

Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Safeguarding Policy, as approved by General Committee on 10 March 2018

Introduction

1. The procedures below are designed to ensure that young people and vulnerable adults can be fully and safely involved with ringing activities organised by Officers of the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers (SNDG). They should be reviewed annually.
2. These procedures are based on current legal requirements and the guidelines and procedures of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.
3. Whilst child and vulnerable adult protection considerations are required for all ringing activities within the SNDG region, these procedures are intended to apply only to ringing events organised by the SNDG. See separate guidance document covering safeguarding requirements for individual towers.
4. Legislation requires that all who work (in voluntary or in paid employment) with young people should keep them safe from harm. "Children" are defined in legislation as anyone under the age of 18, or anyone who has been assessed as having a mental age of under 18. Vulnerable adults also need similar protection from harm.
5. There is reference throughout to the "Officers" of the SNDG (which includes those of the Districts), but it is important to recognise that other members of the SNDG who may be involved in the organisation of ringing events where young people and vulnerable adults are present (such as peals and quarter peals or other privately organised ringing) also carry the same responsibilities, and it is recommended that similar procedures are adopted in such cases.

Guild Safeguarding Officer

The Guild will appoint a Safeguarding Officer to monitor and assist in the administration of the SNDG Safeguarding Procedures, maintain appropriate records and liaise as necessary with the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors.

The Safeguarding Officer will act as a source of information and advice on Safeguarding matters for members of the Guild. Relevant safeguarding policies, resources and links will be made available on a designated area of the Guild website.

DBS Checking of Guild and District Officers:

DBS legislation states that:

"A DBS check would be required if a person undertakes teaching, training or instruction; care or supervision of children if carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period or overnight)".

A DBS check would also be required for someone:

"...driving a vehicle being used only for conveying children and carers or supervisors under arrangements carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period".

On this basis, it can be concluded that there is no need in law for most Guild and District Officers to be DBS checked for the purposes of running monthly practices, for example. DBS checking might, however, be needed for more regular activities such as attending a local practice on a weekly basis to support teaching (in the capacity as a District or Guild representative), or for a consolidated ringing course delivered over a number of weeks.

It is, however, likely that many Guild and District Officers will already possess DBS Certificates through their local towers. As it is acceptable to utilise DBS Certificates obtained through local parishes for Guild purposes, Guild and District Officers will be asked if they are willing to share details of any existing DBS certificate with the Guild

Safeguarding Officer in order to establish a list of DBS certified individuals. This information can then be used when planning Guild or District events which require individuals teaching, training or supervising to be DBS checked.

Although DBS checks are valid for three years, they can only provide assurance at the point of issue: many parishes require DBS certificate holders to make annual self-declarations to compensate. Guild and District Officers will therefore be asked to update any records held by the Guild Safeguarding Officer annually.

Where there is a need for a Guild or District Officer to have a DBS Certificate but the individual does not have this in place via their local tower, then the preference would be for the individual to arrange for DBS checking via their local Parish Safeguarding Officer. If this is not possible, then the Guild Safeguarding Officer should be consulted.

Training of Guild and District Officers

All Guild and District Officers, regardless of whether or not they are likely to take on training or supervision responsibilities or come into close contact with young people on a regular basis, should complete the on-line Level C0 Safeguarding Training which can be accessed here: <http://southwell.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/C0-Introduction-to-Safeguarding-website-info.pdf>. The aim of the module is to provide a basic awareness of safeguarding, particularly within the context of the Church of England. In general, it takes no more than an hour to complete. The electronic certificate received upon completion of the module should be forwarded to the Guild Safeguarding Officer.

All Guild and District Officers who are likely to take on training or supervision responsibilities or come into close contact with young people on a regular basis are encouraged to also complete the Level C1 Safeguarding module. C1 covers the roles and responsibilities of individuals working directly with children and vulnerable adults, the principles of self-protection and how and when to report safeguarding concerns. Module C1 is delivered as a three hour face-to-face session, at a variety of locations throughout the Diocese. A mixture of evening and weekend dates are available. Advanced booking is essential, as each course is limited to 25 attendees. Details of the face-to-face sessions can be found here: <http://southwell.anglican.org/mission-ministry/safeguarding/>. Proof of completion should be forwarded to the Guild Safeguarding Officer.

Guild and District Meetings and Practices

Guild and District Officers organising and running meetings and practices are responsible for ensuring that the procedures detailed below are followed.

1. A list of attendees must be kept for all District and Guild meetings and practices:
 - The first name and surname of all attendees should be recorded.
 - Where a meeting or practice takes place at more than one venue, a separate record must be made for each venue.
 - Old/full attendance books should be submitted to the Guild Library for storage, so that a long-term historical record can be kept.
 - Children must be supervised at all times and should only be allowed into hazardous locations, such as the bell chamber, when accompanied by the Tower Captain (or deputy).
2. The Guild or District Officer responsible for the event should endeavour to ensure that at least two adults (ideally at least one of either gender) arrive at the start of any organised event.
3. Two adults (if possible of different sexes) should normally be present whenever young people and/or vulnerable adults are taking part in ringing or being transported to or from ringing events. Guild and District Officers need to exercise informed vigilance as regards the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults present at Guild events. However,
 - a. Neither the SNDG, nor its officers, should act in *loco parentis* as regards any young people and/or vulnerable adults attending its events. Tower Captains shall be asked to advise of any such people from their tower who wish to attend SNDG events and take responsibility for ensuring that the procedures agreed for protection of young persons and/or vulnerable adults from their tower at such events are followed. This would normally mean that such persons are accompanied to such events by adults from their own tower.

- b. Where a parent/carer is always present during an event, the parent is responsible for the young person's or vulnerable adult's welfare.
4. Children must be supervised at all times and should only be allowed into hazardous locations, such as the bell chamber, when accompanied by the adults responsible for their care, be that adults from the child's home tower, or a parent/guardian.
5. Ringers helping children by ringing another bell or "standing behind" should be made aware of the need to protect personal space. Touching should only be that appropriate for teaching, supervision and/or in an emergency.
6. Normal Health and Safety issues should always be taken into consideration. Young people and vulnerable adults are not to be allowed into a potentially hazardous situation unaccompanied. The organiser of SNDG events shall ensure that any such people are appropriately supervised in their ringing. If the organiser considers for any reason that it is not safe for a young person and/or vulnerable adult to ring they shall politely and kindly prevent them from doing so.
7. If an accident occurs at a Guild or District Event, this must be recorded on the Accident Record Form provided on the Guild Website and a copy sent to the Guild Management Committee.

For Training Days, or events involving special activities other than bell ringing, the following requirements also apply:

1. The Guild or District Officer organising the event shall provide appropriate information about the event on an Information and Consent Form. This form shall be made available in sufficient time for it to be completed and signed by the parent or guardian, and returned to the organising officer prior to the event. Tower Captains shall be asked to advise the organising officer in good time of any young people and/or vulnerable adults wishing to attend, and assist in ensuring that the Information and Consent Forms are completed, signed and returned.
2. The parents/carers must be told if there is any plan to use a video camera as a training tool, and the consent must make this clear. The videotape must be erased after the teaching session, in the presence of the SNDG officer and an independent adult witness.
3. All ringing training shall be carried out by suitably competent and experienced ringers, and any training which involves close and regular contact with young people will be supervised by someone who has been DBS checked.
4. Any transport arrangements as an integral part of an event will generally be made so that young people and/or vulnerable adults do not travel in a car with just one adult. In the event of this being necessary as an exception, the young person and/or vulnerable adult should sit in the back.
5. A first aid kit and an accident logbook should be available at all events. The organising officer shall take on the responsibilities of an Appointed Person, or appoint someone else suitable to carry out this role. The Appointed Person shall look after the first aid equipment and ensure they have ready access to a phone, to enable the emergency services to be called if required. The Appointed Person will also be responsible for completing any accident reports. First aid cover shall be provided where appropriate for major events.
6. Appropriate records from events, including Information and Consent Forms and any accident reports, shall be sent to the SNDG Safeguarding Officer.

Reporting Concerns at Guild Events

If a child or vulnerable adult is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, the emergency services should be contacted by telephoning 999. The Guild Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor should also be informed, who will also liaise with the Parish Safeguarding Officers as appropriate.

Less urgent concerns about behaviour of any adult ringers should be raised with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or Guild Safeguarding Officer/, who will be able to advise about any further actions and also liaise with the local Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer can be found here: <http://southwell.anglican.org/mission-ministry/safeguarding/>. The Guild Safeguarding Officer can be contacted via safeguarding@southwelldg.org.uk.