



Safeguarding Q&A:

Safe Recruitment

What is the recommended ratio of adults to children when holding events with young people?

The NSPCC recommended ratios are:

- one adult leader for every 3 children aged 0-2 years.
- one adult leader for every 4 children aged 2-3 years.
- one adult leader for every 6 children aged 4-8 years.
- one adult leader for every 8 children aged 9-12 years.
- one adult leader for every 10 children aged 13-18 years.

We have youth camps and sometimes adults and children from outside of the parish attend. What is the DBS implication for this?

If it is a parish run event, operating with the approval of the Parish Priest, it should be run in accordance with the safeguarding policies and procedures for the Diocese. If it is agreed that parents can attend, they cannot be left unsupervised with any children other than their own. Adults attending cannot lead, instruct, or supervise activities, unless they have been safely recruited as a group leader/helper. If it is not a parish event and the camp is being led by an outside organisation it is for the camp organiser to manage.

Can we have clarification re using volunteer registration forms (DBS1) and references (DBS2) which may have been obtained years ago?

As part of our safe recruitment procedures, all volunteers must complete a DBS1 registration form and provide 2 referees. Where the recruitment process has been followed and a volunteer then seeks to undertake a further role which requires the same type and level of check, the DBS1 and references can be carried across.

Where a safely recruited volunteer seeks to undertake a role with a different type and level of check, for example, someone who volunteers with children's liturgy who then wishes to become a Eucharistic Minister, this is a different role and new references and DBS will be required.

Where a volunteer is involved in a rolling program such as First Holy Communion, which might not run every year, the DBS1 and references remain valid. The volunteer should remain as current on the parish audit report.

Where a volunteer steps down from their role for a period of more than 6 months, and then wishes to volunteer again, they should be treated as a new applicant and the safe recruitment process started again.

How long do we need to keep volunteer registration forms (DBS1) and references (DBS2)?

Volunteer registration forms and references should be kept for 10 years + 1 day from the date the volunteer role ends. Records can be held electronically within the parish filing system to reduce paper records.

Why is their duplication in the DBS application process in terms of the applicant needing to complete an online form after I have already sent the DBS3c and ID documents?

There is no duplication. The Parish Safeguarding Minister completes the ID verification process, which is the first step of a DBS application. Everything is then passed to the Safeguarding office who check that everything is correct and then process the information, sending an online link to the applicant for the application form to be completed.

All the information that has been captured as part of the ID verification is already added to the application by the central team, the applicant needs to confirm the information provided and make the required declarations.

Can the ID verification form (DBS3) and Self Declaration (DBS4) forms be made online forms, e.g. using Microsoft Forms?

The DBS forms are a requirement of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) as the regulator for the Catholic Church. We cannot transpose into a Microsoft form. They must be "wet signed" by the applicant.

Can the Diocese move to online ID verification?

This is not a Diocese decision. The DBS does allow for online ID verification, but the ID verifier needs to be in possession of the original documents and compare them on screen to the applicant. There are very few applicants that would feel comfortable sending their documents through the postal system, even if a tracked delivery. There is also the matter of where to (they should not be sent to a home address). Online verification places an additional requirement on the Parish Safeguarding Minister to return the documents via a secure method to the applicant.

In this modern age many documents are not paper based e.g. bank statements, utility bills and those that are paper such as council tax will soon be moving online. Can the Diocese accept printed versions of online documents?

The documents that can be accepted are in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Government. Only original documents can be accepted, and photocopies are not allowed. You must not accept documents printed from the Internet e.g., online Bank Statements and on-line Utility Bills. Postal Bank statements and bills can be requested from the provider.

The question of on-line documents was raised at a recent DBS conference. The DBS states that there is no intention to revise its procedures to accept on-line documents at the present time.

Can we be told when someone we have chased has done their online training?

When we send the link to the training out to volunteers, they are informed that they should present their certificate to the PSM as proof of completion. The onus is on the volunteer to do this. Training records are updated on a weekly basis by the central team and completions will appear on the next scheduled audit report.

Can we have the date of Update Service subscription shown on the audit report?

The audit report has been amended to include the date of subscription to the update service and this field will be completed **if the Diocesan safeguarding team have completed the subscription on behalf of the applicant.**

If the audit report shows a volunteer is subscribed but there is no date, this is because we are aware that the Volunteer registered themselves to the service, but we have not been provided with a date. Certificates must be registered with the update service within 30 days of issue.

What is the difference between update service renewal and the Diocese DBS renewal?

The DBS will contact volunteers who are registered on the update service annually and advise that their subscription will require renewal. The email will contain a link to the website for the volunteer to log in to their account and either choose to continue the subscription or cancel it.

The CSSA requires the Diocese to recheck the DBS status for all those working in roles with children and/or vulnerable adults every 3 years.

Can you communicate changes to the update service via Admin and admin news?

Where appropriate, communication that is shared with Parish Safeguarding Ministers is also included in Admin News and E-news. The changes to the update service have been shared via these two communications and we have also sent an email to all volunteers via Safesys.

What are the different DBS levels that are carried out for those holding a role in the church?

The Diocese only carries out checks at an enhanced level, these will be for either the adult and/or the child workforce with the barred list being checked in accordance with the role being undertaken. Audit reports have been updated to advise the current type of check the volunteer has.

In terms of the types of check, there are 6 main categories for volunteers:

Church Ministry role	Workforce	Barred List
Church Ministry 1.	Child & Adult	Child & Adult
Church Ministry 2.	Adult	Adult
Church Ministry 3.	Child	Child
Church Ministry 4.	Child & Adult	Child
Church Ministry 5.	Adult	No
Church Ministry 6.	Child & Adult	No

As long as all roles the volunteer undertakes are stated on the application, the safeguarding office will complete a check at the level that covers them.

Will we always know when the central team has been in contact with our parish volunteers?

Yes. It has been agreed that, when the central safeguarding office makes contact or corresponds with a volunteer, the Parish Safeguarding Minister will be copied in for information and to prevent duplication or miscommunication.