

## **Draft policy for Safer Recruitment of Church Officers including Recruitment of Ex Offenders**

*CHURCH OFFICERS are anyone appointed by, or on behalf of the Church, to a post or role, paid or unpaid, lay or ordained. At St Paul's Church this includes all voluntary roles except for flower arranging, cleaning, gardening or serving refreshments.*

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), St Paul's Church complies fully with the DBS code of practice.

1. St Paul's Church is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or those who come to the church, regardless of race, gender, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
  2. St Paul's Church will select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience.
  3. St Paul's Church will require all candidates to complete an application form, including providing the names of two referees, one of whom must be outside St Paul's Church. For roles involving substantial contact with children or vulnerable adults they will also be asked to complete a Confidential Declaration form.
  4. St Paul's Church undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
  5. St Paul's Church can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not "spent" unless the role involves working with children or vulnerable adults. *Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 a conviction or caution becomes "spent" after a specified period of time known as a Rehabilitation Period. Prison sentences over 4 years never become "spent".*
  6. An application for a criminal record check will only be submitted to DBS if it is listed as necessary in the Church of England Safeguarding Team "Roles where the activity is seen to be eligible for a criminal record check" or if not listed, after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts, and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
  7. When required for a particular role, St Paul's Church will obtain DBS checks for volunteers and paid roles through APCS, the DBS umbrella body recommended by the Diocese of Oxford.
  8. St Paul's Church will make every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the DBS code of practice and makes a copy available on request.
  9. St Paul's Church will seek a risk assessment from the Diocesan Safeguarding officer if a matter is revealed on a DBS certificate that could affect the employment of an individual.
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10. St Paul's Church will undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
11. This policy will be made available to all applicants where the role involves a DBS check. It is made available at the start of the recruitment process.
12. St Paul's Church will require that all those in the church who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained. This training will include the Diocese of Oxford Safer Recruitment training.
13. St Paul's Church will also ensure that those involved in the recruitment process have received appropriate guidance and training in the identification and assessment of the relevance and circumstances of offences and in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
14. At interview, or in a separate discussion, St Paul's Church will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

Approved by the PCC on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Incumbent  Revd Dan McGowan

Church Warden  Mike Moir

*Please note: In relation to volunteers applying to help in the ministries involving children or vulnerable adults, the appointment will not commence until the applicant has been a member of the church for at least 6 months.*