



St Barnabas Church, Swanland

## Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

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### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out how St Barnabas Church, Swanland, will safely and fairly recruit and involve individuals with criminal convictions, in accordance with the safeguarding principles of the Church of England.

We are committed to:

- safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults
  - promoting a culture of inclusion, grace, and rehabilitation
  - ensuring that all recruitment decisions are proportionate, transparent, and defensible
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### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- employees
- volunteers
- clergy (where applicable at parish level)
- anyone undertaking roles on behalf of the church

It should be read alongside:

- Church of England *Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance*
  - Parish Safeguarding Policy
  - DBS Code of Practice
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### **3. Principles**

St Barnabas Church, Swanland recognises that:

- having a criminal record does not necessarily bar someone from working or volunteering in the church
- people with convictions can make valuable contributions to church life
- safeguarding is paramount and must guide all decisions

We therefore commit to:

- treating all applicants fairly and without discrimination
  - considering each case individually
  - ensuring decisions are based on risk, relevance, and context
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### **4. Recruitment Process and Disclosure**

All applicants for roles that are eligible for criminal record checks will be:

- informed at the earliest opportunity if a DBS check is required
- asked to complete a confidential declaration where appropriate
- supported in understanding what information must be disclosed

We will:

- only ask for information relevant to the role
  - ensure that disclosures are handled sensitively and confidentially
  - comply fully with data protection legislation
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### **5. Handling Criminal Record Disclosures**

Where an applicant discloses a criminal record, or a DBS check reveals information:

- The information will be reviewed by the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and, where appropriate, the Incumbent and/or safeguarding panel
- The applicant will be given the opportunity to discuss the disclosure
- Information will be kept strictly confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis

We will ensure:

- no applicant is automatically excluded solely due to a conviction
  - decisions are recorded with clear reasoning
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## **6. Risk Assessment of Applicants with Convictions**

A written risk assessment will be undertaken in all cases where relevant information is disclosed. This will consider:

- the nature of the offence
- the relevance of the offence to the role
- the age of the applicant at the time of the offence
- how long ago the offence occurred
- whether there is a pattern of offending
- evidence of rehabilitation and changed circumstances
- the level of supervision available in the role
- the vulnerability of those the role involves working with

Additional advice may be sought from:

- the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
- statutory agencies where appropriate

The outcome may include:

- appointment with safeguards
  - adjustment of role responsibilities
  - decision not to appoint
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## **7. Fair and Safe Inclusion of Ex-Offenders**

We are committed to the responsible inclusion of ex-offenders and will:

- ensure recruitment processes are transparent and accessible
- avoid unfair discrimination
- provide opportunities for individuals to contribute safely

- put appropriate safeguards and supervision in place where required

Safeguards may include:

- defined role boundaries
- supervision arrangements
- written agreements or covenants of behaviour
- regular review meetings

## 8. DBS Eligibility and Role Assessment

The level of DBS check required is determined by the nature of the role and the level of contact with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

### DBS Levels Overview

DBS Level Description		Typical Church Context
<b>Basic</b>	Shows unspent convictions only	General roles with no safeguarding responsibilities
<b>Standard</b>	Shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands	Roles involving trust but not regulated activity
<b>Enhanced</b>	Includes barred list checks where eligible	Roles involving substantial contact with vulnerable groups

## 9. Role-Based Risk Management

Where an applicant with a conviction is appointed:

- The level of DBS check will inform but not determine the decision
- Additional safeguards will be tailored to the specific role
- A written agreement may outline boundaries and expectations
- Supervision arrangements must be proportionate and recorded

## **10. Decision-Making and Accountability**

All decisions will:

- prioritise the safety and well-being of children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- be proportionate to the level of risk
- be clearly documented

The final decision will normally rest with:

- the Incumbent (or Archdeacon if the parish is in vacancy)
  - in consultation with the Parish Safeguarding Officer and, where necessary, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
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## **11. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

All information relating to criminal records will be:

- treated as highly confidential
  - stored securely in line with data protection requirements
  - retained only as long as necessary
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## **12. Implications of Failure to Reveal Information**

- Failure to reveal directly relevant information could lead to withdrawal of the offer of a post. In the case that disclosure information is received, the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers, if necessary, will be informed so that the information contained can be assessed, although this is not necessarily a barrier to the person undertaking the post applied for.
  - We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of work (paid or voluntary).
  - Copies of documents referred to in this policy are available on request, and this policy sits alongside other Church of England policies and practice guidance relating to recruitment processes and safeguarding.
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### **13. Review**

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually
  - following any significant change in legislation or Church of England guidance
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### **14. Approval**

Adopted by: St Barnabas Church PCC

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Review date: May 2027

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### **Commitment Statement**

St Barnabas Church, Swanland, affirms its commitment to both safeguarding and the gospel call to restoration, seeking to balance justice, mercy, and the protection of all.