

Section 3 - Advertising a Role

6 minutes read

Last updated: 15 July 2021

Version: 1

Requirements

3.1 All advertisements/notices for roles that fall within the scope of this guidance must include the following details, or clearly indicate where they can be found (e.g. Church body's noticeboard or website):

- A statement which confirms the Church body's commitment to safeguarding and safer recruitment.
- The essential elements of the person specification required for the role.
- The pre-appointment checks that are required for the role.

3.2 A 'Personal Approach' to engage applicants must only be used where it can be evidenced that there are no other viable options available. Where it is used, this guidance must still be applied.

Good practice advice

Why?

Advertisements/notices provide the first impression of a Church body. An important part of this message is to highlight that the Church body is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Advertising helps reach as wide a pool of people as possible, with the aim of attracting the best candidates and promoting diversity – people can't apply for the role if they don't know about it.

It is important to note that the level of advertising will be proportionate to the role. For example, adverts for paid staff might be placed in local (possibly national) media and social media, adverts for volunteers are more likely to utilise free services, such as newsletters, word of mouth or noticeboards.

How?

It is good practice to include a statement which confirms the Church body's commitment to safeguarding on all written advertisements/notices.

Example:

"[Insert name of Church body] is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment."

All advertisements/notices should also clearly outline the pre-appointment checks that are required for the role.

Example:

"All appointments are subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check".

If space is limited (e.g. on a church notice sheet), then the advert should signpost people to where they can find full details, including these statements, whether that be the Church body's website or notice board.

If a role is being recruited outside of [the Church of England Pathways system](#), there must be a suitable recruitment privacy notice in place.

The 'Personal Approach'

Particularly where volunteers are concerned, it is recognised that in some circumstances Church bodies will not be able to put out an open public request and may only be able to identify people from within a limited pool who are already members of the church or congregation.

Whilst it may be acceptable for procedures to be more proportionate in this way than it would be for those organisations which are seeking volunteers from the general public, this can make Church bodies particularly vulnerable and such methods should only be used where it can be evidenced that there are no other options available. The fact that someone is already “known” (for example, as a member of the congregation) does not mean they are necessarily safe.

Examples of the sort of situations that need to be avoided:
A notice is given out in church that a Sunday School teacher is urgently required. Someone volunteers, and at the end of the service they are asked if they can begin the following Sunday without any appropriate checks being carried out or relevant safer recruitment procedures followed.
A friend of one of the youth group leaders starts attending the youth group with them and somehow drifts into being part of the leadership team, with no formal appointment process.
A new member of the congregation tells the welcome team that they have worked with the elderly in their previous church and would be keen to get involved. The welcome team member decides that they should strike while the iron is hot and introduces the new member to the leader of the mid-week senior citizen’s lunch club. They join the leadership team two weeks later without any formal appointment procedures being followed.
Someone offers to volunteer with children and young people. An informal interview is conducted. An enhanced DBS Disclosure is obtained. References are taken up. However, no job description is ever written and no induction is given into the church’s safeguarding policy/procedures. After a few weeks, the volunteer begins to organise additional activities for the young people in their group, away from the church premises and with no other adult involvement.

These are examples that can potentially put children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk and should be avoided.

Church Officers need to be vigilant to being groomed themselves into offering positions/roles without the proper necessary checks and procedures. In order to reduce suspicion and gain compliance, offenders groom not only their intended victims but also those around them. This process of social or environmental grooming involves gaining the trust of those with the power and responsibility to safeguard the individual involved.

“...Offenders will utilise an institution’s unique environment to enable their abuse and will endeavour to prevent any disclosure regarding their offending. They are able to achieve this due to their ability to build positive relationships with others, a key skill while working with children, but one used maliciously by offenders in order to create an environment in which they can abuse. An offender’s socially acceptable manner is designed to be deceptive...Some offenders will attempt to gain the trust of the community and ensure that they are considered above suspicion. If accused, these offenders are able to capitalise on the community’s ready acceptance of their innocence...”¹

Even if an individual is already known to the Church body, proportionality should never be confused with being casual about the importance of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. The steps described in the Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance Requirements document should still form part of any recruitment process, regardless of whether the applicant is known to the individual(s)

making the appointment or not.

Role Drift

Often an individual can be appointed to one role within a Church body but, over time, 'drifts' into another role/s, e.g. a person may be appointed as the church administrator but after a period of time is working on the youth team. Church bodies must be alert to such situations arising, ensuring that any new role someone might take on or move into is promptly recognised and risk managed in accordance with the guidance Requirements. This is where the ongoing support and oversight systems put in place (see [Section 14: Ongoing Support, Accountability, Oversight & Supervision](#)) are so important. Effective systems will keep roles under review so that any such changes are quickly identified.

New Members

Some Church bodies advise anyone joining them from another Church body to have a six month 'sabbatical' before getting involved in anything/volunteering. This not only gives the individual a rest (If they have come from another church, they have often been involved in volunteering in one way or another), but more importantly gives the new body the opportunity to get to know them.

- [1](#)(Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) – Thematic Assessment - The Foundations of Abuse: A thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions (Oct 2013)).

This document is version 1 and was printed on 03 May 2024. The most up to date version of this policy can be found on the Church of England website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding>

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance/section-3>