

STAFF HANDBOOK

Version 6 - March 2019

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF).

We trust that you will settle into your new role quickly, will soon feel at home here and will see where your role fits into the overall work carried out here in Church House to support the parishes and bishops of the diocese in promoting the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the diocese.

Our achievements in Church House depend on each of us performing our role well and working together as a team. Although our roles are all very different we are very much interdependent upon each other.

This staff handbook has been compiled to introduce you to the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance and to help to provide the day to day information you will require regarding practices and procedures. Changes will occur from time to time as the work at Church House develops and grows, but you will be advised of these changes as and when they happen. However, if you are unsure of anything at any time please speak to your line manager, to a member of Human Resources or to me as Diocesan Secretary.

We value each and every member of the team at Church House. We believe that we have exciting and challenging plans and are determined to do our very best, individually and collectively, to make them a reality. You will be a key part of this.

We trust that you will enjoy your work here and on behalf of the bishops and the DBF, express a very warm welcome to you.

George Colville
Diocesan Secretary

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

You will have received a formal letter of appointment to your post together with a written statement of the main terms and conditions of your employment, which will form the contractual elements of your employment. This staff handbook and appendices, which are your personal property, supplements that information. All the information in this handbook applies to you, unless your letter of appointment states otherwise.

In addition to your letter of appointment, this handbook refers to a number of other documents which contain more detail on certain aspects of your employment. It is important that you study these documents and are familiar with them. A full list of contents is included.

Employment law and the entitlements of employees change rapidly. Therefore, the DBF reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the content of this handbook and introduce new policies from time to time, although every effort will be made at full consultation.

Revised versions will be circulated as and when appropriate.

The contents of this staff handbook are not contractual and do not form part of your Contract of Employment.

THE CHRISTIAN BASIS AND ETHOS OF THE CHESTER DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE

The DBF is the body which oversees the central financial and administrative work of the Diocese of Chester, provides support, teaching and trained personnel to advance the mission and ministry of the parishes within the Church of England Diocese of Chester, and the mission and ministries of the bishops of the Diocese.

The DBF is part of the Church of England, the established Church of the land, which proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and aims to proclaim the Kingdom of God in an open way to all people, of all races, cultures and backgrounds.

The Church in the Diocese is a partnership between numerous people and organisations, notably:

- The Diocesan Bishop (together with the senior clergy who advise him, including the Suffragan and Assistant Bishops, Dean of the Cathedral, Archdeacons and Advisers)
- The clergy - based in parishes and sector ministry in prisons, hospitals, schools, colleges, universities and other specialist areas, the majority of whom are full time and stipendiary (paid)

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

- Lay communicant members (who are the chief financial supporters and workers for the church at all levels)
- The DBF and DBE (Diocesan Board of Education) Staff (generally based at Church House)

The Church of England is committed to proclaiming the Gospel in partnership with Christians of all denominations. It welcomes to Holy Communion all Christians of any denomination who have been baptised in the name of the Trinity and are full members of their respective churches.

For many posts within the Diocese those who are not members of the Church of England are welcome to apply. We respect their right to express different religious and philosophical opinions but require them, as employees of the Diocese, to respect our ethos as an Anglican Christian organisation and not to undermine it. These posts will require the post-holders to be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of the Church of England.

Some posts may include an Occupational Requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian in accordance with the Equality Act, 2010. Where this applies the recruitment documentation will state this.

Any breaches of this ethos statement may result in the disciplinary procedure being invoked. Action amounting to an undermining of the Christian ethos of the organisation may be considered to be gross misconduct.

We aim to operate:

- within Christian principles of justice and inclusion,
- with a management style that is supportive, open and responsive,
- and within Company and Charity Law.

THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER

The Diocese of Chester was created in 1541. It covers an area of 1017 square miles, including Cheshire, the Wirral, and parts of both Greater Manchester and Derbyshire. The Diocese is the third largest in the Province of York and the ninth largest in England.

The Diocese is divided into two archdeaconries, Chester and Macclesfield, with a total of eighteen Deaneries.

There are around 280 parishes; about 100 of which can be described as rural, some of the others are areas of dense urban population. The Diocese has around 280 clergy and over 400 licensed readers.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

CHURCH HOUSE

The work of the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) is operated from within Church House.

The Finance department oversees all the accounting issues relating to DBF including payment of clergy.

The Communications department is responsible for the diocesan publications: Chester Diocesan News and the Diocesan Yearbook, as well as the website. It also handles all press queries and communications between Church House and secular and Christian media representatives.

The Property department is responsible for dealing with all enquiries regarding clergy housing within the Diocese. It also includes the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) work, which oversees the requests from churches to make changes, improvements and repairs to their buildings.

The Committee for Social Responsibility resources and supports parishes in mission, particularly their social action and outreach in the areas of: Counselling; Criminal Justice; Disability Awareness and signing; Environment; Family Life; Interfaith; Mental Health; Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns; Project Development and Resources; Rural Mission and Ministry; Safeguarding; Urban Mission and Ministry and World Development.

The Committee for Ministry is concerned with the recruitment, selection and training for ordained and lay ministries (Readers and Pastoral Workers) for mission and ministry in the diocese. They also provide a variety of short and long term training and development activities as well as vocational courses for those considering full or part time stipendiary or lay roles within the diocese.

The Mission Team aims to inspire, enthuse and support churches in mission, including both spiritual and numerical growth across generations. Responsible for strategy development and exploration of a fresh vision to grow the Kingdom, we help churches energise ministries to make sure that there is a growing and sustainable Christian witness in every local community. Working in partnership with clergy and lay leaders, we promote the health of churches, ensuring they are appropriately resourced to evangelise and grow new disciples of Christ, as well as develop welcome, worship and giving strategies. Together we ensure that the Diocese is ready to tackle the evolving shape of the church so that we can meet the challenges of mission and ministry in coming decades.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Education department promotes church schools, religious education and worship; advises school governors, school leaders and trustees and approves alterations and repairs on school buildings where necessary as well as providing services for church schools, including governor training and support, staff training and support, school inspections and building and professional services. It includes two separate companies, Chester Diocesan Board of Education and Chester Diocesan Academies Trust, operating from Church House, which supports the work in Church schools and academies.

The Human Resources department is responsible for all personnel matters from recruitment to retirement of all the DBF staff and clergy, including appointments, (together with being the Designated Officer for clergy appointments), pay and remuneration, conditions of service, retirement and termination. They also provide advice and support to the Bishop, other senior clergy and managers as well as to parishes. They are also responsible for the DBS process for lay staff and clergy appointments.

Foxhill is the spiritual conference and retreat centre near Frodsham in Cheshire, owned and managed by the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance. It provides opportunities for individuals and groups to meet, relax and gain spiritual understanding and fulfilment. Foxhill offers day and residential retreats, conferences and study breaks as well as providing meeting rooms with modern facilities to groups of varying sizes.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

CONTACTS WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER

Church House

Church House
5500 Daresbury Park
Daresbury
Warrington
WA4 4GE

Tel: 01928 718834

Web: www.chester.anglican.org

Bishop's House

Abbey Square
Chester
CH1 2JD

Tel: 01244 350864

Fax: 01244 314187

E-mail: bpchester@chester.anglican.org

Bishop's Lodge

67 Bidston Road
Prenton
CH43 6TR

Tel: 0151 652 2741

E-mail: bpbirkenhead@chester.anglican.org

Chester Cathedral

Chester Cathedral Office
12 Abbey Square
Chester
CH1 2HU

Tel: 01244 324756

Fax: 01244 341110

www.chestercathedral.com

Bishop's Lodge

Back Lane
Dunham Town
Altrincham
WA14 4SG

Tel: 0161 928 5611

E-mail: bpstockport@chester.anglican.org

Foxhill – Chester Diocesan Conference Centre

Tarvin Road
Frodsham
WA6 6XB

Tel: 01928 733777

Fax: 01928 731422

www.foxhillchester.co.uk

E-mail: foxhill@chester.anglican.org

SECTION 2 PAY AND BENEFITS

HOURS OF WORK

Your contractual hours of work are stated in your letter of appointment. Full time employees are paid on the basis of a thirty five hour week. There is a system of flexible working, operating within the Working Time Regulations, details of which are included in the Flexible Working Hours Policy & Procedure on the staff page of the diocesan website.

Staff are permitted to have tea and coffee at any point during the day providing that this does not interfere with the overall efficiency of their office.

Overtime should not normally be necessary, but if it is essential, and authorised in advance by the appropriate line manager or the Diocesan Secretary, staff will be expected to co-operate and make themselves available to work reasonable amounts of overtime when required. Time off in lieu will be given for the time worked. Overtime may occasionally be paid in exceptional situations (authorised in advance) at the rate equivalent to the employee's normal hourly rate. Senior members of staff are expected to work such hours as are compatible with the efficient performance of their duties.

HOLIDAYS AND BANK HOLIDAYS

The leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March. Any carry-over of leave from one year to another must be approved, before the end of March, by the Diocesan Secretary and taken before the end of April. This is limited to a maximum of 5 days, in line with Working Time Regulations, unless there are exceptional circumstances and additional time is allowed to be carried over by the Diocesan Secretary.

Every effort will be made to ensure that staff can take their holidays when they wish, but the efficiency of the Diocese must come first and the final decision must remain with the Diocesan Secretary. Proposed holiday dates should be discussed with your line manager prior to booking the holiday, and any difficulties referred to the Diocesan Secretary. Employees will receive a holiday card. Leave should be agreed in advance with your line manager and registered on the holiday card, which is kept in the Finance department. It is a condition of your employment that you will comply fully with the system for noting/recording holiday taken.

Staff are usually required to take up to four days leave during the Christmas holiday period as Church House closes over the Christmas and New Year period.

Staff appointed or leaving during the calendar year qualify for a proportionate amount of leave, according to the date of arrival or departure.

SECTION 2 PAY AND BENEFITS

Staff leaving during a year in which more paid annual leave has been taken than that to which they are entitled by their length of service during that year, will have a payment deducted from their final salary from the DBF in respect of that excess. Staff shall not normally be entitled to take annual leave before completing three months' service, except with the agreement of the

Diocesan Secretary. Holiday commitments made by new staff joining during the year will be honoured so far as is possible.

Your holiday entitlement is stated in your letter of appointment. Leave entitlement is usually 25 days per annum. This is pro-rata for part-time staff. Employees are also entitled to statutory holidays or may be given the time off in lieu.

SALARY POLICY

Your starting salary will have been confirmed with you before you commenced your employment. Unless stated otherwise, your salary will be paid on (or before) the 26th of each month, directly into your bank account. However, it is advised that any regular payments should be arranged for the 1st of the following month to allow time for any difficulty with salary payments to be dealt with. Any changes in salary or other payments will be notified to you in advance of them being paid wherever possible.

It is the policy of the DBF that salaries will be reviewed before 1 April each year on the recommendation of its Human Resources Committee, and after such consultation as is considered appropriate with relevant officers and committees. Any changes in salary levels will usually be advised by letter from the Diocesan Secretary or Human Resources department.

It is open to any member of staff to raise concerns about the level of their remuneration and, in particular, either the pay scale to which their salary is linked or the point on that scale at which they are paid. You may do this firstly by raising the issue with your line manager. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved you can then raise it with the Diocesan Secretary. If the matter still is not satisfactorily resolved it should then go to the Human Resources Committee. Should you still have any concerns you may use the Grievance procedure.

TAX OFFICE

All Church House Income Tax arrangements are made with the Tax Office (709), whose address is H.M. Inspector of Taxes, West Lancashire and West Cheshire District, Customer Operations, the Triad, Stanley Road, Bootle, L75 1HW. Telephone 0845 300 0627.

SECTION 2 PAY AND BENEFITS

RETIREMENT

There is no normal retirement age for staff in accordance with the Equality Act. Staff wishing to retire will need to give notice in accordance with the notice period of their Contract of Employment. However, appointments will be made with staff who are approaching the age of 65 to determine their future plans for succession planning purposes.

PENSIONS

Full-time and part-time employees of the DBF, aged 18 or over, are usually eligible to a pension scheme contribution. Details of the pension scheme, which is operated by the Church of England Pensions Board are provided in your Contract of Employment. The scheme is contributory (minimum of 5% of salary) and details are available for examination by arrangement. A copy of the rules of the scheme will be given to all who join.

CHILDCARE COSTS

Tax-Free Childcare is a government scheme in which the government will pay £2 for every £8 you pay your childcare provider via an online account. Details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/tax-free-childcare>

OFFICIAL TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE & OTHER EXPENSES

The current procedures in operation and current travel rates are explained in the Expenses Policy which is found on the staff page of the diocesan website. Changes in mileage rates will normally be notified to staff.

SECTION 3 ABSENCE FROM WORK

SICKNESS ABSENCE

If you are absent from work due to illness, you should:

- (i) Notify your designated line manager or Human Resources by telephone personally (wherever possible) before 10.00 a.m. on the first qualifying day of your absence, specifying the reason for such absence and the expected date of return.
- (ii) If you are absent for a full day or longer, you should produce to the HR department a self-certificate, in the form provided by the Finance department, containing the following: dates of absence; nature of illness; total number of days of absence; your signature certifying that the absence is wholly due to sickness or injury.
- (iii) If you are absent for more than seven days, you should produce to the HR department Medical Certificates covering the period of absence. For this purpose only, the seven day period includes Saturday and Sunday.

SICK PAY ARRANGEMENTS

There is a sick pay scheme to cover you during genuine absence. Details of your entitlement will have been noted in your Contract of Employment.

You are entitled to six months of sick pay during any rolling 12 month period. Thereafter you will usually accrue an entitlement to contractual sick pay at half your normal salary for an additional period depending upon your length of service as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| - One year's service | - one month |
| - Two years' service | - two months |
| - Three years' service | - three months |
| - Four years' service | - four months |
| - Five years' service | - six months |

These payments will include any Statutory Sick Pay to which you may be entitled.

The DBF reserves the right to require you to produce medical certificates in addition to those required by the regulations and to submit yourself to medical examination. Employees who are absent within 8 weeks of a previous period of sickness absence (whatever the period of either absences) will be required to produce a medical certificate in order to qualify for contractual sick pay.

SECTION 3 ABSENCE FROM WORK

If, whilst off sick, you are entitled to claim state benefits, the DBF reserves the right to reduce your sick pay by the amount of any benefit entitlements, whether or not you claim them.

Payment of sick pay is conditional on full compliance with the DBF's rules and procedures for dealing with incapacity for work owing to sickness or injury. Non-compliance with those rules may lead to the withdrawal of sick pay and may constitute a serious disciplinary offence. You have the right to request written reasons for the withholding of sick pay and to take up any complaint under the Grievance Procedure. These conditions are without prejudice to any statutory rights that you may also have.

On returning to work your line manager, or a delegated person will conduct a return to work interview and undertake a risk assessment if this is felt appropriate. The Human Resources department may conduct a return to work interview where a lengthy period of absence has occurred or after several occasions of sickness absence.

The DBF would not expect any holiday to be taken within four weeks of a return to work after a sickness absence of four weeks or more, other than in exceptional circumstances and with the specific permission of the Diocesan Secretary.

Where an employee is absent from work due to sickness when holiday leave has already been booked, the holiday entitlement will only be reimbursed when a medical certificate is produced, irrespective of the length of absence.

PAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave with pay for compassionate reasons shall normally not exceed three days in any one year, increased to 6 days for those with carer responsibilities or where it is felt appropriate in the circumstances. All such leave is subject to the approval of the Diocesan Secretary. Permission will be given to attend the funeral of a close friend or relative. Leave in excess of six days shall normally be without pay or reckoned as part of the holiday entitlement.

UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Unpaid leave is available to deal with a family emergency and to make alternative care arrangements for a dependent. Further information is available from the HR department.

The DBF may grant a period of unpaid leave so that you can extend your normal holiday entitlement if you have special reasons, for example, an extended visit to family abroad. This must be discussed with your line manager and the Diocesan Secretary before any arrangements are finalised.

SECTION 3 ABSENCE FROM WORK

JURY SERVICE

You should inform the Diocesan Secretary as soon as you are notified if you are called for Jury Service, so that alternative staff cover can be arranged during your absence. You should claim the allowance for loss of earnings from the Court and inform the DBF's Head of Finance as the allowance received will be deducted from your salary. On occasions when you are not required at Court or are dismissed early, you should come into work as normal, unless the Diocesan Secretary has specifically authorised otherwise for practical reasons.

PUBLIC DUTIES

In agreement with the Diocesan Secretary employees who perform public duties may be granted up to 5 days' paid leave of absence in addition to their annual holiday entitlement. Payment will be at full salary minus any payment which the employee receives in respect of their duties. Employees, therefore, have a duty to inform the Diocesan Secretary of any such payment received.

Public duties qualifying for special leave will be those performed as a:

- Magistrate / Justice of the Peace
- Governor of a school or college
- Member of a local authority or health authority
- Member of a statutory tribunal
- Church of England Synodical duties
- Member of auxiliary or reserved forces when attendance is obligatory.

ABSENCE DUE TO INJURY

In the unfortunate event that you shall be incapable of attending to your duties by reason of injury sustained wholly or in part as a result of actionable negligence, nuisance or breach of statutory duty on the part of a third party, all payments made to you by the Diocesan Board of Finance under the sickness absence clause, shall to the extent that compensation is recoverable from the third party, constitute loans by the Board to yourself which shall be repaid when and to the extent that you recover compensation for loss of earnings from the third party by action or otherwise.

SECTION 3 ABSENCE FROM WORK

MATERNITY LEAVE AND MATERNITY PAY

Eligible female employees are entitled to Maternity Leave and Maternity Pay.

In order to be eligible for Maternity Leave, staff need to forward their MATB1 to the HR Department (Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Daresbury, Warrington, WA4 4GE) by the 15th week before the week the baby is due. They must also notify the HR department of the date the individual intends the maternity leave to start by the fifteenth week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC):

Staff are eligible for 12 months' maternity leave. The diocesan policy is to pay the first six months at the usual salary rate followed by thirteen weeks at statutory maternity pay and the final thirteen weeks unpaid. For more information contact Liz Geddes.

Paid time off will be given for antenatal care on production of a medical appointment card.

Further details are available from the HR department in Church House.

PATERNITY LEAVE AND PATERNITY PAY

Paternity Leave of up to two weeks is offered. In order to be eligible for Paternity Leave, staff need to notify the HR department of the following by the fifteenth week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC):

- The date of the EWC;
- The length of the statutory paternity leave that the individual intends to take;
- The intended start date of the period of leave;
- The date of birth, once the child is born.

You can change your mind, but you must give the HR department 28 days' notice of the dates. You can choose to take one or two whole weeks leave, but not two separate weeks, which must end by the 56th day after the date of birth. If the baby is born early you can choose to take your leave any time between the actual date of birth and the end of an eight-week period starting from the Sunday of the week the baby was originally due. You cannot take odd days off, but the weeks can start on any day, for example, from Tuesday to Monday.

You must complete Form SC3 and return it to the HR Department (Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Daresbury, Warrington, WA4 4GE) by the 15th week before the week the baby is due.

SECTION 3 ABSENCE FROM WORK

ADOPTION LEAVE AND ADOPTION PAY

Adoption Leave of 52 weeks is available to parents who adopt children from within the UK. Further details are available from the HR department at Church House. Where one parent takes Adoption Leave the other parent is eligible to take Paternity Leave (whether male or female, e.g. the father may opt to take Adoption Leave and the mother opt to take Paternity Leave).

For paternity leave when adopting you must discuss your leave plans with the HR department and tell them what time off you want within seven days of the date the adoption agency tells you that you have been matched with the child. You can change your mind, but you must give the HR department 28 days' notice of the new date. You can choose to take one or two whole weeks' leave which must end by the 56th day after the date the child is placed with you. You cannot take odd days off work, but the weeks can start on any day, for example, Tuesday to Monday.

You must complete Form SC4 and return it to the HR Department (Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Daresbury, Warrington, WA4 4GE). Please read the notes on the form carefully to ensure you are giving the correct amount of notice.

Staff should tell the HR department within seven days of being told that they have been matched with a child, if this is not possible they must tell the HR department as soon as possible. The HR department will require a matching certificate from the adoption agency. The adoption agency must be recognised in the UK.

Adoption leave may be taken:

- When a child starts living with the employee or up to 14 days before the placement date (UK adoptions).
- When an employee has been matched with a child by a UK adoption agency.
- When the child arrives in the UK or within 28 days (overseas adoption).

If you are a parental order parent you must complete this form and return it to the HR department by the end of the 15th week before the week the baby is due.

Adoption Leave is usually paid at the rate of 6 months at full pay, followed by 13 weeks at Statutory Adoption Pay. The remaining 13 weeks of leave is unpaid.

Further details are available from the Human Resources department.

SECTION 3 ABSENCE FROM WORK

PARENTAL LEAVE (AVAILABLE TO MOTHERS AND FATHERS)

Unpaid parental leave amounting to 13 weeks for all children and 18 weeks for children with a disability (per child) applies to parents who had / adopted a child after 15th December 1999 and have one year's qualifying service with the DBF.

Further details are available from the Human Resources department.

SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

Shared Parental Leave can give parents more flexibility in how they share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. Parents can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay and choose to take the leave and pay in a more flexible way (each parent can take up to 3 blocks of leave, more if their employer allows, interspersed with periods of work). Eligible parents can be off work together for up to 6 months or alternatively stagger their leave and pay so that one of them is always at home with their baby in the first year.

The Diocese offers Shared Parental Leave at the Statutory rate.

For more information see <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4911> or contact the HR department.

SECTION 4 WORK ARRANGEMENTS

CAPABILITY

It is a term of your employment that you will at all times be fit, capable and competent to perform your duties.

Failure or inability to comply with the provisions of the preceding sub-paragraph may, depending upon the circumstances, lead to dismissal. The procedure adopted by the DBF in dealing with questions of fitness, capability and competence to perform your duties will depend upon the circumstances of each individual case. In such cases, the Capability Policy (found on the staff page of the diocesan website) will be applied. The DBF nevertheless undertakes to act fairly and reasonably in the circumstances of each particular case.

RESIGNATIONS AND PERIODS OF NOTICE

If you resign from your position you should give a minimum of four weeks written notice; unless otherwise stated in your Contract of Employment. This period of notice will normally be worked.

If you leave your employment, payment is normally made in lieu of any annual leave not taken, calculated from 1st January, although you may be required to take accrued annual leave during your notice period. Arrangements will be made to reclaim any annual leave taken in excess of that due for the portion of the leave year which has been worked.

Notice periods for staff whose contracts have been terminated by the DBF in normal circumstances will be:

Service of less than five years	4 weeks
Five years, but less than twelve years	1 week for each completed year of service
Twelve years or more	12 weeks

Your P45 will either be given to you or sent to your home address as soon as possible after your last pay slip has been issued.

DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The Disciplinary and Grievance procedures, applicable to all DBF employees, are found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Staff are required to inform the Human Resources department of any change of address, home telephone number or details of next of kin.

SECTION 4 WORK ARRANGEMENTS

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Diocesan Synod and the DBF, as an employer, are committed to pursuing equal opportunities, subject to the organisation's ethos statement and the right to establish Occupational Requirements for appropriate positions. DBF's Policy is found on the staff page of the diocesan website. You are expected to have familiarised yourself with it.

REFERENCES

The Diocesan Secretary or HR Director will provide a written reference to a prospective employer which will comment fairly on service including, where employees have been dismissed, the reasons for the dismissal. Open testimonials are not given, save in exceptional circumstances, e.g. emigrating.

Any requests received by members of staff to provide a reference should be referred to the HR Director for advice.

CHURCH HOUSE WORSHIP

There are regular acts of Christian worship including Eucharists. Prayers are usually on the first morning of the working week, led by a member of staff. All staff and visitors are welcome to attend these services, which form an important part of the life, work and ethos of Church House.

RELOCATION

It may be necessary for employees of the DBF to have their place of work relocated within the Diocese of Chester in a 20 mile radius of Chester. You will normally be given adequate notice of any change in the location of your place of work. The DBF is also willing to consider adjustments to working arrangements to assist staff who are relocated.

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

Employees have the right to be, or not to be, a member of a professional association or Trade Union.

There are no collective agreements in force relating to DBF employees.

SECTION 4 WORK ARRANGEMENTS

USE OF TELEPHONES, IT AND E-MAIL FACILITIES, & OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Private Telephone Calls: Staff are permitted to receive calls of a private nature during working hours. It is envisaged that these will normally be short – the length of calls can affect the efficiency of the staff member.

Staff are permitted to make a modest number of local calls of such nature, but they are reminded that this is a privilege which may be withdrawn if it is abused.

IT and E-mail: Staff are permitted to use e-mail for personal use again provided that such use is not excessive and takes place in their own time. The Email and Internet policy provides further information and is found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

Photocopying: There is no objection to occasional (less than 10 per month) personal copies being made. All other non business copying should be authorised in advance by the Diocesan Secretary or the Head of Finance and fully reimbursed.

Postage: Postage stamps held on site and the franking machine should only be used for business purposes.

STAFF REVIEW

The DBF has adopted a scheme of Staff Review which provides for all staff to have an annual review discussion. This discussion is an opportunity for you to talk to your line manager about your performance, your objectives for the future and any training needs you might have. Full details of the scheme are found on the staff page of the diocesan website, along with a copy of the Review Form. Concerns about the operation of the scheme which cannot be dealt with under the terms of the scheme, should be raised under the Grievance Procedure. It is the responsibility of the reviewer to ensure that annual review discussions under the scheme take place.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

Employees of the DBF are expected to have familiarised themselves with the DBF's policy on Health and Safety which is found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

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TREATMENT OF COLLEAGUES

All staff who work for the DBF, its volunteers, those serving on Diocesan Committees and representatives of the parishes have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy. The DBF's Equal Opportunities, Anti-Harassment and Dignity at Work Policies are all found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND DRUGS

Smoking: All employees of the DBF have a right to work in a smoke free environment. In order to comply with current legislation, DBF operates a no smoking policy within Church House, which applies both to public areas and to all staff offices.

Alcohol: The consumption of alcohol by employees at Church House, or any other work sites, is not permitted except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Diocesan Secretary.

All employees should be aware of their responsibility to refrain from inappropriate consumption of alcohol prior to reporting for work or during working hours.

The consumption of any alcohol by employees whilst, as part of their duties, they are responsible for children or vulnerable adults will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

Drugs: It is not acceptable for any employee to be under the influence of banned substances in their place of work or while performing their duties as an employee of the DBF.

Where staff are under any medication prescribed by a medical practitioner they should ensure that this does not affect their capacity to undertake their work or pose a health and safety risk. If this is likely to be the case, they should discuss the situation with their line manager.

Failure to comply with the guidelines on smoking, alcohol and drug use will normally constitute gross misconduct and may result in suspension or summary dismissal.

OUTSIDE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Staff shall not engage in any activity which is likely to have an adverse impact on the work or reputation of the diocese of a political, commercial, or professional nature or which are contrary to the ethos of the organisation.

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OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS AND VOLUNTEERING

In order to ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations, staff must seek prior permission before accepting an appointment or agreeing to work or volunteer for an outside body in excess of 6 hours per week. Permission will usually be freely given, provided there is no likely adverse effect on the work of the DBF.

Similarly, if you are offered any outside appointments or wish to undertake voluntary activities which may necessitate time off during working hours, you should first discuss the matter with your manager who will, in cases of doubt, discuss the matter with the Diocesan Secretary. The Diocesan Secretary will usually refer requests to take up major outside appointments to the Chair of the DBF.

Staff wishing to attend meetings, conferences, or any other event arising from such outside commitments during normal working hours, should first obtain permission from the HR Director. The time must be made up in consultation with the line manager. Any cases of doubt should be referred to the Diocesan Secretary who will, if necessary, refer the matter to the Chair of the DBF. The Volunteering Policy is found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

DRESS CODE

All employees should be aware that the way they dress conveys messages to others about the way we care for people and about how we respect both those we serve and our colleagues.

Standards and modes of dress will obviously differ depending on the setting and the work being undertaken, however, as a general guideline, employees should appear smartly dressed every day. Employees are expected to take into account their position and the work which they are undertaking when dressing for work and line managers will have the responsibility of ensuring that staff are dressed appropriately for the work they are doing.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS & COMMENTS

In speaking to the media or in other public arena (e.g. blogs), staff must act within the policies and procedures that have been laid down and should decline any invitation to comment on any work-related or other issues where they may be identified as a DBF employee, including comments from DBF e-mail addresses. Any communication must be authorised by the DBF. No staff member should make a statement or comment to the media or in a public domain which is in conflict with the policy of the DBF or department for which he/she works, no matter how passionately they may hold an alternative view.

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Staff who are also members of Deanery and Diocesan Synods need to be particularly aware of this (e.g. it would be inappropriate for a staff member who served on a Synod to speak in a debate on the restructuring of his/her department at Church House without making a declaration of interest or being asked to speak).

ADHERING TO THE ETHOS OF THE ORGANISATION

The Diocese of Chester is an integral part of the Church of England. This carries with it a responsibility for all staff to behave in a manner which does not damage the good name of the Church or DBF (the diocese).

No one, in law, is entitled to behave in a way, which damages his/her employer. Such conduct may be viewed as breach of contract or gross misconduct, which may place his/her continuing employment at risk.

Employees will be aware of the DBF's ethos and the Equal Opportunities Policy found on the staff page of the diocesan website. Acceptance of employment with the DBF is conditional upon understanding and accepting this document and the values it represents.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES IF THE BEHAVIOUR POLICY IS INFRINGED

Any employee, who acts or behaves in a way which breaches any of the principles contained in this Staff Handbook or DBF staff policies is putting their employment at risk. The Disciplinary Policy is found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All employees are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the work of the DBF and the Church of England.

Although it is not possible to list all the types of conduct that might be deemed inappropriate or that may result in disciplinary action, the following list (though not exhaustive) contains some examples of conduct that are considered inappropriate and may result in the onset of disciplinary action.

- Unauthorised or excessive absence
- Job abandonment
- Theft
- Use or possession of illegal drugs or other controlled substances
- Insubordination
- Failure to observe safety regulations
- Carelessness or negligence whilst performing duties

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- Unlawful harassment (including sexual harassment) of other employees, volunteers, or applicants
- Profanity and the use of bad language
- Accepting illegal gratuities
- Harming the DBF's goodwill
- Inappropriate behaviour (including inappropriate sexual behaviour) with employees, visitors, etc
- Conduct contrary to the Ethos of the organisation.

Further information can be found in the Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

STAFF HANDBOOK AND POLICIES

Employees are expected to familiarise themselves with all the sections in this Handbook and sign a statement to this effect. Staff must ensure that they meet the standards that DBF expects from its employees and adhere to the staff policies.

VISITORS

Visitors' signing in sheets are kept at the Reception desk. All visitors must sign in and should usually be accompanied whilst on the premises, and then sign out before leaving.

CONFIDENTIALITY, COPYRIGHT AND THE GDPR

In the course of your work you may be handling information that is confidential and you are expected to act in a trustworthy manner. You must not disclose any confidential information about the Diocese or its personnel to any other person either within the DBF or outside it, or use the information for personal gain. The surrendering of information to a third party where there is a legal duty to do so (e.g. a police investigation or safeguarding matter) requires the specific authorisation of the Diocesan Secretary.

All notes and memoranda of confidential information remain the property of the DBF and shall be surrendered on request.

Should you be uncertain as to which information is confidential you should seek clarification from your line manager.

All information stored on the computer system is covered by the GDPR. The GDPR requires that this information is not disclosed to a third party.

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It is both illegal and unethical to copy printed material, CDs or computer software without the authority of the copyright holder. An individual who infringes copyright can be subject to a fine or imprisonment. Disciplinary action will normally be taken against employees who infringe the Copyright Act.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is the policy of the DBF to establish, maintain and enforce the highest standards of integrity and fairness in all its dealings. Employees are required to observe the highest standards of business and personal ethics in the discharge of their duties and whilst promoting the interests and objectives of the DBF. It is the obligation of employees to avoid any appearance of unethical conduct, impropriety or compromise.

A conflict of interest arises when your personal business and outside activities influence your decisions or judgement in the performance of your job. Such conflicts must be avoided and anyone in any doubt about the existence of a conflict should consult the Diocesan Secretary. Some examples or situations where a conflict of interest may occur include:

- Participating in ventures which are contrary to the beliefs of the Church of England
- Participating in business ventures with suppliers of goods or support to Church House or its work
- Accepting substantial gifts or loans from suppliers of goods or support to Church House or its work
- Performing duties that are similar to your Church House duties for another organisation
- Holding an outside job or engaging in outside business that interferes with your work performance or duties in Church House.

Employees and representatives of the DBF must scrupulously avoid any conflict of interest between their responsibilities to the DBF and any other activity.

RECEIPT OF GIFTS

Employees may through their contacts with outside organisations or individuals find they are offered gifts. A distinction can be drawn between gifts of a trivial nature (such as diaries or calendars) and something more substantial which may be in breach of the Bribery Act. If the receipt of a gift would place an employee under an obligation to take some action, it should be refused, and the circumstances should be reported to the Diocesan Secretary. Gifts and entertainment received should be entered in the Register of Gifts on the shared drive. Further information can be obtained from the Finance department.

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HOSPITALITY

The normal giving and receiving of hospitality is acceptable unless it is knowingly offered to induce a person to show favour or in breach of the Bribery Act. Accepting hospitality on too regular a basis from individuals or organisations should be avoided as it may compromise independence. In order to protect the employee and the organisation, details of hospitality should be declared to the Diocesan Secretary and a record made in the Register of Gifts held on the shared drive. Further details can be obtained from the Finance department.

EMPLOYEES WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Employees working with children and / or vulnerable adults will require an enhanced DBS disclosure and must work in accordance with the national church's policy and practice guidance on Safeguarding.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Whilst reasonable security precautions are undertaken, the DBF regrets that it is not able to accept responsibility for personal property brought to the office. Please do not bring items of value to the premises unless you accept responsibility for their safekeeping.

MOBILE TELEPHONES

Personal mobile telephones should be used sparingly during worktime, unless in emergencies or during breaks. The same rules apply to texting as to the making and taking of personal telephone calls.

The DBF discourages employees from using mobile telephones whilst in their vehicle. However, all employees who use a personal or company mobile telephone whilst in their vehicle on DBF duties must adhere to the requirements of the Highway Code and any other relevant legislation. The DBF will not pay for any fines incurred as a result of any breach of the law.

Mobile telephones and Smartphones that are provided by the DBF are not permitted to be taken out of the UK.

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USE OF CAR FOR COMPANY BUSINESS

Employees who are authorised to use their private car for company business may need to provide their driving licence and insurance certificate to the Diocesan Secretary for inspection. A copy will normally be kept on their personnel file.

PARKING FINES & SPEEDING FINES

Employees should understand that any car parking or speeding fines incurred whilst on the business of the DBF remain the responsibility of the employee. The DBF will not reimburse such expenses.

FIRST AID

Details regarding the provision of First Aid are included within the Health and Safety Policy found on the staff page of the diocesan website.

All accidents must be recorded in the accident book which is kept at Reception.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

Employees receiving cheques or cash in the course of their employment (including through opening the post) should be aware of the following procedures.

All cheques should be sent direct to the Finance department. Cash receipts should be avoided wherever possible, only accepted with agreement from the Finance department and passed to the Finance department straight away. If, for any reason, a member of staff finds that they receive cheques or cash in the post they must pass these to the Finance department with an explanation immediately (i.e. the same day).

Grant and other finance applications should only be made with the agreement of the Head of Finance or Diocesan Secretary.

The advice of the Finance department should be sought before entering into any legally binding financial arrangements (e.g. formal contract documentation). When agreeing payment terms please note the DBF's policy of 30 days from the date of invoice.