2 positions (substantial contact / Regulated Activity) where the criminal record check contains information.

WHO DOES THIS?

As set out, above.

The SAFEGUARDER should contact the REGISTERED BODY, the diocesan safeguarding adviser / district safeguarding officer or (in the Methodist Church) the Connexional safeguarding team for help at any point as needed.

TASK

- where the criminal record check reveals any information at all, this must be assessed for possible risk
- within the Methodist Church, such assessment is arranged by the Connexional safeguarding team, in co-operation with the district safeguarding officer. The final decision rests with the Connexional Safeguarding Advisory Panel (see Standing Order 232)
- within the Church of England, each diocese is responsible for arranging this process and reaching decisions
- the APPOINTER and SAFEGUARDER at local level have a crucial role to play, in supporting the APPLICANT whilst this process unfolds. The MINISTER is usually informed at this stage.
- the possible outcomes of an assessment for work are: approval; approval with conditions; not approved.
- difficult questions can arise about whether this sensitive information needs to be shared and with whom. Always seek advice from the diocesan safeguarding adviser / district safeguarding officer, or (in the Methodist Church) the Connexional safeguarding team, who may in turn seek legal advice.

Step 9

RENEW CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

For all appointments in group 1 and 2 positions
(substantial contact / Regulated Activity)

WHO DOES THIS?

- people working for the church (either in employed, office-holder or voluntary positions) carry individual responsibility for ensuring that their check is renewed within the five year deadline
- every parish, church and circuit should also have a system in place to monitor the criminal record checks and identify when the deadline is pending
- the system for criminal record checks for ministers is managed at diocesan or, in the Methodist Church, Connexional level. See *Safer Recruitment Policy App. 12* for the system in relation to ministers
- the diocesan safeguarding adviser / district safeguarding officer or (in the Methodist Church) the Connexional safeguarding team should be consulted where any difficulties arise
- the local authority designated officer (LADO) in England & Wales is available for advice. The LADO should be notified in any situation where a possible risk arises, including the receipt of such information via a criminal record check.

TASK

- criminal record checks should be updated every 5 years. The process set out in Step 5 (Confidential self-declaration) onwards should be followed
- the one obvious difference is that the person is already in role
- should there be delay in obtaining the updated criminal record check, the person is not approved by the Church to act and should stand down pending completion of the process. The diocesan safeguarding adviser / district safeguarding officer or (in the Methodist Church) the Connexional safeguarding team can be consulted about how to manage this situation
- should the criminal record check be returned with any information, the process at Step 8 should be followed
- at this stage, should the information received suggest a possible risk, then it may be necessary to consider suspension as a neutral act pending assessment and decision-making. Such a decision needs to be reached in consultation with those with responsibility at local, diocese/district or (in the Methodist Church) Connexional level.

Step 10

SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

WHO DOES THIS?

The APPOINTER and the RESPONSIBLE MEETING, with input from the SAFEGUARDER and MINISTER.

TASK

Appointing someone safely is a crucial part of protecting children, young people and adults who are vulnerable within our churches. Even more important is creating a culture of safety and the embedding of that culture in all our practices. Safer working protects children, adults and workers.

Once the APPLICANT has been safely appointed, the church should provide:

- support
- induction
- training in the role and in safeguarding including the requirement to report any concern
- reviews, building in periodic feedback from children, young people or adults with whom the APPLICANT now works
- clear boundaries, especially being alert to unsupervised contact through church, outside of the work role.
- oversight, supervision
- information about who s/he is accountable to and whom s/he is accountable for

See *Safer Recruitment Policy* App. 10 for more information.