

**OUGHTIBRIDGE CHAPEL
SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY & PROCESS**

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Safer Recruitment (SR) Related Documents:	
Safer Recruitment Checklist	SR Related Document 1
Volunteer job roles	SR Related Document 2
Model Application Form	SR Related Document 3
Model Volunteer Reference form	SR Related Document 4
Confidential Declaration Form	SR Related Document 5
Model Volunteer interview./discussion	SR Related Document 6
Eligibility for DBS checks	SR Related Document 7
Oughtibridge Chapel Roles and DBS	SR Related Document 8
Model appointment letter	SR Related Document 9
Recognition of Elders	SR Related Document 10

NOTE: This Safer Recruitment Policy is based on “The C of E Practice Guidance : Safer Recruitment”
Published July 2016, Reviewed May 2017, adapted to suit the needs of Oughtibridge Chapel.

PREFACE

Safer recruitment practice is an essential part of the Oughtibridge Chapel's approach to safeguarding. This policy and guidance sets out safer recruitment practices for people volunteering with children and adults with care and support needs. The guidance addresses two key areas – the recruitment process and criminal record checks (DBS). The guidance outlines who should undertake a criminal record check in accordance with their role within the Church and provides helpful templates. This policy will be implemented from the date approved by the Leadership Team and will apply only to recruitments made after that date.

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Oughtibridge Chapel is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults within our church community. We will carefully select, train and support all those working in regulated activity within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles.

This means that we will:

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent;
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others;
- Adhere to safer recruitment legislation, guidance and standards;
- Produce practice guidance on safer recruitment for our Church and keep it updated.

Oughtibridge Chapel does not have any employees, who receive any payment or stipend for their work in the church. All the roles are volunteers. Whilst this policy may refer to applications, recruitment, workers and other similar vocabulary it does not infer any form of employment or associated rights.

1. THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1.1 RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPOINTMENTS

Responsibility for appointments rests with the Leadership Team, who are appointed by the Church. The Church will appoint a Lead Recruiter, who will always be a member of the Leadership Team.

The recruitment process will be followed whenever a role involves working with children or doing a regulated activity with adults with care and support needs, so whenever an enhanced criminal record check is required. The only exception to this is Elder and Leadership Team appointments, as they go through a totally different appointment process (SR Related Document 10). Whenever a new role is created the Church Secretary will ask the Lead Recruiter to assess whether the role will be required to go through the Safer Recruitment Process. Where the recruitment process raises any questions about an applicant's suitability for a post this will be discussed by the Lead Recruiter with Elders on the Leadership Team. If necessary, advice will be sought from thirtyone:eight, 31:8 (a Christian safeguarding advisory service www.thirtyoneeight.org.uk).

The Church may also choose to appoint an Administrative Assistant to help with the duties of the Lead Recruiter, however responsibility for decisions will always rest within the Leadership Team.

1.2 RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Oughtibridge Chapel actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds, including those with criminal records. Oughtibridge Chapel select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Oughtibridge Chapel complies fully with the Code of Practice (link below) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. Oughtibridge Chapel undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

If a conviction or other information is revealed, the application will be discussed with Elders on the Leadership Team to assess the applicant's suitability for the position. If necessary, the Elders will seek advice from thirtyone:eight and make a decision about appointment based upon that advice.

Oughtibridge Chapel undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of a position.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474742/Code_of_Practice_for_Disclosure_and_Barring_Service_Nov_15.pdf

1.3. ENSURE THAT THERE ARE SAFEGUARDING POLICIES IN PLACE

The applicant will be made aware of the safeguarding approach of Oughtibridge Chapel. The Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy will be given on appointment to a role.

A clear job description or role will be available, which sets out what tasks the applicant will do and what skills are required. The job description or job role will also say whether it is eligible for and requires a criminal records check, and if so the level of the check (See SR Related Document 2).

1.4 JOB DESCRIPTION OR ROLE AND CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

In broad summary, it is the policy of Oughtibridge Chapel that all those who work regularly with children and / or adults with care and support needs, must have, where permissible, an enhanced criminal record check (with / without a check of the barred list, as appropriate). In addition, those who work only occasionally with vulnerable groups will also be asked to apply for enhanced checks, provided they are eligible. Those who manage or supervise those who work with vulnerable groups and those in a leadership capacity who carry responsibility for safeguarding, will also be required to obtain enhanced check, provided they are eligible. For more details please refer to SR Related Documents 7 and 8.

1.5 APPLICATION FORM / REFERENCES

An application form will be used when recruiting for a role working with children and/or adults with care and support needs. A model template application form can be found in SR Related Document 3. We will always ask for and take up references, except for Elder and Leadership Team appointments, as they go through a different appointment process (SR Related Document 10) and if the role would not have the potential for the applicant to be left alone with children. We will ask referees specifically about an individual's suitability to work with vulnerable people. We will ensure that we carefully examine application forms and references and make sure that the information that has been provided is consistent and the recruiter is provided with a satisfactory explanation for any discrepancies and/or any gaps in an applicant's personal history, where the applicant may have lived abroad. If anything is unclear in the reference, we will contact the referee to clarify the position. A model template reference request letter for volunteers can be found SR Related Document 4.

1.6 THE CONFIDENTIAL DECLARATION

The Confidential Declaration asks if there is any reason why the applicant should not be working with children and adults with care and support needs. It can also help to identify any issues that might need resolving at an early stage. thirtyone:eight must be contacted for advice if an applicant discloses any information. Should the applicant not wish to complete the Confidential Declaration, which is entirely his / her choice, the application must not proceed further and must be terminated. A model Template Confidential Declaration Form can be found in SR Related Document 5.

1.7 INITIAL MEETING

Having an Initial Meeting with pre-planned and clear questions helps to assess a person's suitability for a role. We will always ask if the applicant knows of any reason why he / she should not be working with children or adults with care and support needs or if there are any pending cases / issues which could affect him / her or his / her ability to carry out the role. If the applicant discloses any matter then we will refer to thirtyone:eight for advice. A model template Initial Meeting Form can be found in SR Related Document 6. At the initial meeting the application form (SR Related Document 3) will be given, together with the role

description, confidential declaration form, a copy of this 'Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures' which includes the church policy on ex-offenders, and the Data Protection Policy.

1.8 ASKING FOR A CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

The applicant must be asked on the application form for permissions for Oughtibridge Chapel to carry out an appropriate criminal record check. A list of roles, which are eligible for enhanced criminal record checks are outlined in SR Related Document 8. Special arrangements apply to overseas applicants, (see paragraph 1.9 below). Should the applicant not wish to apply for a criminal record check, which is entirely his / her choice, the application must not proceed further and must be terminated.

1.9 OVERSEAS APPLICANTS

If an applicant for a position that is eligible for a DBS check is coming from overseas who, either has never lived in the UK or spent a period of time (i.e. lived abroad), the recruiter will request an additional check and ask the applicant to obtain criminality information (also known as a certificate of good conduct/character) from his/her relevant embassy/high commission (or police force). This means that in addition to the DBS check, the applicant must seek this additional check to cover the time he/she spent abroad. (Further advice can be found on the Home Office website). If such information is not available from the embassy/high commission etc. or if there are concerns about the reliability of the information provided, the person(s) making the appointment should take extra care when taking up references and checking any previous employment record. In such cases, additional references should be sought and at least one reference from a previous employer should be contacted by telephone as well as by letter.

1.10 APPROVAL

The decision to appoint must be made by a member of the Leadership Team, usually the Lead Recruiter. The start date or appointment must not be confirmed until the relevant criminal record check is received and examined. Criminal record checks will be received and examined by the Lead Recruiter. Criminal record checks that are not clear (i.e. which contain information of, for instance, criminal convictions or cautions or additional information such as arrests) must always be referred to the Elders on the Leadership Team and further advice will be sought from thirtyone:eight if necessary. The recruitment checklist in SR Related Document 1 will be used to ensure that all safer recruitment checks have been carried out and the responses have been satisfactory. All volunteers will receive a letter of appointment (SR Related Document 9), which will detail key responsibilities and accountabilities from SR Related Document 2. Included with the appointment letter should be:

- Induction Sheet
- Safeguarding Policy and Appendices. (if the activity will follow the chapel policy, rather than an external organisations policy)
- Code of Conduct
- Specific Good Practice Guidelines and Risk Assessment for the activity applied for

1.11 INDUCTION

Volunteers whose role involves working with children/adults with care and support needs must receive an induction sheet on appointment. They must also be offered relevant safeguarding training, if they have not recently completed a suitable course. Training must be regularly refreshed.

2 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS (DBS Checks)

2.1 WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

There are four types of criminal record checks, each are available for working with children, adults or both:

- **Basic** – This checks for unspent criminal conviction information only. This is currently obtained from Disclosure Scotland;

- **Standard** - This checks for spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings. This is obtained from the DBS.

- **Enhanced** - This includes the same as the standard check plus any additional information held by local police that's reasonably considered relevant to the role being applied for. This is obtained from the DBS; and

- **Enhanced with barred list checks** -this is like the enhanced check, but includes a check of the DBS barred lists. This is also obtained from the DBS.

Good safeguarding practice requires those who work closely with children and/or adults with care and support needs to have an enhanced criminal record check.

Details as regards eligibility for enhanced criminal record checks, as set out in the legislation, can be found in SR Related Document 7. Information on how this relates to Church roles can be found in SR Related Document 8. Those in self-help groups or family and friends arrangements are not eligible for an enhanced criminal record check.

2.2 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK INFORMATION

Oughtibridge Chapel have decided that all DBS checks will be carried out online, ensuring feedback direct to the recruiter as to whether the disclosure is clear or if the certificate needs to be seen. If a criminal record disclosure is not clear, the applicant will be asked to present the original disclosure to the Lead Recruiter, the original disclosure must always be seen. The disclosure must be cross-referenced with the Confidential Declaration (paragraph 1.6) to see if there are any discrepancies. The disclosure will be passed to thirtyone:eight for a risk assessment. The application will then be discussed confidentially with the Elders on the Leadership Team. In complex cases the advice of an independent specialist may be required. Should the applicant not wish the confidential declaration and / or the criminal record disclosure to be seen, which is entirely his / her choice, the application must not proceed further and must be terminated.

Data provided by the applicant and the DBS will be handled, used, stored, retained and disposed of in accordance with this policy and the Church Data Protection Policy.

Oughtibridge Chapel have decided that criminal record checks will be repeated every three years. This will usually be done through the update service. Should there ever be a delay beyond 4 years in obtaining the criminal record check, the person is not approved by the Church to act and must stand down pending completion of the process.

2.3 THE DBS UPDATE SERVICE

Oughtibridge Chapel will use the Update Service if:

- We have the individual's permission;
- If the volunteer holds and offers a DBS certificate obtained for a position elsewhere and has signed up to the DBS Update Service;
- the DBS certificate held is suitable for the position applied for;
- photo ID (Passport, Photo Driving Licence) checks confirm that the name and date of birth on the DBS certificate are those of the applicant.

2.4 DBS PORTABILITY

Oughtibridge Chapel have decided not to accept DBS checks obtained elsewhere unless the individual has registered for the Update Service and gives permissions for us to check their certificate, as detailed above.

2.5 REFERRAL TO THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) places a duty on organisations where people volunteer with children or adults with care and support needs in regulated activity to make a referral to the DBS in certain circumstances to protect vulnerable people from harm. This is when an organisation has dismissed or removed a person from working / volunteering with children or adults with care and support needs in regulated activity (or would or may have removed such a person if the person had not left or resigned etc.) because the person has:

- Been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence (e.g. a serious sexual or violent offence); or
- Engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and / or adults with care and support needs, (i.e. an action or inaction (neglect) that has harmed a child or adults with care and support needs or put them at risk of harm as defined under the SVGA); or

- Satisfied the harm test in relation to children and / or adults with care and support needs, (i.e. there has been no relevant conduct (i.e. no action or inaction) but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult still exists as defined under the SVGA).

Detail about how to refer would be obtained from the DBS and advice would always be obtained from thirtyone:eight.