

Safeguarding Audit Checklist: for Congregations, the Annual Inspection of Records and Local Church Review.

Congregation:.....
Date checklist completed.....
Completed by:.....

Purpose

This is an opportunity for congregations and Presbyteries to assess how well they are protecting children, and adults at risk, from harm. This Checklist was originally developed as a self-assessment tool for **congregations**. A General Assembly deliverance, 2015, extended its use to include the **Annual Inspection of Records** and the **Local Church Review**. The checklist is a set of **20 questions**, or standards, about what good safeguarding should look like in practice. It is the process for the audit and review of safeguarding arrangements in the Church. The aim is to identify good practice and opportunities for improvements. For help with the questions see *Church of Scotland Safeguarding Handbooks 1 to 5*, the summary of General Assembly Safeguarding Committee Deliverances, policy and practice guidance documents, posters, and key publications at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/safeguarding_service/key_publications.

The questions are arranged under **three themes**:

- Policies, procedures and safeguarding arrangements
- Safe Recruitment and Management of Volunteers and Paid Staff
- Awareness of Harm/Abuse and Safeguarding Training

For a shorter review **9 key** safeguarding activities are highlighted in rows 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16 and 17.

Method

1. **Congregations**: the Kirk Session could give one or two members – who are ideally not on the Safeguarding Panel – the task of using the checklist to gather information. How you gather this information is up to the Kirk Session. But the Kirk Session could get all Church groups working with children or protected adults to complete just questions 15–17. That information could then be checked against the Safeguarding Congregational Register form SG7 (2017). A short report of findings and recommendations could then be prepared for the Kirk Session.
2. **Annual Inspection of Records**: submit this SG11 form. (Before 2015 only the Safeguarding Congregational Register was inspected).
3. **Local Church Review**: use this revised SG11 as the inspection schedule.

Further information and guidance about all of the safeguarding activities in the following table and a directory of General Assembly Safeguarding Committee Deliverances is at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/safeguarding_service/key_publications

Safeguarding activity	x✓	Notes/action needed
<i>THEME 1: POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS</i>		
1. Are the Church's Safeguarding Policy Statement, 2010, 'Ensuring a Safe Church for All' and the Safeguarding in the Church of Scotland poster, 2015 , with details about how to contact the Safeguarding Coordinator, clearly displayed?		
2. Has the Kirk Session appointed a Safeguarding Coordinator? (Two are sometimes appointed.)		

Safeguarding activity	x ✓	Notes/action needed
3. Has the name and email address of the Safeguarding Coordinator been passed to the Church of Scotland's Safeguarding Service? <i>(If not the congregation will not receive important safeguarding updates. Use form SG10)</i>		
4. If a member of the congregation or a volunteer working with children or adults at risk, suspected or witnessed harm, or it was reported to them, would they immediately know how to contact the Safeguarding Coordinator ? <i>(See 1 above.)</i>		
5. Has the Kirk Session set up a Safeguarding Panel and have the members attended Safeguarding Coordinator training? <i>(Safeguarding Coordinator training covers most of what Safeguarding Panel members need to know).</i>		
6. Does the Safeguarding Coordinator update Kirk Session about the latest safeguarding policies and procedures?		
7. Is the Safeguarding Congregational Register , form SG7 (2017), up-to-date? <i>(This is the record of all volunteers and paid staff who are PVG Scheme members – essential for ensuring that we do not 'employ' barred individuals who have harmed children or protected adults.)</i>		
8. Are the Kirk Session, the Minister and the Safeguarding Panel aware of the policy for managing those who pose a risk (sex offenders), and the procedure for their safe inclusion in worship or in any other church activities, as described in <i>Safeguarding Handbook 5, 2014</i> ?		
9. Prior to planned activities for children or adults at risk is the Safeguarding Service Risk Assessment Tool being used to identify and address potential risks? <i>(Use form SG20, in Church of Scotland Safeguarding Handbook 4, 2013, pages 4–6).</i>		
10. Does the Kirk Session have a standard signed Let Agreement with individuals or groups who hire Church premises and encourage their compliance with the PVG Scheme if they are providing a service for children or protected adults? <i>(See Safeguarding Handbook 4, 2013, page 23).</i>		
11. Is the Kirk Session aware of the Disciplinary Code 2012 , for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007? <i>(See Safeguarding Handbook 2, 2013, pages 16–19).</i>		
12. Are all confidential paper and electronic safeguarding records stored in a secure and confidential place and, when necessary, destroyed?		
THEME 2: SAFE RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF		
13. Has the Kirk Session ensured that all new paid staff and volunteers doing regulated work with vulnerable groups have completed the safe recruitment process and been appointed by Kirk Session? <i>(Job description, interview, two references and since 2011, PVG Scheme membership or update etc. See Safeguarding Handbook 2, 2013, page 6 for summary).</i>		

Safeguarding activity	x ✓	Notes/action needed	
14. Where a congregation's children are attending a joint churches/congregations activity, for example a school holidays group, is there evidence that all volunteers have been safely recruited? (This could be a short typed agreement covering all the arrangements for the joint event including safe recruitment).			
THEME 3: AWARENESS OF HARM/ABUSE AND SAFEGUARDING TRAINING			
15. Have all volunteers and paid staff been issued with the Pocket Guide Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk: Key Information for Volunteers and Staff , 2012 (reprinted 2014). And has the content of this short guide been discussed with them individually or as a group?			
16. Reporting harm or abuse: do all volunteers and paid staff know the procedure to follow if harm or abuse is suspected, witnessed or reported to them, as set out in the Pocket Guide (see 17 above). This includes suspected or reported non-recent abuse .			
17. Have all volunteers and paid staff attended the introductory level of Church of Scotland safeguarding training ? Is there a record of who has attended safeguarding training, and when, and is refresher training needed for some? Please fill in the training needs in notes field. (See <i>Safeguarding Handbook 3, 2012, on the Safeguarding Service webpage, for types of training and how to arrange them</i>).		Total numbers of volunteers who attended training this year	Total number volunteers still needing training
18. Has a representative group (not necessarily all) of the Kirk Session attended Kirk Session Safeguarding Training to be made aware of their responsibilities for the safe recruitment and management of volunteers; and ensuring that effective arrangements are in place to prevent and respond to harm? (<i>Kirk Session responsibilities are set out in Safeguarding Committee directory of Safeguarding Committee General Assembly Deliverances.</i>)		Total numbers of Kirk Session members who attended training this year	Total numbers of Kirk Sessions members still needing training
19. Has the Safeguarding Coordinator attended Safeguarding Coordinator training? Please fill in the training needs in notes field.		Total numbers of coordinators who attended training this year	Total number coordinators still needing training
20. Has the Safeguarding Coordinator advised the Presbytery Safeguarding Contact about the safeguarding training needs identified in nos. 17–19, above?			

Contact for more information:

t: 0131 240 2256 e: safeguarding@churchofscotland.org.uk w: www.churchofscotland.org.uk for the most up-to-date information