

Section 14 - Ongoing Support, Accountability, Oversight and Supervision

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Requirements

14.1 As part of finalising the probation/settling-in period, arrangements must be made for how ongoing support is to be carried out for all roles that fall within the scope of this guidance, which must include confirmation of the responsible person to whom the individual reports to

14.2 Regular meetings must continue to be scheduled between the responsible person (or someone to whom this task has been delegated) and the individual and safeguarding must form a core part of these ongoing meetings. For some roles, (eg DSAs) this will take the form of formal/professional supervision; for other roles, different terminology will be used (e.g. Ministerial Development Review)

14.3 Any safeguarding concerns must be thoroughly discussed and documented. These opportunities must also be used to develop the individual's safeguarding understanding and skills

14.4 If an individual already in post becomes involved in criminal activity, or other unacceptable behaviour¹, the individual must bring it to the immediate attention of the responsible person for their role (as identified at 1. above) in order that the information can be assessed for relevancy to the individual's role. The responsible person must report the disclosure to their own line manager or other appropriate person and the information dealt with as per the Church body's criminal record process (see [Section 10: Criminal Records](#)). This includes seeking advice from the appropriate point of contact from within the body's safeguarding team, as well as legal advice from the Diocesan Registrar (or equivalent)

14.5 If an individual already in post fails to disclose their involvement in criminal activity, or other unacceptable behaviour (see the footnote in the Requirements area of [Section 13: Probationary/Settling in Period](#)), then this must be addressed immediately by the responsible person for the role (as identified at 1. above), reported to their own line manager or other appropriate person and the information dealt with as per the Church body's criminal records process (see [Section 10: Criminal Records](#)), including seeking advice from the appropriate point of contact from within the body's safeguarding team, as well as legal advice from the Diocesan Registrar (or equivalent).

¹“Unacceptable behaviour” is defined as: including actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be seen as causing distress or discomfort to another person., e.g. bullying, harassment and/or victimisation. Any of the following listed below could be construed as examples of “unacceptable behaviour” - aggressive or abusive behaviour, e.g. shouting or insulting someone, spreading rumours or gossip designed to hurt someone, discrimination or harassment in particular when related to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, physical contact that is unwanted, offensive comments/jokes, publishing, circulating or displaying offensive material or pictures (could be violent or pornographic), isolating or deliberately excluding someone, persistent, continuous and unreasonable destructive criticism, unreasonable demands and impossible deadlines/targets and coercion, such as pressure to agree to a particular idea, - e.g. political or religious belief. Please also see [The Code of Safer Working Practice](#).

Good practice advice

Why?

Support for individuals is generally quite intensive during the probation/settling in period, and whilst it can usually be reduced once that stage has passed, a level of continued individual support is important and has many general benefits, whether someone is an employee or a volunteer, including:

- **Whether they are happy in his/her role, or whether there are any personal issues which may be affecting him/her.**
- **Being able to address any issues of poor performance or behaviour, and more importantly recognise those that are good.**
- **Identifying if there is any training the individual needs or wants.**
- **Provide updates on any developments within the Church body, where appropriate.**
- **Identifying ‘role drift’ (see [Section 3: Advertising a Role](#))**
- **Address any other concerns.**
- **Setting and reviewing objectives – competency/values and behaviour based.**
- **What are the individual’s career aspirations/future plans (where appropriate).**

Safeguarding forms an integral part of this ongoing support, providing an opportunity for continued vigilance and review as well as development of the individual’s understanding of safeguarding, their skills and expected behaviors.

How?

The way in which this support is carried out is very much a local decision and will depend on the role. This may take the form of formal/professional ‘supervision’ meetings. For other roles, different terminology will be used, such as a ‘one to one meeting’, ‘review meeting’ or simply a ‘catch up’ – whatever is most appropriate to the role, the church body and the individual.

As part of the overall support process, there should also be in place a mechanism to observe the practice of individuals on a regular basis with the opportunity to then debrief on these observations during a subsequent meeting.

In an employment context, meetings would generally be held on a monthly basis, but for volunteers this would not necessarily be appropriate, and should be adapted depending on the role carried out and the level of engagement. A minimum of three times a year is recommended but, whatever the arrangements are, they should be agreed with the volunteer at the outset. These meetings go a long way to ensuring volunteers feel properly valued. Where church bodies have a large volunteer workforce, it is acknowledged that the practicalities of organising one to one meetings at the recommended frequency may be challenging and bodies could consider the use of ‘group supervision’ (a small meeting of those carrying out the same role) in lieu of some meetings, ensuring that volunteers have at least an annual one to one meeting and are clear on who to approach should they need an individual meeting in between times.

The usual format should be a face-to-face meeting between the responsible person and the employee/volunteer but other mechanisms such as via telephone, video call, etc. can also be effectively utilised.

Meetings should allow enough time to discuss matters properly but should not be longer than 90 minutes and the time should be uninterrupted.

Where appropriate, any notes of relevant safeguarding matters raised and discussed should be taken and stored on the relevant file.

Safeguarding must be a standing agenda item during meetings. This will keep it at the forefront of people's minds and means everyone has an opportunity to raise any concerns or queries they might have and to reflect on and improve their safeguarding practice. It is also a chance for any changes that are made to safeguarding policies and procedures to be shared and discussed.

Meetings should be viewed as a two-way process, helping to ensure that individuals are well supported and clear about the body's requirements.

Toolkit

- [Volunteer Support Meeting Agenda template](#)

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