



Clergy Babies Maternity Policy Audit

By Rev'd Dr Rae Caro, Rev'd Chantal Noppen
and Rev'd Caroline Taylor

With foreword from
Rev'd Preb. Dr Isabelle Hamley

Summary

As the Church of England seeks to continue to adapt to contemporary society, we present this report analysing and comparing the range of maternity provision available across dioceses. We hope that uncovering the disparities in provision will act as a catalyst for reform and more equitable practice. Specific suggestions, observations and improvements are offered for each diocese as well as highlighting some examples of particularly good practice.

An encouraging, challenging and motivational report that celebrates the ministry of women and recognises the value they bring to the church, within which children can also play a role.

Independently collated by three clergy of the Northern province, with a foreword from Isabelle Hamley and endorsed by a number of bishops and relevant organisations.

The authors are grateful to WATCH for arranging a grant that enabled a 24-hour writing retreat and to Ministry Council for funding the final publication and subsequent distribution of the report.

**Dedicated to women clergy who have been denied leave,
mistreated or encouraged to leave ministry due to having a child
in the Church of England.**

May our children know a fairer, more welcoming Church.



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We would like the report to be useful for dioceses in considering and revising their maternity provision and policies, we understand that to be so copying parts of the report may be necessary, if you do this, please ensure that we are appropriately credited.

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Foreword

To care for clergy is part of the covenant that the church makes as people offer themselves for ordination. This covenant means that clergy often make huge sacrifices in terms of income, accommodation, choices and ways of life, so that they give the whole of themselves and often more than perhaps they should. In return, the Church cares for them and enables them to have income, accommodation and benefits that frees them to be able to discharge their duties fully. This covenantal framework has been in place for many years, even centuries. However, until recently, this only extended to men. The welcome to women clergy was a wonderful stage into the growth of our church. However, many systems were designed by men and for men, simply because nothing else was needed. As women have begun to form a greater part of the clergy workforce, it is important to re-examine some of the assumptions and default ways of being assumed in the covenant between church and clergy-men, and ask how does this covenant need to be reshaped and extended to fully welcome women.

One of the areas where this is most salient is that of maternity and paternity provision. Those two things go together, because the default understanding in the church still seems to be anchored in social mores from long before the ordination of women, when women cared for children while men went out to work. However, increasingly in wider society, it is recognised and expected that men will take a greater role. This is important, because one of the underlying questions to answer is not, 'why aren't women more like men, so that they can put their work of the welfare of their family', but rather it should be, how can men and women, in their similarities and differences, be enabled to show the appropriate level of care, gentleness and responsibility towards their families that a Christian ethos would expect.

As Christians we hold up the value of families and care for children as a high vocation and a priority because caring for children is caring for the vulnerable, for those who need us, and is one of the ways in which the image of God is manifested within us. It is not a competing vocation to Christian service; it is part of our vocation as human beings. Unhelpful expectations of overwork, and at times neglect of family, need addressing.

Nevertheless, women have specific needs that cannot be covered by catch all policies. It is women who carry children, give birth and breastfeed. This should not need saying, yet acknowledgement of this can seem lacking when appropriate maternity provision is not made. Female clergy of childbearing age are not a drain on the workforce, they are not a difficulty to be solved, any more than male clergy are. They are contributors to church life, to ministry and society, and have something unique to bring. Women are more vulnerable at these stages of life, because of the immense demands on them; as a result, civil society has recognised that specific provision needs to be made for them, and that this provision is legitimate and a social 'good' that all benefit from. It seems disturbing to think that the Church should be less caring, and less supportive of families, than secular workplaces.

This report is therefore hugely important and timely. Offering an encouragement and a challenge to the Church to demonstrate the essence of its being: to be Good News for clergy parents, and clergy mothers in particular, so that the fullness of humanity can

be welcome in ministry, and clergy of all walks of life and with all kinds of backgrounds can be part of caring for the whole people of God. We need all kinds of people in ministry, and putting in place family-friendly policies and good maternity provision is simply part of being a good employer. The Church of England should not be a 'bare necessities employer' but seek to enable all those who willingly dedicate themselves to ministry to be able to serve joyfully, in ways that are Good News for the entire person, and those they love and care for.

At the moment, women with children are not quite as welcome, and not quite as equal: it is part of our Christian calling to ensure that this changes.

*Revd Preb. Dr Isabelle Hamley
Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge.*

Endorsements

‘Women who are called to the twin vocations of parenting and ordination are a gift to the church. This report challenges the church to match the generosity with which they offer their ministries. Containing incisive observations about clergy wellbeing generally, it sets out what is needed in particular for clergy who are mothers to thrive. Surveying the current maternity leave arrangements across dioceses, it offers constructive advice about how better to implement national guidelines, and calls for the national church to provide support. It reflects the energy and wisdom which clergy mothers bring to the table. These are voices which need to be heard.’

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, Bishop of London

‘My prayer is that this report will swiftly be out of date. It is welcome precisely because it is so challenging. Thirty years after women’s priestly Ordination, the Church still seems to find it incredibly hard to make ministry compatible with bringing up a family. The result is that many women feel that answering God’s call is something that has to be deferred with the result that years of precious priestly ministry are lost. It will take more than generous maternity leave policies to address this complex issue, but it is a good starting point. This impressive and exhaustive study is a powerful call for a big rethink on how we can properly support ordained women after the birth of a child. I am sure that I will not be the only Bishop who will be swiftly reviewing our approach and how we advertise it as a result.’

The Rt Revd Phillip North, Bishop of Blackburn

‘This report is timely, vital, and urgent, and matters for the whole church. I am grateful for the careful, caring, and informed work that lies behind it, and urge all to read it and attend to its findings.’

The Rt Revd Mark Tanner, Bishop of Chester, Chair of Ministry Council

‘I welcome this report which highlights the diversity of experience of clergy and ordinands who take maternity leave. As a Church, we have more to do to ensure supportive and appropriate person-centred policies are in place across the Church of England, which are lived relationally and have room to consider each person’s different situation and context. I recommend this report to my episcopal colleagues in conjunction with HR directors and senior colleagues, and I thank the authors for their work in shining a light on this important matter.’

The Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester

‘I am delighted to endorse this report and acknowledge both the work that has gone into it and the many lives of those bound up in it. To make changes you have to be informed, and in facing into the reality of women’s lives the Church has much to do to enable the full flourishing of all who minister. My hope is that this report will be the basis of real and sustained outcomes to ensure women are fully able to flourish in ministry and motherhood and both together.’

The Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Newcastle

‘We heartily congratulate the *Clergy Babies* team on this thorough and vital piece of work. It is so important to the health of Christ’s church, and to the people whose

vocations she has formally recognised, that vocations to ministry be fully compatible with vocations to family life. We pray that the bishops and officers of the Church of England pay close attention to this clear call to end practices and culture which discriminate against mothers in ministry.'

*Fr Dan Barnes-Davies,
Chair of the Inclusive Church network*

'Members of NADAWM have been working in their Dioceses, and nationally, over a number of years to develop and implement best practice in maternity provision. The challenge of finding examples of operational, high-quality, family friendly policies has been an obstacle to making progress. The question from Bishops often comes: 'What are other Dioceses doing?' This report answers that question with clarity and detail. It is a remarkably helpful tool for DAWMs and Dioceses as we continue to ensure that all women flourish in ministry, and specifically those who are starting a family.'

*The Revd Canon Lucy Davis,
Dean of Women's Ministry, St Albans Diocese
Chair, NADAWM*

'Proper support for those who become parents during ordination training or in ordained ministry is not a perk, it's an investment in their future ministry, and therefore in the Church. As well as pointing out weaknesses in practice, this clear and focused report includes commendation of good practice where it exists, and constructive suggestions for improvement for each diocese. If dioceses can receive it as a gift, they will find this report a real help in strengthening their practice.'

*The Revd Mark Earey,
Director of Anglican Formation and Tutor in Liturgy and Worship
The Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education*

The Clergy Babies team (the authors)

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Rev'd Caroline Taylor

A vicar in Middlesbrough, Caroline served a curacy in Hoxton, London after training at Cranmer Hall, Durham. She is married with 2 under 5s (who arrived in curacy and incumbency). Prior to ordination, she was an archaeological consultant alongside volunteer youth worker. Proactively interested in the environment, heritage as a mission opportunity, prayer walking and a theology of adoption.



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Clergy Babies: Maternity Project Audit

Background and Introduction

Having children can be an amazing privilege, but it is also a time of vulnerability and unknowns. We have discovered much more could be done to signpost, support and encourage the balancing of vocations and exploring if, and how, it is possible and practical to have children alongside a life in ordained ministry, particularly young children, as ordained women.



The 'Clergy Babies' Facebook group was set up in response to a desire to provide a space for those in ordained ministry with preschool children to share tips, advice and support. It is an ecumenical group and inclusive of gender and parenting nature. However, the three founding members of the group all happen to be female Church of England priests. We all went into the discernment process single, without expectation or assumption that children might be a part of our future. Yet we find ourselves in a wholly different set of realities, the journey to which has been full of challenges.

Our children are a blessing to us and have broadened and deepened our ministry in hugely beneficial ways, opening doors and possibilities we would never have even considered or predicted. However, while we had hugely different experiences of pregnancy, parental leave and early motherhood, the similarities in missing support, unclear parameters and concerning levels of vulnerability are shared. Over time, we have each become more aware and committed to trying to improve the situation for others. The 'Clergy Babies Maternity Project Audit' was born when we realised the disparity of experience across the Church of England between dioceses.

One of the reasons for this project is to practically and proactively encourage women that the combination of early motherhood and ministry is viable. Maternity provision forms a huge part of ensuring that assurance is available. We are very grateful for the work done by *Transformations Research and Implementation Group* (TRIG) and *Transformations* developing and advocating for more thorough and comprehensive family friendly policies in the church. This audit builds on that work.



Whilst our language has mainly defaulted to discussing women as the ones taking maternity leave, this reflects the people we have supported and the wording of maternity policies. The reality is however more nuanced and we want to affirm and acknowledge that non-binary and trans clergy who carry children will be affected by similar issues and may face further discrimination due to their gender identity.

We are also encouraged by the *Motherhood and Ministry* webinars that began in 2023, offering support, information and encouragement to women wanting to explore the topic in

a safe space, unconnected to their own diocese or church. These involve stories and testimonies from women who have experienced or are currently in a position of balancing motherhood and ministry. The overwhelming attendance at these events and subsequent feedback has been very clear that this area is one that causes a lot of anxiety, stress and worry and the opportunity for peer support and honest conversations on the topic are invaluable.

We are committed to our Church and love being in ministry and would like to proactively support seeing:

- More people, especially younger women, being able to access information and flourish in their vocations.
- Folk being able to easily find out what support they are eligible for, and what they are likely to receive, *without* having to declare their fertility intentions, journey or circumstance. Whilst there is protection in law against such things leading to discrimination (Equality Act 2010), discrimination can, and does still occur.

Whether we think it should be or not, the Church is exempted from being bound to behave in accordance with the Equality Act, yet it is not an unreasonable expectation that the Act be considered an appropriate guide for acceptable behaviour.



A lot of behaviour and attitudes are so deeply ingrained that many of us don't even notice them and wouldn't think to challenge them. However, the stories which have been disclosed to us through the Clergy Babies network lead us to believe that prejudice is widespread and can be incredibly damaging to the individuals affected.

The impact of absent advocacy or the effect on vulnerable folk having to fight for and protect their rights, from a vulnerable position of challenging those with power and authority over them, needs to be acknowledged, and **it would be hard to overstate this reality** - especially for curates.

Equally, lots of women are now living their best lives as parents in ordained ministry, being who they are called to be in following the dual vocations of ordination and parenthood, with panache and integrity. The church has come a long way, and there is much positive progress to celebrate. We don't wish to ignore that, rather to see the improvement continue and to proactively support that process.



Updated national guidelines

There has been a central set of documents since 2020 that offers guidance for dioceses and sets out what are intended to be minimum provisions¹. This guidance is meant to be used to help each diocese write the policies they will use and refer to. Dioceses are each governed and run independently, and act autonomously. While each is a part of the greater whole, individual bishops are not answerable to their archbishop, certainly not in a line manager hierarchical way that a secular mindset might expect or assume. Most, if not all, bishops do try to do the best by their diocese, clergy and people, but each exercise this differently and there are a variety of approaches and priorities.² We feel that this contributes greatly to the confusion and lack of consistent practice, but we also acknowledge that most bishops would guard their independence fiercely!



The national guidelines are intended to inform policies and advise a minimum for provision. The guidelines in themselves provide an excellent baseline, but many dioceses fall short of them, and some seem to have not realised that the guidelines are not actually policies. For transparency and interest, we decided an audit of the approach each diocese seems to currently have and how they compare to the national minimum guidelines would be a useful tool and resource, for individuals but also for dioceses.

This report is the summary of that audit.

Additional thanks

We are especially grateful for the generous time put into this project by Sophie Hudson and the immense privilege and blessing it has been to have her insight, wisdom and administrative diligence assisting us. We have been gathering and auditing policies for nearly two years and a great many hours of data mining and analysis has gone into finding, translating and evaluating them. Lots of the policies were very difficult to locate and many took us an inordinate amount of time to unpack and understand, which for four intelligent, capable people is worth observing.

It has taken us far longer than we expected and more time was needed than we really had available. We are grateful for the support we received from WATCH towards our work on this project but would like to see further investment being made in this area from the National Church Institutions (NCIs).

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/family-friendly-policies>

² Question asked to seek clarity on the enforceability and/or support available to ensure dioceses can meet the minimum guidelines (See Q58 GS Question papers July 2022). Essentially, there isn't any.

Follow up work

We really hope this report will form a part of an ongoing discussion and that we are able to convey a positive picture of the possibility to become a parent while in, or training for, ordained ministry in the Church of England. We have many beautiful stories of where this has been good and children welcomed into a church family with open arms, being blessed and blessing others. Collating those stories was however not the job of this report but do be assured that they exist!



Maternity provision, along with general wellbeing of clergy, is a field that is under active review in many dioceses so whilst the information here will be accurate at the time of writing, it could easily have changed by the time we publish. Some of the observations and conclusions we draw will be subjective, and you are welcome to disagree, but we felt that if four of us had drawn the same conclusions, that in itself was relevant.

As with anything, there will always be exceptions and there is often more ‘wiggle room’ than appears at first glance, yet without the support, confidence, or knowledge to push back to check these things, many will be disadvantaged, or at least discouraged from pursuing things further. It is good to hear anecdotal evidence about positive experiences of maternity leave even in those dioceses whose policy or published guidance seems to suggest otherwise, but it would be helpful if the policies were updated to provide a more accurate portrayal of the reality.



It is beyond the capacity and remit of this report to comment on the arrangements and provision around adoption leave, paternity leave and shared parental leave.

Additionally, very little, if any, consideration or information is discussed here concerning the provision and arrangements for those in self-supporting ministry; in large part this is because that information is simply not known or available. Much work is needed to properly assess and analyse the impact, reality and balance of SSM ministry³ in general, to consider the gender balance there and how those in that ministry are appropriately supported, valued and served. We hope this is work that someone will take up soon, but for now we hope that the observation that they too need considering will suffice.



The changes that have been happening are encouraging and signs of positive steps being taken. We look forward to seeing this continue.

³ Self-supporting ministry, previously NSM or non-stipendiary clergy.

Audit approach

Starting perspective & initial observations

We approached this project from the position of an ordinand seeking information about their diocesan policy ahead of making a decision about starting a family.



We felt this was important as not everyone who needs the information about a diocesan maternity policy will have access to clergy handbooks or other material which may only be given to clergy directly, once ordained. Phase 1 and Phase 2 IME⁴ takes many years, and couples may not feel they are able to wait to start a family until after this time. It is crucial that policies are freely available to all, and this is stated in the CofE family friendly policies guidance⁵. Women at the beginning of their ministry are particularly vulnerable in these policies as they will often have little information on where to find resources, compared to colleagues who have been in ministry longer.

Having said that, we have learned that many clergy (of any gender) are unaware of their diocesan policies or where and how to access them.



We would encourage all dioceses to raise their awareness of this and ensure signposting is readily available.

We are aware from the Clergy Babies network that some of the policies we have had access to study are no longer current, but the connected diocesan website has not been updated. An ordinand or recently ordained curate would likely not know this and would make their reproductive choices based on the information that they could find. Some diocesan websites do not contain a full policy but provide a summary or very basic information.

For example, we have heard anecdotally that some policies have been updated to accord with the 2020 guidance but have not been published on the diocesan website. In some cases, this could mean that a high scoring policy has received a low score, or even a score of 0. The policies being easily publicly available is a key part of the guidance, so dioceses aiming to follow the 2020 guidance should be taking note of this.



⁴ *Initial Ministerial Education* i.e. The post-ordination training that is conducted alongside being in the role

⁵ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/1.-why-we-have-produced-guidance-on-supporting-clergy-ordinands-who-become-parents.pdf> Paragraphs 4b, 6, 7

“6. Diocesan family friendly policies - along with any supporting documents - should be fully available and accessible not only to clergy but to all members of the public. This will help to ensure not only that lay people are aware of the provisions, but also to reassure those considering the possibility of a vocation, that they will be supported by the Church in exploring their vocation and training for ministry. 7. Dioceses should, therefore, ensure that their family friendly policies are available on their website”

- We have made an assessment based on the information readily accessible.



Several websites do not contain a policy, but rather direct people to speak to the diocesan office, HR or their archdeacon. **We are critical of this approach.** Many women in our network have been treated unfavourably due to pregnancy and childbirth. Although this should not be the case, we can see how a woman would not feel able to ask directly for this information out of fear of the treatment they might receive.

Collating these policies was a mammoth task. Some were provided by our network; many were found by our data support Sophie who spent many hours scouring diocesan websites and reading clergy handbooks. We would like to make a plea to all dioceses to make these policies easier to find. The lack of transparency and the sheer time it takes to find these policies, even if they are technically available creates unneeded stress for pregnant women.



When policies are being updated, we would recommend stating this on the website and keeping the current policy up as a guide for the minimum provision that can be expected.

Key Considerations

The 2020 Family Friendly Policies Guidance

In March 2020 a suite of guidance documents relating to Family Friendly Policies were published by the Church of England. These superseded the 2015 guidance⁶ but go alongside the legal provisions made in the Ecclesiastical Office (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 (updated to July 2017)⁷.

The 5 guidance documents are:

1. 'Why we have produced guidance on supporting clergy and ordinands who become parents'
2. Guidance notes to Dioceses on policies to support clergy office holders who become parents
3. Guidance note on the legal entitlement of clergy office holders who become parents
4. Guidance note to clergy office holders about to become parents
5. Guidance note to dioceses and TEIs on policies for ordinands about to become parents.

These guidance documents are hosted on the 'Family Friendly Policies' webpage on the Church of England website⁸ and are the basis of the categories which have been used to audit the existing Diocesan policies. It is clear from the front page that **"Much of this guidance is in the form of recommendations to dioceses and you should always check with your diocesan office/DDO/TEI about the provision in your diocese."**

In other words, these documents are *not* policies in and of themselves, but set out considerations for Dioceses when forming their own policies.

The fact that there are 5 different documents speaks to the more comprehensive nature of this guidance compared to the 2015 provisions. However, we would also offer the comment that it was not very helpful or conducive to accessibility for the national Church of England to issue the guidelines as five separate documents. We think this has led to some of the details being missed by dioceses.

The most important detail to note is that there is **an aspiration that eligibility will carry across, without break, from training to ordination**. This means that whilst previously if curates become pregnant before they have been in post for a specified number of weeks,

⁶ https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/parental_pay_and_leave_advice_dec_2015.pdf

⁷ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/terms-of-service-regulations-updated-to-july-2017.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/family-friendly-policies>

they could be told they would not be eligible for any pay whilst on leave, now that should not happen, even if they are still not eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay⁹.

The variation in the qualifying criteria for the diocesan offer for maternity pay is considerable (qualifying criteria can be found in appendix 1). The same woman could be entitled to no diocesan pay and Maternity Allowance only in one diocese and nine months full stipend in another. It is clear which of these arrangements would better support a new mother to flourish in ministry.

The overall thrust of the documents is that Diocesan policies should **err towards generosity**. The document 'Why we have produced guidance' is particularly helpful in explaining this, though it is unfortunate that the formatting of the webpage makes it look like a heading rather than a document in its own right. It points out that while there may be additional costs incurred in supporting clergy who become parents:

“Substantial sums and time will already have been invested in training. It is vital not to jeopardise this investment by being inflexible or trying to avoid a comparatively small additional expenditure. Generosity and humanity on the part of the institutional Church is more likely to produce a fruitful harvest of long and fulfilling ministry”.

This is especially pertinent given that those most likely to have children are younger clergy with therefore a potentially greater number of years of ministry ahead of them. **Investing in clergy at a stressful time to enable longer and more fruitful ministry** is a point repeated multiple times in the document (1, 2a, 2e, 3, 4a, 4c).

It also highlights that particular seasons of ministry can be especially stressful, such as the transition from curacy to incumbency, and lack of clarity and easy access around the support available can add to this stress. “We hope that this guidance will help dioceses to be clear about the support they will provide, and to **keep uncertainty to a minimum**”.

Many of the dioceses state that their policies meet the national guidelines but on closer inspection, they fall short. Some dioceses have simply not realised that the guidelines are not a policy in themselves, and that they need to provide some more specifics, notably how much notice they need in order to process the required paperwork.



⁹ Often referred to simply as SMP

The **2020 family friendly policy guidance** states that Diocesan policies should:

National Guideline (as a minimum)	Comment or interpretation
Be easily accessible to everyone (including the public) on Diocesan websites (<i>'Why we have produced guidance'</i> section 4b, 6 &7) 	Ideally this would be as a stand-alone item, rather than contained within a Clergy Handbook. This makes it much easier to locate.
Offer financial provision of Enhanced Maternity Pay (greater than Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)). The recommended amount is full stipend for 26 weeks (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 9</i>) 	This usually means topping up the SMP to the usual stipend level. So essentially 6.5 months at full pay.
Offer 13 weeks further paid at SMP (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 9</i>)	An extra 3 months at a reduced rate.
Give provision <i>regardless</i> of legal entitlement to SMP (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 9; 'Why we have produced guidance' point 5</i>)	Ordinands and curates in their first year may not be eligible for legal entitlement to financial support, but they should be financially supported by their Diocese.
Make provision irrespective of length of time in office (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 9</i>)	This unequivocally makes it clear that <i>all</i> are eligible from point of ordination and marks a notable shift from pre 2020.
Indicate KIT (Keeping In Touch) days are not applicable - as stipendiary office holders we do not lose SMP if we work while on leave (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 29; 'Why we have produced guidance' 13</i>)	KIT days can't be legally enforced, but the principle is useful, and guidance as to a suggested maximum number of working days/hours is helpful.
State how much notice clergy need to give (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 12h</i>)	Women may find themselves without pay if their diocese does not process the paperwork in time so a realistic deadline is important.
State clergy remain entitled to stay in housing provided (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 12b; 'Why we have produced guidance' 13</i>)	This is <i>without</i> being charged rent or access being assumed for meetings etc. 
Make clear that a pension is earned as usual, including voluntary contributions, though these can be decreased if wanted (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 8</i>)	We presume this means that payroll does this automatically, but it isn't stated. 
State training curacies may be extended to take account of maternity leave. (<i>Guidance to dioceses point 13</i>)	If no extra time is given, curates may find they cannot complete their training portfolios before their expected sign off date.
Indicate Self Supporting Ministers (SSM) are entitled to Statutory Maternity Leave regardless of length of service (<i>Guidance note to Dioceses point 7</i>)	This is the statutory requirement for Maternity Leave (distinct from Maternity Pay).
Explicitly state clergy are entitled to 52 weeks of statutory maternity leave on commencement of office (<i>Guidance note to parents point 4-6</i>)	This is the statutory requirement for Maternity Leave (distinct from Maternity Pay).

Audit Categories

To conduct our audit, we awarded points by assessing policies against these criteria:

Is the policy:

1. Largely meeting the national guidance on Diocesan policies?
2. Publicly **accessible** on the Diocesan website?
3. Available as a separate webpage / standalone document?

Does the policy:

4. Give assurance of paid provision irrespective of length of time in office?
5. Offer **Enhanced Maternity Pay** (greater than SMP) for 26 weeks or more?
6. Offer 13 weeks further at SMP as a minimum?
7. Explain that KIT days are not legally applicable?
8. State how much **notice** clergy need to give?
9. State that clergy remain entitled to stay in **housing** provided?
10. State **pension** is earned as usual during paid leave?
11. State training curacies may be extended to take account of maternity leave?
12. State SSM entitled to statutory Maternity Leave regardless of length of service?
13. Point to an accessible diocesan policy or guidance for **ordinands**?

Note: **ordinands** and those in training for ministry are covered by a separate guidance document that is applicable nationally and should mean there is no variance between the different Dioceses and TEIs.¹⁰ We are however aware that there is a diverse range of experiences and attitudes encountered.

Maternity Leave

We did not include specific details around maternity *leave*, as women are entitled to take up to 52 weeks maternity leave, regardless of their length of service, hours worked and wage. They are also legally obliged to take at least 2 weeks off after childbirth¹¹.

In reality, the amount of maternity leave most people are able to take off is directly linked to the level of maternity pay they receive and a careful balancing of responsibilities and resources.



¹⁰ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/6.-guidance-note-to-dioceses-and-teis-ordinands.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave> Without further comment, it is worth noting that we are aware of women being ordained when they are less than two weeks post-partum.

Findings

Note: Due to the different legal structures in the Diocese of Europe and Diocese of Sodor and Man, they were excluded from our audit. However, we would encourage these dioceses to reflect on their provisions.

Of the 40 dioceses studied:

- **Nearly three quarters (29/40) had policies accessible on a diocesan website (72.5%)**
- 4 of 40 dioceses had no information we could study (10%)¹²
- Less than half (18/40) had a standalone webpage or document for maternity leave/family friendly policies (45%)
- **Less than a quarter (8/36) of available policies/maternity information assure paid provision regardless of length of service (22.2%)**
- 33 of 36 available policies/maternity information provide enhanced paid leave during the first 26 weeks (91.7%)
- 22 of 36 available policies/maternity information offer enhanced paid leave for up to 39 weeks (61.1%)
- 9 of 36 available policies/maternity information are clear about the current legal standing of KIT days (25%)
- 20 of 36 available policies/maternity information are clear about the notice period for mat pay (55.6%)
- **23 of 36 available policies/maternity information are clear about the entitlement to housing (63.9%)**
- 23 of 36 available policies/maternity information are clear about continued pension provision (63.9%)
- **22 of 36 available policies/maternity information stated that training curacies can be extended to take account of maternity leave (61.1%)**
- 11 of 36 available policies/maternity information stated that SSMs are entitled to statutory maternity leave (30.6%)
- 5 of 36 available policies/maternity information had information for ordinands (13.9%)
- **Only 5 of 40 dioceses broadly meet the 2020 guidelines (12.5%) A further 2 dioceses are close to meeting the guidelines but require a separate policy to be written.**

¹² We were unable to access current maternity policies or information on provision for Leicester, Norwich, Peterborough and Sheffield.



Currently, the top spot goes to **Coventry** – with the caveat that they don't offer full stipend for 39 weeks as most dioceses we studied do.



Followed by **Birmingham, Exeter, London and Oxford.**



Where individual dioceses had particularly good provision or there was a standout detail, we have tried to indicate this in the analysis.

If someone was able to take all those great things and roll them into a policy that was then funded and supported nationally so all dioceses could offer the same provision, that would be ideal please!



We have also offered specific suggestions for each diocese regarding changes or improvements they might like to make.

From information shared in the Clergy Babies network, we believe that these dioceses may be currently updating their policies: Durham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Oxford, St Albans, Eds & Ips. We find the willingness to update these policies encouraging and we hope that this work will be concluded soon and policies published.

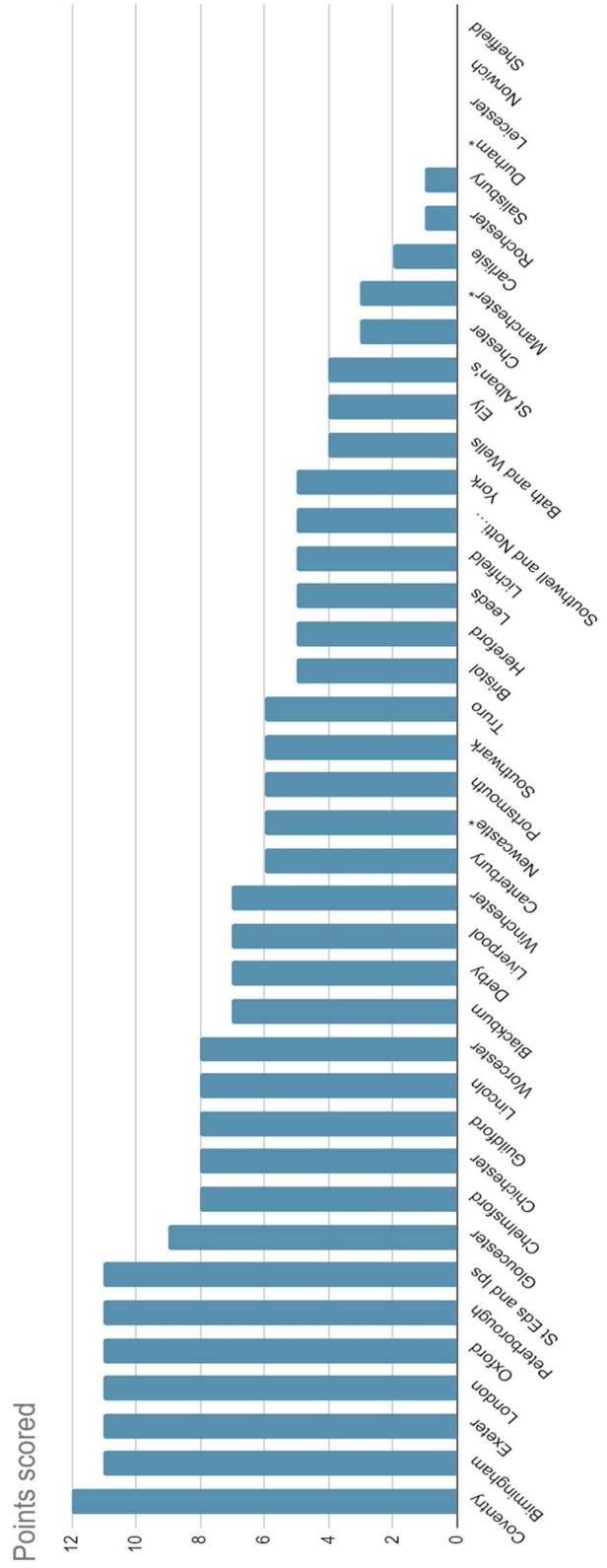


We feel it is important to also make note of our concern about the number of people who felt nervous and/or scared to speak to us about their experiences, and the pressure they felt they were under to not share the policies they had been given - policies that dioceses have been advised should be publicly available and accessible to all.

To protect and honour those who did share information despite their unease, we would like to make it clear that the number of clergy we have had contact with regarding this project and gathered policies from is far wider and more thorough than those immediately and/or recently affected or involved in issues around maternity provision.



Graph summarising our findings:



Our findings in a colour coded table

Diocese	Does the policy overall meet the 2020 national guidance?	Points awarded by audit	Policy publicly accessible on the Diocesan website	Policy available as separate webpage/stand-alone document?	Assurance of paid provision irrespective of time in office	Enhanced pay (greater than SMP) for 26 weeks or more	Assurance of 13 weeks further at SMP as a minimum	Up to date wording reflecting that KIT days are not relevant	State how much notice clergy need to give	States that remain entitled to stay in provided housing	States receive pension contribution as usual during paid leave	States curacies may be extended to take account of mat leave	States SSM entitled to SM Leave regardless of length of service	Accessible diocesan policy or guidance for ordinands?
Bath & Wells	No	4	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes-Full stipend	No - 10 days are given	Maybe - Policy says ASAP, external link says 28 days	No	Yes	No	No	No
Birmingham	Maybe - Diocesan policy needed	11	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - level not clear	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, link to national guidance provided
Blackburn	No	7	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - SMP	No - 10 days are given	Maybe - ASAP but within 3 weeks after start of maternity pay period. We believe this may be incorrect.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Bristol	No	5	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes-Full stipend	No - 10 days are given	Maybe - Not in policy, but form states 28 days	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Canterbury	No	6	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes-Full stipend	No - 10 days are given	Yes - ASAP or 15 weeks before EWC	Maybe - those in PCC supported housing may be vulnerable	No	Yes	No	No
Carlisle	No	2	Maybe unclear if full policy - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - SMP	Not mentioned	No	No	No	No	No	No
Chelmsford	No	8	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - SMP	No - 10 days are given	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Chester	No	3	Maybe unclear if full policy - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - SMP	Not mentioned	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	No	No	No	No	No
Chichester	No	8	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - Full stipend	Yes	Yes - ASAP or 15 weeks before EWC	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Coventry	Yes	12	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - SMP	Yes	Yes - ASAP or 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, linked in doc
Derby	No	7	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - Full stipend	Not mentioned	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Durham	Maybe - policy under review	0	No	No info available										
Ely	No	4	No - Link	No	Maybe - max of 13 weeks	Yes	Yes - SMP	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Exeter	Yes	11	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes - could be clearer	Yes	Yes - SMP	Yes	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes - during paid leave only	Yes	Yes	No
Gloucester	No	9	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days are given	No - 'reasonable period of notice'	Yes	Yes - during paid leave only	Yes	Yes - elsewhere	No
Guildford	No	8	No - Link to summary	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	Yes	Yes - ASAP or 28 days	Yes	Yes - during paid leave only	Yes	Yes	No
Hereford	No	5	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days given	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Leeds	Maybe - policy under review	5	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days given	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	No	Yes	No	No	No
Leicester	No	0	No - Link	No	No info available									
Lichfield	No	5	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	Not mentioned	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	No	No	No	No	No
Lincoln	No	8	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - mentioned no detail given	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Liverpool	No	7	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - SMP	Not mentioned	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
London	Yes	11	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes ^{tho'} some ambiguity	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes specific reference in policy
Manchester	Maybe - policy under review	3	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	Not mentioned	No	No	No	No	No	No
Newcastle	Maybe - policy under review	6	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Norwich	No	0	No - Link	No info available										

	Does the policy overall meet the 2020 national guidance?	Points awarded by audit	Policy publicly accessible on the Diocesan website	Policy available as separate webpage/stand-alone document?	Assurance of paid provision irrespective of time in office	Enhanced pay (greater than SMP) for 26 weeks or more	Assurance of 13 weeks further at SMP as a minimum	Up to date wording reflecting that KIT days are not relevant	State how much notice clergy need to give	States that remain entitled to stay in provided housing	States receive pension contribution as usual during paid leave	States curacies may be extended to take account of mat leave	States SSM entitled to SM Leave regardless of length of service	Accessible diocesan policy or guidance for ordinands?
Oxford	Yes	11	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - full stipend	Yes	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peterborough	Maybe-diocesan policy needed	11	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - Level not stated	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, link to national guidance provided
Portsmouth	No	6	Yes - Link	Yes	No	No	Yes - SMP	No - 10 days	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Rochester	No	1	No - Link	No	No	No	Yes - SMP	Not mentioned	No - link says 28 days	No	No	No	No	No
St Albans	Maybe-policy under review	4	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	No	No	No	No	No
St Eds & Ips	Yes	11	Yes - Link	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - SMP	Yes	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Salisbury	No	1	No - Link	No	No	No	Yes - SMP	Not mentioned	No - link says 28 days	No	No	No	No	No
Sheffield	No	0	No - Link	No	No	No info available								
Southwark	No	6	No - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC, elsewhere suggests around 12 week span	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Southwell & Notts	No	5	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	Yes - 15 weeks before EWC	No	No	Yes	No	No
Truro	No	6	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	No - says 'reasonable'	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Winchester	No	7	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	No - says 'reasonable'	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Worcester	No	8	Yes - Link	Yes	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	No - 10 days	No - link to clergy payroll docs (28 days)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
York	No	5	Yes - Link	No	No	Yes	Yes - full stipend	Not mentioned but SPLIT days are	Yes - 28 days	No	Yes	No	No	No

Breakdown and Detail by Diocese

Bath & Wells

The policy is technically accessible but we did not find it easy to locate and it is not available as a stand-alone document.

Provision is currently dependent on time in office and there is no explicit statement on the right to remain in provided clergy housing while on leave.

There is no comment on provision for SSMS.

Enhanced pay provided for 26 weeks and a further 13 weeks offered of SMP. Insufficient details are given for the length of notice required.

Diocesan staff have a separate policy and the link is available, there is not a link provided to the policy for ordinands.

The policy was last updated in 2018 and we found it clear and easy to understand but it does not yet meet the national guidelines.



Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. Improve wording around notice period, comment on housing, reword information on KIT days to reflect current legal guidance, add acknowledgment of SSMS and improve access to policy

Birmingham

It seems clear that Birmingham diocese are striving to be fully supportive of women's ministry as their website has a specific page linking to the national guidance documents, however there is not yet an actual policy available.

Information around the level of stipend given after the initial 26 weeks and the length of notice that is required needs to be stated.

There is also room for more inclusive language and clearer signposting for men who are seeking to find out about paternity leave and/or shared parental leave.

The clergy handbook is out of date.

Despite the lack of a specific diocesan policy, this diocese has scored highly as it seems very clear that they intend to meet the national minimum guidelines.



Write a diocesan policy. State stipend level and notice periods needed. Update the handbook

Blackburn

This diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served and there is no information about what happens if someone does not qualify.

It is unclear what provision there is for SSMs and there is no signposting for ordinands.

Our interpretation of the notice period is that incorrect information may have been given, we would encourage the diocese to check this and set a reasonable deadline to allow claims for SMP to be processed.

The information on KIT days does not reflect current legal guidance.

However, if someone does meet the requirements, then they will receive the full 26 weeks of enhanced pay with the additional 13 weeks of SMP. Details around training, pension payments and housing are also clearly stated.



A stand-out detail from Blackburn Diocese is that paid cover is available for two services per week, other occasional offices and essential meetings for up to 12 months. This is really encouraging and disappointingly unusual!



Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. Improve wording around KIT days and notice period.

Bristol

Bristol diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served nor is the policy available as a standalone document.

There is explicit mention of the right to remain in provided housing, but not that pension contributions will continue. No mention of SSM provision or support, we could not find information for ordinands about maternity leave. Details are not given for the length of notice required within the policy itself. The section on KIT days is out of date with current guidance.



However, **cover may be found** with a fixed term post and there is information on how to fill out your maternity form and what goes in each box of the form.



Produce a standalone document that is easily accessible on the website. To bring into line with the guidance, remove the qualifying period and add information on boundaries without using the language of KIT days, pension entitlement, SSMs and ordinands.

Canterbury

Canterbury diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. One year's service is required for the fullest provision, at which point up to 39 weeks paid leave on full stipend is granted.

Policy found entitled 'Family leave' under 'Guidance, forms and fees' section of the diocesan website.

The wording around KIT days is not up to date with current legal guidance.



We are concerned by the section on housing, as we believe this could lead to people being asked to leave their tied accommodation or to contribute to it, despite the stated wish that nobody should be worse off.

Training for curates may be extended.



Guidance has helpful appendices with '**case studies**' for reference and **suggestions** to consider **around boundaries**.



*Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.
Improve wording around KIT days and notice period.*

Carlisle

Carlisle diocese has very limited information publicly available on which we would assess their policy. It may be that their full policy does meet more criteria, but we were not able to determine this based on the information we had access to.

The available qualifying criteria assume an entitlement to SMP. It is not clear if clergy receive maternity pay if they do not qualify for SMP.



Make the diocesan maternity policy available online and bring it into line with the 2020 guidance if it does not meet this standard.

Chelmsford

Chelmsford diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. There must be 26 weeks continuous service at the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth.

The policy is a publicly available standalone document.



Fixed term cover may be found for maternity leave.



Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. Improve wording around KIT days and notice period. Provide information to ordinands.

Chester

Chester diocese has very limited information publicly available on which we could assess their policy. It may be that their full policy does meet more criteria, but we were not able to determine this based on the information we had access to.

The available qualifying criteria assume an entitlement to SMP. It is not clear if clergy receive maternity pay if they do not qualify for SMP.



Make the diocesan maternity policy available online and bring it into line with the 2020 guidance if it does not meet this standard.

Chichester

Chichester diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. The qualifying criteria could be clearer but seem to suggest that clergy should qualify for statutory benefits to qualify for any diocesan enhancement. The link which is provided for those who do not qualify is broken. Some of the 2020 guidance is linked to in the policy, but the link is broken.

The policy lacks information for SSM clergy and ordinands.

There is no clear notice period.



There is a promotional video and case studies, which may be helpful.



Update policy with working hyperlinks, add information on SSM clergy, ordinands and a reasonable notice period. Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.

Coventry



A clear policy, with case studies, which meets the national guidelines.

Also contains an additional section on maternity leave in curacies.



Consider offering full stipend for 39 weeks, as the majority of the policies we studied do. This would cement Coventry as a leading diocese in this area.



Derby

Derby diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. Clergy must qualify for SMP and intend to return to their post to receive enhanced pay.

Policy is found in Section 7, named 'family friendly policy' in the clergy handbook.

Policy does not mention KIT days, and though this is not the correct terminology some guidance on boundaries is something which needs fuller exploration.

Policy lacks information for curates, SSMs and ordinands.



DBF will pay for maternity cover for services.



Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. Add guidance on boundaries whilst on leave. Provide information to curates, SSMs and ordinands.

Durham



No information was available for Durham because the policy is currently being updated. We believe the situation on the ground to be much more positive than the score that we have been able to give. This highlights the importance of having a publicly available policy. We are grateful to the diocese for engaging with this project.



We recommend the 2020 guidance documents (and this report) be referred to and hope to see updated policies published shortly.

Ely

Ely diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. Clergy must qualify for SMP to receive enhanced pay. In cases where clergy do not qualify, up to 13 weeks of pay will be provided.

There is no full policy online which we could study, so we have taken our information from information in the clergy handbook section of the website. This includes 'FAQs on the guidance on supporting clergy and ordinands who become parents' and a short section on 'Maternity and Paternity Leave in Curacy'. It may be that the full policy covers points missing here, we would urge the diocese to make this publicly available.

Ely does state that the diocese will **use its discretion on a case-by-case basis** and may provide additional pay where qualifying criteria have not been met, or may provide cover in particular cases.



A fuller policy should be published containing information on the notice period, pension contributions, curacy training, SSMs and Ordinands. Remove qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.

Exeter

This is a well written and thought-out policy which takes account of many of the guidelines.



We particularly praise that it is written in a pastoral tone, especially the section on miscarriage, premature birth and stillbirth. This level of consideration has not been seen in many other policies.



This policy is found under 'work-life balance' and could be easier to find. Information for ordinands needed.

Gloucester

The diocese of Gloucester has a relatively good policy found in 'Section 5 Family Friendly Policies' found in the 'Clergy, Readers and Parish Handbook section of the diocesan website. There is no qualifying period, which is particularly positive.



The policy contains a useful checklist for preparing for maternity leave.



Improve wording around KIT days and notice period. Provide information to ordinands.

Guildford

The full policy was not available but a summary of the policy is contained within the Diocese 'Clergy Wellbeing Covenant' in section 6. The information mentions 'qualifying clergy' when talking about maternity pay and SMP but does not specify the criteria.



The website states that clergy HR information is being updated and will be publicly available in the Autumn (presumably 2023), however it does not say if this includes maternity information and we have not yet seen it.

Even in the absence of a full policy, the summary contains information which relates to the criteria, however information for ordinands is absent.



*A fuller policy should be published containing information for ordinands.
Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.*

Hereford

Hereford diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served.

The policy assumes that clergy qualify for SMP. Maternity information is contained within section 7.11 within the Clergy Handbook. Links to advice given in 2015, not the updated 2020 guidance. Much needed information is missing from this policy, which is disappointing as it was published 2 years after the Family Friendly Policies guidance.



*Produce a standalone policy which includes information on notice period, up to date information on KIT days, pension entitlement, SSMS and ordinands.
Remove qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.*

Leeds

We based our assessment on the information we could find in section 5 in the Clergy Handbook (updated April 2023). We are unsure if this is the most recent, full maternity policy, but it is what was publicly available to us at the time of writing. Compared with the 2020 guidance, there is much detail missing.

Provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced maternity pay, clergy should have one year's service at the end of the qualifying week.



*Remove qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.
Produce a standalone policy which includes up to date wording on KIT days, and information on housing entitlement, curacy, SSMS and ordinands.*

Leicester



The 2020 guidelines have not been followed because no policy was publicly available at the time of writing. We were shown a copy of the maternity policy by an anonymous source but have not included it in our analysis.

We are concerned at the lack of transparency around this policy.

The document we have seen is not consistent with the 2020 guidelines.



Make the diocesan maternity policy available online and bring it into line with the 2020 guidance.

Lichfield

The policy for Lichfield is contained within Section 4 of the 'Diocesan Policy Guidelines for Clergy', published in 2022. Lichfield diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced maternity pay, clergy must have one year's continuous service by the beginning of the qualifying week (14 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth).

Much is missing from this policy, and despite being published well after the 2020 guidance much of its recommendations have not been taken on board.



Make a fuller policy publicly available. This should contain information on boundaries, housing and pension entitlements, curacy training, SSMS and ordinands.

Lincoln

'Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy' is found on the 'Clergy Documents' page of the Diocesan Website. Though this policy has been recently updated it does not make reference to the national guidelines or some of its key points, such as the removal of a qualifying period have not been taken on board.

Lincoln diocese does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced maternity pay, clergy must have one year's continuous paid service by the beginning of the qualifying week (15 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth).



Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. Produce a standalone policy which includes up to date wording on KIT days, SSMS and ordinands,

Liverpool

'Becoming A Parent' is a short summary contained within the Clergy Handbook on the Diocesan website. It contains links to government and national CofE guidance on legal entitlements but very little additional information. There is no information on qualifying criteria except for a link to a government page on SMP.



We would hope to see a fuller standalone policy with information on boundaries, SSMs and ordinands. We would like to see more clarity around the qualifying period, ideally removing the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.

London



This is one of the more thorough policies, taking 2020 guidance into account.



The policy says that 10 KIT days may be worked, however this is not in line with current legal guidance and may contradict the good guidance around boundary discussions on the diocesan 'Family Friendly Leave for Clergy' webpage.

The section on "What obligation does the PCC have with regard to housing?" could introduce anxiety. The wording suggests that the 'aim' is that people taking leave are no worse off with regard to housing, but we would rather see a guarantee.



Perhaps look at some of the 'gold star' elements of other policies to make this one even stronger. It could also be improved around KIT days and housing.

Manchester

We understand the policy may be under review. We used the little information available at time of writing which is the short summary contained within the 'Guidance For Ecclesiastical Officers' on the 'Terms of Service' section of the Diocesan website.

There is no mention of a qualifying period, but the wording suggests it may be the same as for SMP. Few categories are addressed from the 2020 guidance. We believe the situation on the ground is different, but we have not been able to assess a full policy.

The document says fuller information is available from HR, but we believe this approach may mean clergy or ordinands having to disclose their reproductive intentions before they are ready.



We recommend the 2020 guidance documents, and hope to see updated policies published shortly.

Newcastle

Policy is contained within the Clergy Handbook on the 'Diocesan Handbooks for Clergy and Parishes' section of the diocesan website. We are heartened that the diocese has engaged with this project and the maternity policy has recently been updated, which we believe will meet the 2020 guidelines. However as it is not yet publicly available we had to use the information which can be found online to ensure consistency across all dioceses.

The available policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced maternity pay, clergy must have one year's continuous paid service by the end of the qualifying week (15 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth). We believe this will be addressed in the new policy.

The available policy states 10 KIT days are available, which do not apply to office holders. Information on pension entitlement, SSMs and ordinands is not included in this policy.



A standalone maternity policy in line with the 2020 guidance to be available on the diocesan website, and we hope to see this shortly.

Norwich



The 2020 guidelines have not been followed because no policy was publicly available at the time of writing. Norwich is one of only 4 dioceses which had **no maternity information available** at all so we have not been able to assess whether any of the other guidelines, such as the removal of the qualifying period have been followed.



Make the diocesan maternity policy available online and bring it into line with the 2020 guidance.

Oxford



This is one of the clearest policies and as there is no qualifying period for 39 weeks enhanced maternity pay, this is **one of the most generous policies** we have studied.



However, there is a stated requirement to return to their licensed ministry in the Diocese of Oxford for at least a year on their return; for curates this is more relaxed with a requirement to return to some form of licensed ministry in the Church of England for at least a year. We have heard however that this part of the policy may be under review.



Include information about training for curates, the only missing criterion on our list. This would make Oxford a leading diocese in this area. Consider some of the 'gold star' parts of other policies to strengthen this one further. We are also aware that there is room for improvement in this diocese ensuring the policy is understood and best practice applied, especially around housing.

Peterborough

'Family Friendly Policies' can be found under the 'Resources for Clergy' section of the website. This links to the 2020 guidance for Family Friendly Policies. However, as these documents do not form a policy in themselves, a diocesan policy should be written. We applaud the intention to follow this guidance and have assessed the diocese upon the links they provide. In intending to follow this guidance, the diocese is showing a commitment ahead of many of the policies we have studied.

Information around the level of stipend given after the initial 26 weeks and the length of notice that is required needs to be stated.



Write a diocesan policy which reflects the 2020 guidance that the diocese has already embraced.

Portsmouth

The parental leave policy is available on the diocesan website. However, we found a discrepancy between the information in the maternity policy and the clergy handbook. The maternity policy says that clergy will only receive 39 weeks SMP, whereas the handbook states 39 weeks at full stipend. This is a significant difference, which should be addressed to avoid confusion.



The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. The policy gives the qualifying criteria for SMP and states that those who do not qualify can get the government Maternity Allowance.

The policy uses KIT days which do not accord with current legal guidance, and has no information for curates, SSMs or ordinands.



Update maternity policy to uphold enhanced pay for 39 weeks Remove qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. Produce a standalone policy which includes up to date wording on KIT days, and information for curates, SSMs and ordinands.

Rochester



The 2020 guidelines have not been followed because no policy was publicly available at the time of writing. The only information we could find were some links in the Clergy Handbook. The link to the CofE website was to basic information on SMP, not the Family Friendly Policies Guidance. Whilst this link shows that SMP is available, we have not been able to assess whether any of the other guidelines, such as the removal of the qualifying period have been followed.



Have a diocesan maternity policy publicly available that meets the 2020 guidance.

St Alban's

Maternity policy is contained within the clergy handbook, which contains a notice to say the handbook will be updated in Spring 2023. This deadline was passed at the time of writing.

The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced pay clergy must have at least one year of continuous paid service at the beginning of the 14th week before the 'expected week of childbirth.

The policy contains little information which the guidelines recommend. The policy mentions KIT days which do not accord with current legal guidance. There is no information about housing, pension, training for curates, leave for SSMs or support for ordinands.



We recognise that a new policy may already be in the pipeline. We recommend the 2020 guidance and hope to see a new standalone policy when the current update is complete.

St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

This policy specifically references the 2020 guidelines and clearly aspires to meet them. The policy contains some forms at the back which clergy will find helpful.



The section on miscarriage and stillbirth is more pastoral than many of the policies we have read.

We celebrate that St Edmundsbury and Ipswich have adopted the 2020 guidelines. However, there is currently no guidance for ordinands. Some of the links to the guidance were broken, so we would recommend that these be fixed as soon as possible.

We are unsure about an inconsistency in the policy. We are pleased that the qualifying period for paid leave has been removed, but we also found a reference to those who don't qualify for SMP applying for Maternity Allowance. It would be helpful if this was clearer.



Make sure that there is publicly available guidance for ordinands. Check the links within the policy and be clear about the good maternity provision that the diocese offers.

Salisbury



The 2020 guidelines have not been followed because there was no policy available for us to study. The Clergy Reference Manual contains brief information with a link back to the HR page which in turn links to basic Church of England information on SMP.

The reference manual states “the law in this area is complex and fast moving. It is therefore advisable that any clergy interested in finding out more about Maternity, Paternity, Parental (including Shared) and Adoption Leave and Time Off to Care for Dependants should contact their Archdeacon or, where appropriate, the Dean of the Cathedral for advice. A copy of the most up to date Maternity, Paternity, Parental and Adoption Leave and Time Off to Care for Dependants policies can be obtained from <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/ministry/clergy-hr>”.



Despite the ‘complex and fast moving’ nature of maternity provision, we would like to note that most dioceses do manage to have publicly available information on entitlements. Many in the early stages of planning a family will not wish to contact their archdeacon.

NB. Despite the above statement, the HR link does not contain an up to date policy,



Have a diocesan maternity policy publicly available that meets the 2020 guidance.

Sheffield

The only mention to maternity provision that we could find on the diocesan website was in the booklet “*Flourishing in Ordained Ministry*”. The 2020 guidelines have not been followed because there was no policy available for us to study.

The booklet states “In November 2021 our Diocesan Synod adopted a set of Family Friendly Policies, which were introduced from January 2022. If you need to take advantage of the support these policies make available, you are encouraged to speak with clergy colleagues and your Archdeacon / Area Dean / Training Incumbent or DDO as soon as you become aware of your need. See here for more information: sheffield.anglican.org/health-wellbeing”.

It could be the case that Sheffield diocese has a policy which has taken account of the 2020 guidance. However, as we could not access this policy, it’s clear that the guidance that the policies are publicly available has not been followed in that respect at least. At the time of writing, there was no relevant information on the link above.



We believe this is another case where the reality on the ground is different to the score that we have been able to give, but this underlines the importance of openness with those who need to access the policies.



Have a diocesan maternity policy publicly available that meets the 2020 guidance.

Southwark

It is debatable whether this policy is publicly available as it appears to be behind a log in wall for clergy so technically if you have no log in account then you shouldn't be able to access it. However, we did find a policy by googling it independently, but it is not clearly titled in the search results, and definitely not easy to find, so we decided not to award a point of this.



The policy has a useful page of procedures including a table of who to inform and forms for informing of intentions.

The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced pay clergy must have at least one year continuous paid service at the 15th week before the 'expected week of childbirth and intend to return to work.

There is a link to some national guidance, but this is broken. Out of date wording is used around KIT days, and no information is available for SSMs or ordinands.



The policy should be easily found on the diocesan website, without the requirement to log in as ordinands, those in the discernment process or clergy seeking to move into the diocese also need access to this information. Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines.

A policy should include up to date wording on KIT days, and information for SSMs and ordinands.

Southwell and Nottingham

The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. To qualify for enhanced pay clergy must have at least one year continuous paid service at the beginning of the 14th week before the 'expected week of childbirth and intend to return to work.

This policy took us some time to find on the website, it is within the Clergy Handbook, which itself is not located as straightforwardly as some other diocesan websites.

The wording around KIT days needs to be updated to accord with the current legal understanding of KIT days for office holders. There is also a lack of information around housing and pension entitlement, and no details for SSMs or ordinands.



Produce an easy to find, standalone policy. Remove qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. A policy should include up to date wording on KIT days, discuss housing and pension provision and have information for SSMs and ordinands.

Truro

The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. Clergy must qualify for SMP to receive maternity pay. The policy is found within the diocesan handbook, not on a separate page. The wording around KIT days needs to be updated to accord with the current legal understanding of KIT days for office holders. The policy should be more specific about the notice period needed for maternity pay forms to be submitted, the policy currently says the person should give 'reasonable' notice, but a deadline would be clearer. There is no information for SSMs or ordinands.



Maternity checklist.

Fixed term posts may be found to cover maternity leave



The policy should be available as a standalone document or webpage which is easily accessible. Remove qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. A policy should include up to date wording on KIT days, a specific notice period, and provide information for SSMs and ordinands.

Winchester

The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. Clergy must qualify for SMP to receive maternity pay. The policy is available in a document called 'Clergy Information- Family Friendly Policies' on the 'HR policies and support' section of the diocesan website. The wording around KIT days needs to be updated to accord with the current legal understanding of KIT days for office holders. The policy should be more specific about the notice period needed for maternity pay forms to be submitted, the policy currently says the person should give 'reasonable' notice, but a deadline would be clearer. There is no information for NSMs or ordinands.



Maternity checklist and fixed term posts may be found to cover maternity leave



Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. A policy should include up to date wording on KIT days, a specific notice period, and provide information for NSMs and ordinands.

Worcester

We could not find a full maternity leave policy for Worcester, therefore the policy does not appear to meet the 2020 guidelines. There is a summary of information on a page called 'Parental leave' under 'Support for Clergy' on the diocesan website. Eligibility for 39 weeks maternity pay on a full stipend appears to be linked to qualifying for SMP. The website includes as an annex, the outdated 2015 guidance to dioceses. We have assumed that the diocese intends to meet the guidance they have supplied, but this is not a policy in itself. The supplied information contains little information which the 2020 guidelines recommend. The 2015 guidance mentions KIT days which do not accord with current legal guidance. There is no clear notice period given, though a link to the clergy payroll documents states 28 days.



Produce an easy to find, standalone policy. Remove the qualifying period of service to bring in line with national guidelines. A policy should include up to date wording on KIT days and notice period.

York

The policy does not meet the suggested national guidelines, as provision of maternity pay is dependent on time served. In York, clergy must have one year's continuous service at the beginning of the 14th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth to qualify for full diocesan maternity pay. The policy can be found online but it is contained within the 'Common Tenure Guide Clergy Handbook' available on the 'Terms of Service' section of the website. Despite being updated in 2023, the policy is not in line with the 2020 Guidance.

Interestingly KIT days are not mentioned at all, but Shared Parental Leave in touch (SPLIT) days are, so this is an inconsistency that should be cleared up in accordance with the current legal understanding of KIT days for office holders.

There is no information on housing, curacies, SSMs or ordinands so there is work to do to bring the policy in line with the 2020 guidelines.



We would hope to see a fuller standalone policy with information on boundaries, SSMs, housing, curacies and ordinands. We would like to see the qualifying period of service removed in order to bring in the policy in line with national guidelines.



Our Recommendations

Along with the specific recommendations to bring each Diocesan policy in line with the national guidelines detailed above, the following more general recommendations are offered.

Apply the policy

While we would hope that this didn't need saying, "**Dioceses please refer to and apply your policy!**" We are aware of far too many instances where someone going on maternity leave has been offered or promised something, or has simply assumed the provision stated in their diocesan policy will be provided, but it has not been. As office holders the majority of clergy will be unlikely to be able to fight this, they will just need to accept sub-standard treatment, however we would like to be able to expect the church to be seeking to operate a best practice approach and be alert to the impact on the wellbeing of clergy when this is not the case.

Post-ordination

At the point of ordination, you become the responsibility of your diocese and their policy will vary - the above guidelines are from the central Church, but dioceses are able to apply them (or not) individually. Curates and Incumbents are often treated differently.

The individual attitude of a training incumbent towards a pregnant curate will have a direct impact on their experience of maternity provision and the subsequent ministry they feel encouraged and enabled to offer. It would be hard to overstate the impact this has and worth remarking that some attitudes encountered would be, without a doubt, deemed unacceptable in a secular work environment and grounds for legal complaint.



We would like to suggest or encourage that all training incumbents, area deans and archdeacons

1. Receive unconscious bias training
2. Are well briefed on appropriate language to use
3. Are familiar and confident with the relevant policies
4. Be willing to seek further guidance and proactively support those seeking parental leave.

We would also strongly encourage dioceses to have at least one person in the role of Diocesan Advisor for Women's Ministry (DAWM) so women have someone for advice and guidance outside of their TI and/or Archdeacon, **regardless of the gender of those in senior roles.**

Enhanced Pay

We were encouraged that most of the policies we studied included 39 weeks of full stipend maternity pay (for those who meet the qualifying criteria). This is a more generous offer than the 2020 Guidance gives as a minimum, **so this is one of the most positive findings in this report**. We would encourage the minority of dioceses offering only 26 weeks at full stipend to consider meeting the level of support offered across the majority of the Church of England.

The dioceses that do not offer a clear indication that full stipend is payable for the full 39 weeks are Birmingham, Blackburn, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Chester, Coventry, Ely, Exeter, Liverpool, Peterborough, Portsmouth, Rochester, St Eds and Ips and Salisbury.

KIT days and language

Under ecclesiastical law, the majority of ordained clergy hold an odd position legally¹³. We are not employees of the church, nor are we self-employed; rather we are religious officeholders. While we may receive stipend pay and benefits, we are not given a contract of employment that clearly defines the hours we must work and how.

A stipend in practice is received monthly, so it can feel like a 'normal salaried job', however we do not have the same rights or protection as those employed by institutions bound by the Equalities Act 2010. Understanding of the nuances of being officeholders is not widespread and confuses many organisations and individuals we might turn to for advice.



One example of this ambiguity is seen immediately on the subject of 'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) days. The guidelines state that as officeholders we are not entitled, or limited to, the provision of KIT days which offer a clear right for maternity leave recipients to work for up to 10 days without having their leave or pay affected. In some ways this is helpful as the nature of ministry, particularly parish based, is full of grey areas and it can be very hard to determine and decide what is work and what is not. Therefore, it is **helpful to have it stated that some 'work' is permissible** and to offer a figure for that to prevent overwork



and/or anyone being taken advantage of. KIT days are a specific provision that are understood and reasonably widely known about in the secular world, so it is understandable why the term is used in diocesan policies, but it is inappropriate and misleading if we are not eligible.

This will be particularly pertinent to individuals who are inclined to overwork and those whose neurodiversity needs clear parameters to work with - the unknowing and/or fear of getting it wrong can be very damaging.



Another term should be used to differentiate the legal standing.

¹³ Not all ordained clergy are office-holders/parish clergy, some are employed as chaplains or similar

Cover

In most dioceses, as far as we are aware, the task of organising cover falls to the woman preparing to take leave. Very few dioceses assist with this responsibility, financially or logistically and this experientially adds an immense amount of stress and pressure, and often hours of additional work on top of the existing demands of ministry. If, and when, cover is not able to be organised there is then the guilt of leaving your parish 'without' and for some women this will mean they feel duty bound to return to work sooner than would be helpful to them.



Under no circumstances is it acceptable or appropriate to suggest that cover be paid for by the woman on maternity leave as she is "receiving pay for a job she isn't doing". This is immoral and illegal. But we are aware of this being said or suggested to more than one priest preparing to go on maternity leave.

To put this into a secular context, there would be outrage if someone suggested a schoolteacher taking maternity leave offered a portion of her salary to pay someone to take her classes while she was off. Yet some people feel it is perfectly reasonable to suggest this to their clergy.



*Greater support provided to those organising their own cover
More "proactive offers of additional help" such as fixed-term posts, or using retired clerics initiated by Dioceses (Guidance to Dioceses points 24-27)*

Housing

The same is true of housing. The national guidelines are clear that clergy remain entitled to stay in their provided accommodation, free of charge. In fact, as women on maternity leave are still in office, their housing forms part of their remuneration and conditions and should not be withdrawn during leave. This is however not widely understood and far too frequently, suggestions contrary to this guidance are made. It is outrageous that a family with a baby could be made effectively homeless by the church, but we know that sadly, this has happened. Those in PCC provided accommodation are especially vulnerable in these situations. Some policies we studied did not provide sufficient reassurance to those in PCC supported housing, compared to those in diocesan housing.



Many dioceses do not mention housing as part of the policy. A generous interpretation is that they may feel this is a given that does not need stating, however this is clearly not always the case.

We are also aware of occasions when provided clergy housing is no longer suitable as circumstances change and the family needs to move. In these cases, we would encourage dioceses to recognise the need to provide financial support to enable the move as they are 'resettling' to be able to do their job,



even though their post is continuing. Added to this, families with additional needs may require adaptations to their housing and/or it may be more suitable for them to receive a housing allowance and live in their own accommodation. Household needs vary hugely, one size does not fit all.

We encourage all dioceses to make the entitlement to stay in provided housing, explicit.

Curacy training

Women in our network have made us aware of numerous incidents of being disadvantaged by having a baby during curacy.

Where appropriate, **curacies should be extended to take account of maternity leave.**

Where this does not happen, women may not be able to complete their diocese's criteria for having their curacy signed off at all, or to be signed off as 'incumbent status' despite that being their calling. It should be clear that this is because they have had less time in active ministry (perhaps up to a year) and therefore significantly less experience and mentoring compared to those they were ordained with.



Those who feel called to incumbent status ministry should not be prevented from this because they have had a child. We are aware that it is worryingly common for women with young children to be steered towards SSM ministry and/or actively discouraged from looking for incumbency posts.¹⁴ **We have not heard of the same being said to any male priests who have recently become parents or have young children.**

Women should not feel pressured to return to work before they are ready, simply to hit criteria required for a curacy to be completed. As each diocese has its own approach to training and sign off, the impact of not extending curacies will be different in each place. It is vitally important that dioceses are unambiguous when conversations of maternity leave and provision are held, and that these conversations are accurately recorded and taken as binding by both parties, so that there is no subsequent confusion. The lived experience where dioceses have changed what is offered or denied any earlier offers in subsequent conversations is very unfair and can be a huge source of anxiety, stress and pressure.

Aside from the question of training, we have had numerous reports of unfair or bullying behaviour by training incumbents towards curates who are pregnant or have recently had a child. We hear that curates feel particularly vulnerable because they fear that if they make a complaint, it may affect their ability to get a first post after curacy. **Sadly, we are unable to say to them with confidence that this will not be the case.**

¹⁴ A supplementary question asked at General Synod was able to clarify that no data is collected nationally (and we're not aware of more locally) mapping the journey from curacy to incumbency or otherwise, that takes gender and parental circumstances into account or seeks to explore the reasons behind decisions around appointments.

Part-time working

It is not unusual for women to wish to explore the possibility of working part-time for a while after maternity leave. This is met with varying responses in dioceses. It is important for dioceses to realise that some clergy, especially those who are neuro-divergent, are unlikely to simply 'do less' without being given permission to do so. As clergy do not have contracted hours and what is classed as 'work' can include more nebulous tasks, this is an area that could (on paper) be easily managed independently, but the reality is more complex.

Impacting this too is the prevalence of unrealistic expectations of a work-life balance, an unhealthy workaholic ethic and competitive busyness, this needs addressing. It is a highly subjective area that is impacted hugely by an individual's environment, support structures and personality, to name just a few factors! The norm of clergy working a six-day week with pressure to be always 'on call' and available to a parish is not healthy or sustainable.

Some clergy are more confident than others in managing their time sustainably and the reality of Parish life is that there is almost no universal workload or pattern, each parish comes with its particular requirements. Additionally, within the church year, the workload ebbs and flows with the changing seasons. This should facilitate dioceses to be adaptable and encourage different working patterns for a time, especially when required by family life. There is the opportunity to ask 'what is work' for clergy and broaden the understanding of how ministry can be lived out.

Connected to this, if a member of the clergy asks to reduce the number of days they work, it has been known for them to then be charged rent on the property the church has demanded they live in. There is very little justification to do this. We do not choose the houses we are asked to live in, they are often far bigger and more costly to heat than somewhere we might buy, or in a very different community. The stipend clergy receive is not easily able to also cover a mortgage or rent. Clergy should never be put in the situation of having to pay for the privilege of being in ministry.

Advocacy and Power



As already touched on, the level of responsibility and expectation placed on women to facilitate their own maternity leave requires a high level of capacity and energy. This is unrealistic and unmanageable for many, without their wellbeing being detrimentally affected, especially those who are having complicated pregnancies. The importance of having people allocated to support, advocate and advise women on their rights, the logistics and the reality cannot be overstated.

We have experienced ourselves, and heard of many others being offered, or assured that certain provisions or accommodations would be made available to them by those in positions of authority, trust or power in their diocese; and then these have never materialised or simply all knowledge of the conversations denied. While it is solid advice to encourage people to ensure such offers and agreements are made and confirmed in

writing, in practice this is hard to push for when there is resistance and a power imbalance involved. The effect of then having such conversations denied or stated to never have happened erodes trust in the relationship and can be very damaging. In addition, whilst it is increasingly common to encourage ministers to ensure they have joined a union¹⁵ to offer some protection and external support, the unions are often prevented from being as effective as would be helpful due to our Officeholder status.

It is our belief that the power imbalance is often perpetuated by the ingrained patriarchy of the institution and societal stereotypes and expectations on gendered roles within a household, alongside the churches reliance on being exempt from acting in accordance to the Equality Act of 2010. The recent *Love Matters* report goes into much detail about what constitutes and supports an environment in which children and family life can flourish¹⁶. Gender based assumptions can stifle this flourishing. That report also touches on the damaging effect on children when there are concerns around financial provision, housing, or employment for their family. All areas in which ministers taking parental leave are disproportionately affected¹⁷. All dioceses are encouraged to have diocesan advisors in women's ministry (DAWMs) which should be one avenue for that support, but many do not have anyone in this post.¹⁸ Similarly, many dioceses do not have allocated disability advisors, who might be another logical option.

We also note that our findings and observations are largely echoed in the most recent Jay report¹⁹ which, while covering a broader remit, offered comment on the lack of uniformity across dioceses, variable interpretations of guidance and inequitable support.



The Church of England has been ordaining women for over thirty years, but we are still a long way from being treated equally, never mind equitably. It is our belief that fighting for women's rights to be addressed and their voices heard should matter to *all* followers of Jesus who believe in justice, not just women.

It is concerning to note the number of dioceses who seem resistant or reluctant to have their policies publicly accessible and available. As pressure has rightly increased to demand that our Safeguarding policies, practice and procedures are fully visible and easily accessible on all parish and diocesan websites, the failure to do similar with maternity policies should not be overlooked in our opinion. Due to the power imbalance and the nature of pregnancy this is a safeguarding issue. Policies being generous, readily available and followed well would reduce the risk of emotional, material and organisational harm to women at a vulnerable time in their lives.

¹⁵ Unite and Community have branches for faith-based workers.

¹⁶ See *Love Matters (2023)* report from the Archbishops' Commission.

¹⁷ Parental leave is deliberately used here as the Church of England does offer shared parental leave and pay, this is not yet widely known or utilised, but if it was used more we feel it would help address the imbalance and be beneficial for everyone.

¹⁸ Currently there are about 10 dioceses with no identified DAWM

¹⁹ See *Future of Church Safeguarding Report* by Prof Alexis Jay, February 2024.



All Dioceses should ensure they have a DAWM and also a Disability Advisor listed on their website as a point of contact. Or at the very least provide signposts to other organisations, groups or people that may be able to help.

Centralised data gathering

We put a question to General Synod to try and get data to help us know what numbers we're talking about so the financial impact on the church could be more thoroughly discussed²⁰. The answer offered was that this information is not collected centrally. This is data that we would like to see and believe would be helpful to have access to. For those of us with lived experience of pregnancy, birth, the fourth trimester, post-natal depression, breastfeeding challenges, sleep deprivation and the impact of all the other aspects of early parenthood, this is an area we hope is going to be addressed. Collecting this data should help ensure the well-being of those who take maternity leave can be tracked, considered, and monitored, doing this centrally would also add in a layer of anonymity which might help safeguard individuals.

In addition, we asked about those dioceses who were not meeting the national guidelines for provision, where women in them were being told that their diocese couldn't afford to follow them²¹. Whilst we recognise that not all dioceses have the same disposable income or the same willingness to invest in women's ministry, we are concerned that there does not appear to be any follow-up support for those dioceses, rather simply the impact borne by the women, with no subsequent monitoring of wellbeing being provided, locally or nationally. Again, this is a safeguarding issue.

One of the stated priorities of the Church of England is to 'grow younger and more diverse';²² we believe that addressing these areas is a necessary accompaniment to that. Almost all DAWMs are not paid for the role and simply do it on top of their 'normal' ministry, there is no paid support or co-ordination nationally for supporting women's ministry that we are aware of. This report is one example of something that, arguably, should have been organised and funded centrally. The church chooses how and what to invest money in, spending more on women's ministry we believe would pay off.



Data on maternity (and other types of parental) leave is compiled by each Diocese and centrally. This should include the number of clergy taking leave, as well as the length of leave taken.

²⁰ See Q182 from GS questions July 2023.

²¹ See Q58 from GS questions July 2022

²² <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/vision-and-strategy>

Commendations



At General Synod July 2022 the Chair of Ministry Council said “supporting clergy who are parents is right and proper, and is an investment in their long-term ministry”²³. We agree and hope that we have shown there are some great examples of ‘above and beyond’ provision and considerations in place in various dioceses. We encourage those involved in updating and maintaining policies to consider learning from these examples.



Diocese	Commending detail
Bristol	Cover available for fixed term, help with filling in the forms provided.
Canterbury	Case studies
Chelmsford	Fixed term maternity cover available
Chichester	Policy which includes takes different learning styles into account with case studies and a video clip.
Coventry	Clear policy including case studies and information on curacies
Derby	DBF pays for maternity cover for services
Eds & Ips	Good pastoral language and includes forms to download and use
Exeter	Good pastoral language and tone around difficult topics.
Gloucester	Checklist to help prepare
Southwark	Clear table of who to inform and forms to download for doing so.
Truro	Checklist to follow and possibility of cover.
Winchester	Checklist to work through. Possibility of cover being found.

²³ Response to Q58, From +Mark Tanner, Bishop of Chester, GS questions Jul 2022.

Concluding Remarks

Many of the women who offered us their experiences and stories were reluctant to be named or to identify their diocese. It is not unrealistic to suggest this is evidence of the vulnerable, precarious position women are put in and how hard it is to speak up about the injustice they encounter. There is a deep concern about the impact such statements may have on future opportunities and relationships with those in authority. Alongside this there is a fear that to call someone out on their attitude, language or behaviour will be seen as disloyal or a personal attack.

As a church hoping to address the unequitable balance of those in ministry, with a real focus on growing younger and more diverse, investing in provision for young parents, who will give decades of their lives to the church, is both wise and necessary.

It is not uncommon to hear or be told that ‘the women issue is done now’, as women have now been able to be ordained as priests for 30 years and in the Episcopate for 10 years. However, to assume that means that we have gender equality is to ignore the reality that many women (and other minority groups) still encounter and experience regular discrimination, prejudice and abuse. The idea that a woman cannot possibly be both a full-time minister and a mother, is archaic and untrue. Full-time ministry, especially parish ministry, is not easy to juggle alongside family responsibilities but that could reflect the prevalent gender imbalance around managing a household just as much as the unhealthy models of workaholic ministry. Ministry while parenting does indeed look different and comes with plenty of challenges, however, with good support, communication and grace applied, the ministry of working mums brings a valuable expression of the love of Christ.

We have not heard any reports of male clergy having their capacity or suitability for fulltime stipendiary ministry challenged based on their being or becoming a parent and would suggest this disparity is concerning. We hope the church will continue to address this inequality and take steps to better support the flourishing and wellbeing of *all* clergy and their households so they can be blessed in their ministry, as they are a blessing.

We offer this report out of love for the church and in hopeful prayer for the future,

Rev'ds Rae, Chantal & Caroline



Further Signposting

Other sources of support and information that may be helpful



All Dioceses are encouraged to have a Diocesan Advisor for Women's Ministry, not all do. The NADAWM network includes many of them and they also have a library of resources and policies to adapt and refer to.

Find them here:

<https://www.nadawm.org/>

They also have a great selection of pictures of women in ministry you can use

<https://www.nadawm.org/gallery-of-women/>

WATCH are kind of the campaigning arm for Women in the Church, find out more about their work and research here

<https://womenandthechurch.org/>



Clergy Support Trust are an incredibly generous grant making body, that can help towards childcare costs and/or a family holiday, among other things.

<https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/>



For Anglican Evangelical Ordained Women called and sent to proclaim the Gospel

<https://www.thejunianetwork.org.uk/>



Appendix 1: Policy Location and Qualifying Criteria for Fullest Maternity Provision by Diocese

Bath and Wells

Policy in online Clergy Guidelines

Qualifying criteria:

In the Diocese of Bath & Wells, office holders will qualify for occupational maternity pay if they meet the following conditions: Have one year's continuous service at the beginning of the 14th week before the expected week of childbirth Be in paid service at the time maternity leave begins Have given notice confirming the commencement of their maternity leave to the Archdeacon and the diocesan office Give an undertaking of the intention to return to the duties of their office after the birth Occupational maternity pay is set at full stipend for 39 weeks (inclusive of SMP) from the commencement of maternity leave. Following this, office holders are entitled to 13 weeks unpaid leave.

Birmingham

There is a link to the national Family Friendly Policies Guidance on the 'Women's Ministry' page of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

The diocese states they have adopted the Family Friendly Policies Guidance, removing any need to qualify for SMP.

Blackburn

Separate webpage under 'Women in Ministry' page of diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria

Blackburn Diocese has agreed that clergy on maternity leave will receive 6 months' full stipend (which includes any entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay) followed by 13 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay as part of an additional 6 months unpaid Diocesan leave.

The Statutory Maternity Regulations are as follows:

Statutory Maternity Leave is for 52 weeks. Clergy may be entitled to receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) for up to 39 weeks of the leave. The minimum level of pay depends on length of service. Clergy with 26 weeks' service are entitled to at minimum, Statutory Maternity Pay for 39 weeks (at 90% of average weekly earnings for 6 weeks followed by lower rate SMP for the remaining 33 weeks) plus 13 weeks' unpaid leave.

If clergy qualify for SMP, it is paid:

- for the first six weeks at 90 per cent of your stipend
- for the remaining 33 weeks at the lower of either the standard rate or 90 per cent of your stipend.

Bristol

'Family Friendly Policies' found in online clergy handbook

Qualifying criteria

Office holders already have a right to statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay because of their National Insurance Contributions.

Canterbury

Policy found entitled 'Family leave' under 'Guidance, forms and fees' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Clergymen and licensed lay workers who express an intention to return to work and who have completed at least one year's service at the beginning of the 14th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC), should receive 39 weeks' paid maternity leave on full stipend. They may also wish to take an additional 13 weeks' unpaid maternity leave after the end of the period of paid maternity leave.

Carlisle

Policy found in 'Clergy Terms of Service Handbook' on 'For Clergy' section of Diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Carlisle Diocese has agreed that clergy on maternity leave will receive 6 months' full stipend (which includes any entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay) followed by 13 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay as part of an additional 6 months unpaid Diocesan leave. 10
The Statutory Maternity Regulations are as follows: Statutory Maternity Leave is for 52 weeks. Clergy may be entitled to receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) for up to 39 weeks of the leave. If clergy qualify for SMP, it is paid: for the first six weeks at 90 per cent of your stipend for the remaining 33 weeks at the lower of either the standard rate of £151.20, or 90 per cent of your stipend If you are pregnant, you must notify your Rural Dean and give your MATB1 form to the finance department at Church House.

Chelmsford:

Policy found in 'Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave' below clergy handbook on diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

In the Diocese of Chelmsford, office holders and employees of the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Finance and its subsidiaries qualify for Occupational Maternity Pay on the same basis as Statutory Maternity Pay i.e. if they have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth. Solely for the purposes of maternity leave and pay, previous service as an office holder or as an employee of the Diocesan Board of Finance in another diocese of the Church of England (including the diocese in Europe) will be considered as qualifying service. Occupational Maternity Pay comprises 26 weeks during which the Statutory Maternity Pay due to the individual during this period will be made up to the level of her normal pay/stipend.

Chester:

Policy found in clergy policies and procedures section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

No qualifying criteria listed, but assumes qualification for SMP

The diocesan policy is to pay the first six months at the usual stipend rate followed by thirteen weeks at statutory maternity pay and the final thirteen weeks unpaid.

Chichester

'Family Friendly Policy For Clergy' found on 'Wellbeing for Clergy and Families-Resources' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

For Parental, and in situations where clergy are not entitled to the enhanced Diocesan benefits, statutory entitlements apply, and advice on these can be obtained at BROKEN LINK <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/4.%20guidance%20on%20legal%20entitlements.pdf> or from the HR consultants at Church House, Hove.

And

The Diocese of Chichester offers benefits in excess of the statutory requirements to clergy and licensed lay workers who meet the statutory eligibility requirements and any additional requirements set out below. These benefits are detailed below:

Maternity Pay and Leave

Stipendiary clergywomen and licensed lay workers should receive 39 weeks' paid maternity leave on their full stipend. This can start any time after 11 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC). They may also wish to take an additional 13 weeks' unpaid maternity leave after the end of the period of paid maternity leave. It is important to

give the required notice described in sections 6 and 15 in order to be entitled to maternity leave and pay.

Coventry

'Clergy Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave Policy' is found under the 'Clergy HR Policies and Procedures' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Effective 4 November 2021, as approved by Bishop's Council, the Diocese of Coventry has agreed that, clergy may receive Enhanced Maternity Pay, irrespective of whether they qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay or have held office in the diocese for any length of time.

If the mother intends to return to her role after maternity leave, she is entitled to receive:

- *her existing level of stipend (which includes Statutory Maternity Pay) for the first 26 weeks.*
- *Statutory Maternity Pay or 90% of her average earnings (whichever is the lower) for up to a further 13 weeks.*
- *an additional 13 weeks' maternity leave without pay. 2.25. This enhanced provision is in order to:*
- *ensure that stipendiary office holders are not disadvantaged (if, for example, they do not have a statutory entitlement to statutory maternity or adoption pay because their maternity or adoption leave starts shortly after commencing their curacy);*
- *provide adequate support to clergy and their families;*
- *demonstrate that the Church is serious about providing good care and support for its clergy when they have family responsibilities.*

Derby

'Section 7 Family Friendly Policies' is found as part of the clergy handbook on the diocesan website.

Qualifying Criteria:

Pregnant clergy who meet qualifying statutory conditions (based upon their length of service and average earnings) will be entitled to 39 weeks Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). The remaining 13 weeks of Additional Maternity Leave will be unpaid.

The Diocesan Board of Finance will continue to make contributions to the mother's pension throughout Ordinary and Additional Maternity Leave.

SMP is equivalent to: 90% of the usual stipend for the first 6 weeks and is then paid at a rate set by Parliament for a further 33 weeks (the rate from 6 April 2022 is £156.66).

An expectant mother intending to return to stipendiary ministry will receive Occupational Maternity Pay in addition to the statutory requirements.

- The Occupational Maternity Pay will be the sum which, when added to the SMP, will give the mother a sum equal to her usual stipend^[1].
- Occupational Maternity Pay will be payable for the first 39 weeks of Maternity Leave.
- If the mother subsequently decides not to return to work, the Diocese will require her to refund all sums paid to her by way of Occupational Maternity Pay.

Durham

No policy is currently available on the website, although their DAWM has requested that it be made available.

We understand the handbook is being updated, including the maternity policy.

Ely

A policy is not available, but there is some information in the clergy handbook section of the website. This includes 'FAQs on the guidance on supporting clergy and ordinands who become parents' and a short section on 'Maternity and Paternity Leave In Curacy'.

Qualifying criteria:

From FAQs- Clergy office holders have the same legal entitlement to maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave and pay as employees. This is 6 weeks paid leave at 90% of average weekly earnings and 33 weeks at lower rate Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) (currently £148.68), plus 13 weeks of unpaid leave. However, in order to be eligible to receive the statutory minimum, it is necessary to have worked for 26 weeks before the 15th week before the date on which the baby is expected to be born.

As long as clergy have 26 weeks' stipendiary service on the national payroll, the service does not need to be in one appointment or even one diocese. Training for ordination does not count as work for the purposes of qualifying for statutory maternity (and other) pay. Dioceses are required to pay SMP (where someone is eligible and has 26 weeks' stipendiary service by the 15th week before the expected date of childbirth). They have discretion to provide maternity pay at an enhanced level (and this is in line with good employment practice).

And the guidance

- recommends a minimum level of enhanced maternity (and other) pay that dioceses should pay in addition to the statutory minimum, (26 weeks on full pay and 13 weeks on SMP £148.68 per week) which will help to reduce inconsistencies between dioceses;
- removes an uncertainty among dioceses by making it clear that clergy are eligible for SMP if they have held stipendiary office for at least six months by the 15th week before the due date, even if some of that service was in a previous office or in a previous diocese, and recommends that these clergy should also receive enhanced maternity pay;

- recommends that shared parental pay should be paid at the enhanced rate;
- recommends that enhanced maternity pay should also be paid where someone is not eligible for SMP for example , if a curate has been in a paid post for less than six months by the 15th week before the due date;
- recommends that ordinands should continue to receive discretionary means tested maintenance grants during any period of maternity or adoption related absence for up to one year to enable them to resume their studies and accommodation should continue to be provided;
 - provides for this support to be included in the existing pooling arrangements which share the cost of training between dioceses;
 - recommends flexible support for ordinands who become pregnant after completing training in order to enable them to be ordained and start in a curacy;
 - encourages those providing training to respond positively to the needs to ordinands who become parents; and
 - reassures ordinands that they can expect to continue to receive support during any period of parental absence. The primary consideration in every case is that support should be provided at the appropriate level. Sometimes this will mean going beyond the legal entitlement, for example providing the equivalent of enhanced maternity pay when someone not legally eligible to receive SMP, or by making special arrangements to provide additional cover on a temporary basis

However, the section on curates states:

- Where the qualifying criteria for payment of statutory maternity pay are not met, (i.e. to have been employed by the Diocese for at least 26 weeks), the Diocese will pay an honorarium; the amount dependent upon the number of weeks without salary to a maximum of 13 weeks in the first instance.

Exeter

'Clergy Maternity Policy 2022' is found in the 'Work Life Balance: Forms and Policies' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

SMP was previously payable to those stipendiary office holders with between 26 weeks and 52 weeks continuous service. These office holders now qualify for the enhanced maternity pay providing they meet all of the other qualifying criteria. The requirement to remain in office is still extant.

A stipendiary office holder is entitled to SMP if:

- The office holder must have at least 26 weeks continuous service by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth and must remain an office holder of the Diocese.

- The office holder's average weekly earnings during the eight weeks ending with the Qualifying Week (the Relevant Period) are not less than the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions set the Government.
- The office holder has given at least 28 days' notice (or as much notice as is reasonably practicable) confirming the commencement date of their Maternity Leave to the Archdeacon and the diocesan office along with a doctor's or midwife's certificate MATB1 stating the expected week of childbirth.
- The office holder is still pregnant at the 11th week before her baby is due or has had her baby by that time.
- The office holder has ceased to perform her duties.

Previously, if an office holder had less than 26 weeks' stipendiary service, they may not have been entitled to SMP. The diocese has extended the maternity pay provision to qualifying office holders with less than 26 weeks' service providing they meet all of the other qualifying criteria. If for any reason the office holder does not qualify for the enhanced maternity pay provision they will need to seek advice from the Department of Work and Pensions to identify whether they qualify for maternity allowance. This is based on their recent employment and earnings record and is a state benefit paid for 39 weeks. In such cases the Finance Officer Clergy Payroll will issue an SMP1 form to confirm that no stipend payment will be made from the Diocese.

Gloucester

'Section 5 Family Friendly Policies' found in the 'Clergy, Readers and Parish Handbook' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

This policy applies to all stipendiary clergy and curates regardless of time in the office they hold.

And

In Gloucester Diocese clergy will receive their full stipend for the 39 week OML period which includes SMP.

Guildford

No policy but some information is available in the Clergy Wellbeing Covenant on the Clergy page of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

In the Diocese of Guildford qualifying clergy will receive their full stipend for the 39 weeks OML period which includes the element of statutory maternity pay (SMP).

Hereford

Policy can be found in the Clergy Handbook available on the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Assumes clergy qualify for SMP

Office holders already have a right to statutory maternity, paternity and adoption **pay** because of their National Insurance Contributions.

Stipends will be payable in full for 39 weeks.

Leeds

Policy is found within the Clergy Handbook on the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Subject to the eligibility below, clergywomen and licensed lay workers who express an intention to return to work and who have completed at least one year's service by the end of the qualifying week, will receive 39 weeks paid maternity leave on full stipend (pro rata for part time office holders).

To qualify for Diocesan Maternity Pay it is necessary to: Have one year's continuous service at the end of the qualifying week; Be in paid service at the time maternity leave begins; Stop work at the earliest after the start of the 11th week before the EWC; Give notice to the Diocesan office in writing of the intention to take maternity leave before the end of the 15th week before the EWC.

The Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department should then confirm the date in writing, including the date when the clergywoman or licensed lay worker is expected to return to work. The clergywoman/licensed lay worker can change her mind about the dates but should give 8 weeks' notice of any changes, which should again be confirmed by the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department in writing; Give an undertaking of the intention to return to work after the birth; Be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC, or have had the baby.

Leicester

No policy available on the website. A clergy person provided us with a copy of the clergy handbook.

Qualifying criteria:

Depending on the conditions below, clergy are entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). The Church Commissioners will claim back SMP but for the 39 weeks of SMP clergy will receive their full stipend... SMP is paid to clergy who:

- *Are in their post by the end of the 15th week before their baby is due... and*

- *Have completed at least 26 weeks continuous service at the qualifying week*
- *Have given notice confirming the commencement date of their maternity leave...*
- *Are in receipt of an average stipend which is above the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions*
- *Are still pregnant at the 11th week before their baby is due, or have had their baby by that time.*

Lichfield

'Section 4 Family Friendly Policies' is found within the 'Diocesan Policy Guidelines For Clergy' section of the Diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Subject to the eligibility below, clergywomen and licensed lay workers who express an intention to return to work and who have completed at least one year's service at the beginning of the 14th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC), will receive 39 weeks' paid maternity leave on full stipend.

To qualify for Diocesan Maternity Pay it is necessary to:

1. have one year's continuous service at the beginning of the 14th week before the EWC
2. be in paid service at the time maternity leave begins
3. stop work at the earliest after the start of the 11th week before the EWC
4. give notice to the diocesan office in writing of the intention to take maternity leave before the end of the 15th week before the EWC. The Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department should then confirm the date in writing, including the date when the clergywoman or licensed lay worker is expected to return to work. The clergywoman/licensed lay worker can change her mind about the dates but should give 8 weeks' notice of any changes, which should again be confirmed by the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department in writing
5. give an undertaking of the intention to return to work after the birth
6. be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC, or have had the baby.

Lincoln

'Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy' is found on the 'Clergy Documents' page of the Diocesan Website.

Qualifying Criteria:

the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Finance operates a discretionary enhanced scheme. To be entitled to this discretionary enhanced scheme, the cleric should:

- be in at least one year continuous paid service at the time of her maternity by the beginning of the 15th week before the 'expected week of childbirth (EWC)', known as the Qualifying Week.
- her average weekly earnings are above the National Insurance threshold. • she has given at least 28 days' notice (or as much as is reasonably practicable) of the date she intends maternity pay to start
- she is still pregnant 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth, or has already given birth
- she supplies, no more than 3 weeks after the birth, a certificate from a midwife or doctor confirming the actual date of childbirth²⁴

And

Where a clergy has worked for less than one year she needs to be in service at the Qualifying Week (15 weeks before the EWC) and have completed 26 weeks work to qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay although entitled to maternity leave regardless of length of continuous service. The SMP is paid at 90% for the first 6 weeks and thereafter at the lower flat rate SMP for 33 weeks. Clergy are not entitled to the discretionary enhanced scheme due to the lack of service.

A cleric who does not have 26 weeks continuous service at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth is not entitled to SMP, but may claim maternity allowance from the government, which is 39 weeks at the lower rate of SMP.

Liverpool

'Becoming A Parent' is a short summary contained within the Clergy Handbook on the Diocesan website. It contains links to government and national CofE guidance on legal entitlements but very little additional information.

Qualifying criteria:

Link to government page on SMP provided.

London

'Family Friendly Leave For Clergy' is a page on the diocesan website which includes the Maternity policy and other useful information.

Qualifying criteria:

²⁴ If an official certificate is required (which differs from the birth certificate), it would be useful to specify what it is called to make sure the correct document is received. However, it would be even better to remove this requirement as it appears quite intimidating especially in the weeks immediately following birth. In our experience, a quick email to TI/Bishop has been sufficient.

With the exception of self-supporting ministers and ordinands in training, office holders are entitled to 39 weeks leave at full stipend (this is inclusive of the first 2 weeks compulsory time off following childbirth). Any additional time taken (taking leave up to a maximum of 52 weeks) will be unpaid.

Manchester

We understand that the policy is currently under review, but we used the information available to us at time of writing which is the short summary contained within the 'Guidance For Ecclesiastical Officers document' on the 'Terms of Service' section of the Diocesan website.

Qualifying Criteria

Newcastle

Policy is contained within the Clergy Handbook on the 'Diocesan Handbooks for Clergy and Parishes' section of the diocesan website. We are grateful that the maternity policy has recently been updated, however as it is not yet publicly available we have had to use the information which can be found online to ensure consistency across all dioceses.

Qualifying criteria:

Subject to the eligibility below, clergywomen and licensed lay workers who express an intention to return to work will receive 39 weeks paid maternity leave on full stipend.

To qualify for Diocesan Maternity Pay it is necessary to:

- have one year's continuous service at the end of the 15th week before the EWC
- be in paid service at the time maternity leave begins
- stop work no earlier than the start of the 11th week before the EWC;
- give notice to the Diocesan office in writing of the intention to take maternity leave before the end of the 15th week before the EWC. The Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department should then confirm the date in writing, including the date when the clergywoman or licensed lay worker is expected to return to work. The clergywoman/licensed lay worker can change her mind about the dates but should give 8 weeks' notice of any changes, which should again be confirmed by the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department in writing;
- give an undertaking of the intention to return to work for at least 9 months following the Maternity Leave;
- be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC, or have had the baby. Women whose babies are stillborn, or who miscarry after the 24th week of pregnancy, still qualify for the full scheme terms. The payment of Diocesan Maternity Pay includes any entitlement to SMP. If a woman who has claimed Diocesan Maternity Pay subsequently decides to resign from office within 9 months of the

end of her maternity leave, she will be required to refund the Diocesan Maternity Pay to the diocese.

Norwich

We were unable to locate a policy without contacting the diocese directly, which clergy or ordinands might not wish to do whilst planning a family.

Oxford

'Maternity Leave and Pay' is a separate page found in the Clergy Handbook section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying Criteria:

Enhanced Maternity Pay (EMP)^[1] eligibility and procedure - The Diocese of Oxford operates an enhanced scheme where all stipendiary office holders (including curates in training) are entitled to maternity pay irrespective of whether they qualify for SMP or have held office in the diocese for any length of time if you:

- have given the correct notice as detailed above in point 4 - Giving notice of pregnancy) and
- are still pregnant 11 weeks before the EWC or have already given birth.

In order to get EMP, even if you do not meet the qualifying criteria for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) (i.e., haven't held your office within the Diocese under common tenure for at least 26 weeks), you will receive an SMP1 form and must apply for Maternity Allowance (MA1 claim form). Send a copy of the decision letter for your claim to our Payroll Officer. This way, if your claim is successful, the Diocese will recover the amount of maternity allowance awarded from your stipend. Please also note that in order for the diocese to reclaim 92% of Statutory Maternity (and other) Pay, the diocese is required to give at least 28 days' notice to HMRC.

To qualify for EMP, an office holder who is either a clergy or a licensed lay worker must return to their licensed ministry within the Diocese of Oxford for at least one year after maternity leave. Failure to do so will require reimbursement of the difference between SMP and EMP to the Diocese. Whereas an office holder who is a training curate is expected to return to licensed ministry (which would also include Extra Parochial Minister (EPM), Permission to Officiate (PtO) or an equivalent license to parish ministry) within the Church of England for at least one year after maternity leave.

Peterborough

'Family Friendly Policies' can be found under the 'Resources for Clergy' section of the website. This links to the 2020 guidance for Family Friendly Policies.

Qualifying criteria

No policy stating the qualifying criteria, but we assume the following guidance is upheld:

The Archbishop's Council recommends that dioceses should adopt the following minimum provision for clergy office holders who are due to become parents or adopt regardless of legal entitlement.

- Stipendiary office holders should receive Enhanced Maternity or Adoption Pay during maternity and adoption leave (i.e. pay in excess of the statutory minimum level), with the recommended level of Enhanced Maternity or Adoption Pay being 26 weeks on full stipend plus 13 weeks at the level of statutory maternity pay;
- They should receive Enhanced Maternity or Adoption Pay, irrespective of whether they qualify for Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay or have held office in the diocese for any length of time

Portsmouth

The document 'parental leave' is found on the 'Information for Clergy' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Information on SMP only

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

A minister will be entitled to higher rate SMP at 90% of her stipend for the first 6 weeks of ordinary maternity leave and thereafter at the lower flat rate SMP for 33 weeks, provided that:

- she has 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the qualifying week i.e. the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth
- her average weekly earnings are above the National Insurance threshold.
- she has given at least 28 days' notice (or as much as is reasonably practicable) of the date she intends SMP to start
- she is still pregnant 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth, or has already given birth
- she supplies a certificate from a midwife or doctor confirming the date of her expected week of childbirth
- she has ceased work

A minister who does not have 26 weeks continuous service at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth is not entitled to SMP, but may claim maternity allowance from the government.

Rochester

At time of writing the only information we could find was some links in the Clergy Handbook. The link to the CofE website was to basic information on SMP, not the Family Friendly Policies Guidance.

Qualifying criteria:

No detailed information.

St Alban's

Maternity policy is contained within the clergy handbook, which contains a notice to say the handbook will be updated in Spring 2023.

Qualifying criteria:

Enhanced maternity pay is offered where clergy have been:

- in at least one year continuous paid service at the beginning of the 14th week before the 'expected week of childbirth (EWC)'
- average weekly earnings are above the National Insurance threshold.
- they have given at least 28 days' notice (or as much as is reasonably practicable) of the date they intend maternity pay to start
- they are still pregnant 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth, or has already given birth

St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

'Clergy maternity Policy' is found within the 'Ministers well-being and support' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

All stipendiary office holders are eligible for the DBF's Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) from day one of their deployment. This is an enhanced rate of maternity pay ie above the statutory maternity pay (SMP) rate. These payments are administered in the same way as your normal stipend.

The enhanced provision is:

- First 26 weeks: you are paid your normal stipend (which includes Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance)
- Followed by 13 weeks: SMP paid at the rate set by the Government or the Earnings Related Rate if this is lower.

Salisbury

No policy available. Clergy handbook is called the 'clergy reference manual'. No real maternity policy included in manual, but link back to HR page which in turn links to basic CofE info on SMP. The reference manual states “the law in this area is complex and fast moving. It is therefore advisable that any clergy interested in finding out more about Maternity, Paternity, Parental (including Shared) and Adoption Leave and Time Off to Care for Dependants should contact their Archdeacon or, where appropriate, the Dean of the Cathedral for advice. A copy of the most up to date Maternity, Paternity, Parental and Adoption Leave and Time Off to Care for Dependants policies can be obtained from <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/ministry/clergy-hr>”. Many in the early stages of planning a family will not wish to contact their archdeacon. The hr link contains no up to date policy.

Qualifying criteria:

No detailed information.

Sheffield

The document ‘Flourishing in ordained ministry’ on the wellbeing section of the website was the only document we could find that mentioned maternity leave. It states that new Family Friendly policies were introduced in January 2022, but we have no information on what they are. “If you need to take advantage of the support these policies make available, you are encouraged to speak with clergy colleagues and your Archdeacon / Area Dean / Training Incumbent or DDO as soon as you become aware of your need”. There is a link at the bottom of the page for further information, but no further information can be found at that link.

Qualifying criteria:

No information.

Southwark

Policy appears to be behind a log in wall for clergy. Technically no log in account = no public access. It can be found it by googling it independently, but it is not clearly titled in the search results, so not easy to find. have useful page of procedures including table of who to inform and forms for informing of intentions. Link to national guidance is broken and needs to be fixed ASAP.

Qualifying criteria:

If 15 weeks before the expected birth or adoption you have been holding office in the Diocese continuously for at least 52 weeks, and have indicated that you intend to return to work after maternity / adoption leave, we will pay you the enhanced level of maternity / adoption pay at the rate of 39 weeks at full pay. This includes the statutory maternity / adoption pay. The payment of enhanced maternity pay is subject to a commitment to

returning to hold office for at least 3 months following the end of the maternity / adoption pay. If not, you will be expected to repay the enhanced maternity / adoption pay less the Statutory Maternity Pay element.

Southwell and Nottingham

Policy found within the Clergy Handbook on the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Subject to the eligibility below, clergywomen and licensed lay workers who express an intention to return to work and who have completed at least one year's service at the beginning of the 14th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC), will receive 39 weeks' paid maternity leave on full stipend. The payment of Diocesan Maternity Pay includes any entitlement to SMP. To qualify for Diocesan Maternity Pay all the conditions required for entitlement to SMP must be satisfied and it is necessary to: a) have one year's continuous service at the beginning of the 14th week before the EWC; b) be in paid service at the time maternity leave begins; c) stop work at the earliest after the start of the 11th week before the EWC; d) give notice to the diocesan office in writing of the intention to take maternity leave before the end of the 15th week before the EWC. The Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department should then confirm the date in writing, including the date when the clergywoman or licensed lay worker is expected to return to work. The clergywoman / licensed lay worker can change her mind about the dates but should give 8 weeks notice of any changes, which should again be confirmed by the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department in writing; e) give an undertaking of the intention to return to work after the birth; f) be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC, or have had the baby.

Winchester

'Family Friendly Policies' available to download from the 'HR Policies and Support' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Depending on length of service, clergy are entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). Church Commissioners can claim back SMP – for the 39 weeks of OML. In Winchester Diocese qualifying clergy will receive their full stipend for the 39week OML period which includes SMP.

Worcester

There is not a formal diocesan policy, but a collection of guidance available under 'Parental Leave' on the 'Support for Clergy' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

No detailed information but assumes SMP.

York

Policy found in the 'Common Tenure Guide' on the 'Terms of Service' section of the diocesan website.

Qualifying criteria:

Subject to the eligibility below, clergywomen and licensed lay workers who express an intention to return to work and who have completed at least one year's service at the beginning of the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC), will receive 39 weeks' paid maternity leave on full stipend (pro rata for part time office holders). To qualify for Diocesan Maternity Pay it is necessary to a) have one year's continuous service at the beginning of the 14th week before the EWC b) be in paid service at the time maternity leave begins c) stop work at the earliest after the start of the 11th week before the EWC d) give notice to the Diocesan office in writing of the intention to take maternity leave before the end of the 15th week before the EWC. The Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department should then confirm the date in writing, including the date when the clergywoman or licensed lay worker is expected to return to work. The clergywoman/licensed lay worker can change her mind about the dates but should give 8 weeks' notice of any changes, which should again be confirmed by the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department in writing e) give an undertaking of the intention to return to work after the birth f) be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC, or have had the baby.

Dedicated to women clergy who have been denied leave,
mistreated or encouraged to leave ministry due to having a child
in the Church of England.

May our children know a fairer, more welcoming Church.

