

Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2)

## **Frequently Asked Questions (Parishes & Benefices)**

Some answers to key questions you might have about the Past Cases Review 2 and your role within it.

- **Is this Review essential?**

Yes. PCR2 has been approved and established by the Archbishop's Council and it is a national requirement for each Incumbent to undertake the Review.

- **Is every Incumbent being asked to undertake the Review?**

Yes.

- **What is my responsibility as the Church officer leading this review in my parish?**

You are required to examine all documentation kept within a parish that relates to any safeguarding concerns. If, following receipt of the Acting Bishop of Oxford's letter, you are unsure about the type of information you are collating or how to record any information you may have about a safeguarding concern, then please contact the Safeguarding team.

- **What if I am approached by someone who wants to disclose?**

You may be approached by a victim or survivor which might result in uncomfortable conversations and rekindle painful memories.

With permission of the victim/survivor, this should be referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding team. If permission is not granted by the victim/survivor, the Diocese can advise you about where they can receive support.

A free and confidential helpline - **0800 80 20 20** - has been established by the NSPCC for those who prefer to discuss safeguarding concerns about the Church of England with an independent organisation.

- Do I need to sign off separately for every parish in my benefice?**

Yes. Use a separate signing sheet for each of your parishes. You will find a link to the document with your copy of the Bishop's letter. A 100% response rate from the 622 parishes in the Diocese of Oxford is required.
- Who is overseeing this process?**

Archbishop's Council has approved the setting up of a Past Cases Review Reference Group in each Diocese. This is led by an independent chair, as well as key members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel, representatives from victim/survivor groups and organisations such as the Police and Local Authority Designated Officer Teams.
- What will happen to all the information gathered by the parishes?**

Any information sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding team will be assessed, and where necessary, referred to the appropriate authorities. The outcome of the review of Parish Information will be sent to an independent reviewer for scrutiny and a final report produced for sign-off by the Diocese's Past Cases Review Reference Group and the Diocesan Bishop. It will then be passed to the national Past Cases Review management team.
- Is 2 March 2020 a firm deadline?**

Yes, all signed responses must be submitted by 2 March 2020. This is to allow time for the information to be reviewed, actions undertaken if required by the Diocesan Safeguarding team, and then for the information to be independently evaluated to ensure the Diocese has taken appropriate safeguarding action.
- How far back should we be looking?**

It is important to review all files, no matter how old, because even though a perpetrator may now be deceased, their victims may still be alive and in need of pastoral care.
- What if the benefice is in vacancy or the Incumbent is otherwise absent?**

In such cases it will be the responsibility of the Area Dean, working with the Church Wardens of each parish (or the PCC Secretary where there are no Church Wardens) to undertake the review for their parish.

- **What if the benefice goes into vacancy after the Acting Bishop of Oxford's letter has been received?**

It is the responsibility of the outgoing Incumbent to ensure that all information pertaining to the Review is passed on to the new Incumbent or Church Warden, and also to the Area Dean and Archdeacon.

- **Which roles are included within the scope of 'Church Officer' as defined by the PCR2 guidance?**

Anyone 'appointed/elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid' is a broad definition.

The guidance indicates that for the purposes of PCR2 'Church Officer' will certainly include all clergy, including those with PTO and clergy such as hospital, school and prison chaplains who hold the Bishop's licence, readers and licensed lay workers; any parish lay employees and volunteers whose role includes, or has included, or is likely to include in the future, *engaging in direct involvement with children and vulnerable adults in church organised activities based upon a relationship of trust that is likely to have provided, or provide in the future, opportunities for their abuse or neglect.*

All roles that are required to undertake some level of safeguarding training should automatically be considered for inclusion within this definition.

Other roles where a basic level of safeguarding training is '*recommended but not required*' may not (refer to the table at the end of this document).

Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding team on **01865 208290** for advice if you are uncertain whether or not a particular role is within the scope of PCR2.

- **What is the definition of a vulnerable adult?**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired. For the purposes of PCR2, this includes all allegations in relation to domestic abuse.

- **What if I identify a potential example of abuse or need advice about thresholds and next steps?**

Please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding team on **01865 208290**

- **Will any support and/or counselling be made available to any victims/survivors who come forward?**

Yes. Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding team and check the Safeguarding pages on the Diocesan website for more information about support available.

- **What do we do if we are contacted by the media about the review?**

Refer all media enquiries to Steven Buckley, Director of Communications for the Diocese of Oxford: email **steven.buckley@oxford.anglican.org** during office hours or, if urgent, call **07824 906839** (7am to 10pm daily)

- **Should I put something in the pew sheet or parish magazine to ask for people to come forward if they have anything they wish to offer?**

Yes. You are free to use and adapt the following:

Our churches and church-related activities must be safe for all, with safeguarding policies and practices that promote a safer church.

We need to be certain that all known cases of concern about the behaviour of our clergy or church officers towards children and adults have been considered and dealt with appropriately.

Every church in the Diocese, including our own, is now undertaking a comprehensive review as part of the national Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2). You can find out more about PCR2 on the Diocese of Oxford website: [oxford.anglican.org/pcr-2](http://oxford.anglican.org/pcr-2)

If you have information or need to make a disclosure regarding church-related abuse, please make direct contact with the Safeguarding Team at the Diocese of Oxford on 01865 208290.

If you have lived experience of abuse from within the Church of England, you may prefer to call the dedicated telephone NSPCC helpline, which is independent of the Church. Call 0800 80 20 20

The NSPCC helpline is also available to anyone wishing to provide information or to raise concerns regarding abuse within the Church of England. The helpline is there for you whether you are reporting issues relating to children or adults or seeking to whistleblow about poor safeguarding practice. Your call is confidential, and your concerns will be taken seriously.

## Church Officer roles within the scope of PCR2 (see previous page)

<b>Safeguarding training required</b>	<b>Safeguarding training recommended</b>
PCC Member	Vergers
DBS Verifier / Recruiter	Servers
Parish worker with children / vulnerable adults (paid & unpaid)	Welcomer's
Driver of children / vulnerable adults	Caretakers
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Refreshment Helpers
Church Warden	Shop Staff
PCC Safeguarding Lead	Sidesperson's
Leader of Activity with Children / Vulnerable Adults (paid / unpaid)	Flower Arrangers
Youth and Children's Worker	Administrative Staff
Pastoral Visitor / Home Visitor	Bell-ringers
Director of Music / Music Group Leader / Choir Leader	Choir Members
Bell Tower Captain	Music Group Members
House Group Leader	Sound/ AV Technicians
Lay Pastoral Leader	
Authorised Minister – Preach / Communion / Funeral Ministry	
Authorised Listener	
Spiritual Director	
Bishops Visitor	
Ordinand	
LLM in Training	
Curate	
Anyone who holds a Licence, Authorisation or Permission to Officiate from a Diocesan Bishop – Including Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers	