

# VOLUNTEER POLICY

The Diocese is fortunate to have a large number of people enriching our communities by volunteering in a range of parish roles. We appreciate you volunteering with us and are committed to providing you with a supportive environment. We hope that you will find your volunteer experience enjoyable and rewarding.

## 1. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Voluntary roles within the Diocese vary widely, as does the training and induction available. Your parish priest can help you learn about your voluntary role and connect you with experienced volunteers. You are encouraged to attend relevant opportunities for training and development in your parish and at Diocesan events. Information about training can be found on the Diocesan website and in the weekly E-Bulletin.

You can sign up for the E-Bulletin on the homepage of our website: W: [www.abdiocese.org.uk](http://www.abdiocese.org.uk)

## 2. HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is most important that you familiarise yourself with safety information connected to your parish and role. Ensure that you know where the emergency exits, fire extinguishers and alarms are and be fully aware of the evacuation plan in the event of an emergency. Parish staff and other volunteers can assist with this. You are responsible for carrying out your voluntary duties safely. It may be necessary to work with colleagues from the parish and central team to perform a risk assessment before undertaking certain activities. Dangerous activities should not be undertaken by volunteers. Please see the Health and Safety Policy [here](#). If you become aware of an accident or incident, or if you have any concerns about safety in the parish, please contact E: [property@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:property@abdiocese.org.uk).

## 3. SAFEGUARDING

It is the firm expectation of the Bishop, Trustees and Safeguarding Commission that all those working with vulnerable groups including children, young people or adults at risk, undertake

Diocesan Safeguarding Awareness Training. Some roles also require a DBS check. See guidance [here](#).

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, do not delay in contacting the police. Telephone 999 if a child or an adult is believed to be in immediate danger.

You must refer allegations directly to the Safeguarding department or directly to the Police. You can contact our Safeguarding Office on T: 01293 651148; E: [safeguarding@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@abdiocese.org.uk).

You can learn more about our Safeguarding Guidelines [here](#).

#### **4. WELLBEING**

As a volunteer it is important that you take responsibility for your own wellbeing, and that you only undertake tasks that you are fit and well enough to do. If you are at additional risk from infectious illnesses, we strongly encourage you to take particular care when meeting others. We advise precautions such as wearing a mask and avoiding very crowded indoor events, particularly during winter.

#### **5. PERFORMING YOUR VOLUNTARY ROLE**

We ask all our volunteers to share our values and standards. Please familiarise yourself with our published policies on equal opportunities, anti-bribery, and harassment & bullying. Volunteers are expected to abide by the commitments in these policies in the same way that staff and clergy are obliged to do.

All policies can be found [here](#).

#### **6. SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any problems or concerns while volunteering with the Diocese, please discuss these with your main point of contact in the parish. Any further issues can be raised with the Chief Operating Officer, who will direct you to the support you need: E: [coo@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:coo@abdiocese.org.uk).

#### **7. TRIAL PERIOD AND CHANGES TO YOUR ROLE**

It is customary for voluntary roles to begin with a trial period of 3 months for all volunteers, at the end of which both parties review the situation. Your parish priest may make changes to roles or activities undertaken by volunteers from time to time, as he reasonably considers is in the best interests of the parish as a whole. Volunteers do not have the right to continue in their

parish role if the priest in charge has asked them to stand down. As a volunteer, you are free to cease carrying out your parish role at any time.

## 8. EXPENSES

Certain out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with your volunteering for us can be reimbursed. Please speak to your parish contact or the Chief Operating Officer about this. Receipts should be retained, and a Diocesan [Volunteer Expenses Form](#) used to make a claim.

## 9. INSURANCE

We will provide adequate insurance cover for you while you are undertaking voluntary work in the way approved and authorised by us. You can inspect the insurance policy [here](#).

## 10. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

In the course of providing your volunteering services, you may have access to confidential information relating to the Diocese or to individuals. We expect you not to use or disclose this information to any person either during your volunteering experience with us or at any time afterwards. In the course of your work you may handle people's personal data. Please remember to do so securely, sensitively and safely. It is important to comply with the Diocesan [Data Protection Policy](#). If you have any questions about how this impacts your voluntary role, please contact E: [dpo@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:dpo@abdiocese.org.uk).

This policy is due for review by the end of October 2026.