

CRB Checks: Advice from KCACR: June 2011.

Tower captains, secretaries and many ringers will be aware that there is a confusing situation as regards the need for CRB checks; this has particularly been the case following two reviews of legislation and the suspension of some parts of the relevant Act of Parliament. Advice issued by the Church of England last November brought some clarification but Dioceses have interpreted this advice differently. The purpose of this paper is

- to clarify KCACR's understanding
- to make recommendations to tower captains when agreeing with their PCC which CRB checks are needed
- to ask that local arrangements are reported to KCACR, via the CP lead, so that we are aware of current practice. (This will be important as we *may* seek intervention by Central Council over some problems)

The main considerations are:

* CRB checking has its place in good practice, but the essential requirement is a focus on behaviour. Tower Captains should ensure that the advice in the Central Council leaflet is followed, so that children and vulnerable adults can ring in a safe and welcoming environment. These guidelines should be drawn to your PCC representative's attention when discussing CRB checking.

*Central Council and KCACR agree with and support the recommendation from the Church of England that CRB checks should be required on "All Tower Captains, Ringing Masters and Adult Ringers who train/teach children under 16". (This is in Appendix 1 of the 4th edition of "Protecting all God's children").

*Strictly speaking, this definition applies to "mixed towers", i.e. where children are present – so that checks are undertaken by those currently within the defined scope of "regulated activity" – but Central Council and KCACR believe it is good practice for such checks to be agreed for all towers. This is because, for example, children may visit "non - mixed" towers, or learners may join soon after the PCC have carried out checks.

*Chichester, Rochester and Southwark CP advisers have told us they agree with this definition, and will not carry out "blanket checks" of all ringers in a tower. However, Rochester believe they can request CRB checks only in "mixed" towers, believing our, and Central Council's, suggestion of it being "good practice" to have checks in all towers would not be legal.

*Canterbury Diocese is choosing not to follow the C of E national guidance. They are advising PCC reps to check all ringers in "mixed" towers, and none in "non - mixed". The national C of E guidance warns that such "blanket checks" may be subject to legal challenge, and the Central Council are aware of this situation.

*The C of E has not yet clarified its position on portability of checks – so, for instance, an up to date check on a teacher may not be accepted as sufficient.

When discussing the need for checks with your PCC rep please advise them of the C of E definition, as above, and please note that training/teaching implies main responsibility for this, not just standing near a learner to support the trainer.

If you wish to discuss these matters in more detail please contact the KCACR CP lead, Nigel Spencer, on 01303 260524, or by email on np_mjs@btinternet.com

If you have had, or will have, discussions with your PCC during this year, 2011, please could you contact Nigel and tell him the outcome.

NPS. June 2011.