

Ad Clerum 1.8

The appointment of lay workers working with children, youth, families and the elderly

A growing number of parishes throughout the diocese are employing lay workers in order to increase and develop their work with different groups of people. This is an exciting and encouraging development. However when a parish decides to employ a lay worker it needs to be aware of the legal, financial and personal implications of doing so.

It is the responsibility of the parish to ensure that they comply with current legislation and that a detailed contract of employment is entered into with the lay worker. The Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Personnel Advisors (via the Diocesan Secretary) are happy to give general guidance. Before a parish decides to employ a lay worker, they should ensure that they are paying fully the parish share (a parish's first responsibility is to ensure that the Diocese is able to continue to pay for their parish priest).

It is also the parish's responsibility to obtain clearance under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (formerly called CRB).

We strongly encourage all connected with the Diocese to pay at least the "Living Wage" to those they employ. Paying the National Minimum Wage is a statutory obligation. By contrast, the Living Wage is a voluntary undertaking by employers who commit to paying their lowest paid staff more than the statutory minimum and above the "market" rate for these jobs. In November 2012 the General Synod wholeheartedly endorsed the Living Wage campaign. For further details see <http://www.livingwage.org.uk/> . It is very much a live issue within the Church.

A great deal of work has already been undertaken on the employment of youth workers/ministers and guidelines have been prepared which are available from the Diocesan Office. In particular the Diocesan Youth Officer (who can be contacted via the Diocesan Office) is a useful point of contact.

Thank you for all you are doing to further Mission and Ministry within your parish. We want to encourage you in our moral duty to ensure that all we do in such situations is within the law and, more than that, is an example of excellence.

Revised April 2015.