

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH - DIOCESAN OPERATING PROCEDURES

DOP – PARISH SUPPORT VISITS

## DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH



## DIOCESAN OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR PARISH SUPPORT VISITS

Maidenhead – St Edmund Campion

Part 1 of 3

(Parish Accounting, Personnel, and Environmental, Health and  
Safety)

Issued by

The Bishop of Portsmouth and the Trustees of the Portsmouth Diocesan Trust  
St Edmund House  
Edinburgh Road  
Portsmouth  
PO1 3QA

# DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH - DIOCESAN OPERATING PROCEDURES

## DOP – PARISH SUPPORT VISITS

(Additional copies may be downloaded from [www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk))  
Registered Charity No. 246871

### **FOREWORD**

These Diocesan Operating Procedures are an important step forward in providing clarity for all those concerned with administration in all the communities that together form the Diocese of Portsmouth. We have a responsibility to ensure that people, buildings and money are treated carefully and with respect and to perform our duties “with the diligence of a good householder.” (Canon 1284§1)

As a diocese we must always ensure that the matters we deal with fulfil the requirements of both civil and canon law. It should be clear that these Diocesan Operating Procedures are not ‘guidelines’ or in any way optional. They have the status of particular law for this diocese and therefore must be adhered to in the broad areas of personnel, schools, buildings and finance. They reflect the vision of the Church contained in our diocesan Pastoral Plan.

I am grateful to those who have given so much of their time to compiling these procedures and who will ensure their regular review and updating.

Philip Egan  
Bishop of Portsmouth  
June 2014

# DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH - DIOCESAN OPERATING PROCEDURES

## DOP – PARISH SUPPORT VISITS

The purpose of this procedure is to help validate that Diocesan Operating Procedures (DOPs) are working as designed through the provision of a soft touch audit program using a simple question and answer based approach. The parish support program aims to help parishes provide a consistent approach to all administrative activities including accounting, gift aid, personnel and the care and maintenance of buildings etc.

The Diocesan Trustees are obliged under the provisions of the Charities Act 1993, to account for all funds connected to or under the control of the Diocesan Trust. Parish accounts are aggregated with the Diocesan central accounts to give the complete financial position of the Diocesan charity, and the overall accounts are audited by external auditor Haysmacintyre chartered accountants. There are also other external requirements including governmental bodies that may need to access Diocesan and parish accounts such as the Charity Commission, and the Inland Revenue who currently maintain a soft touch approach to this charity. It's therefore important the Diocese can demonstrate the following through an effective parish support program:

1. Reliability and integrity of financial operational information
2. Effectiveness and efficiency of operations
3. Safeguarding of assets
4. Compliance with laws, regulations and contracts.

Canon Law 1284 paragraph 2 & 3 repeats the need to observe secular laws to prevent the Church from suffering damage, arising either from the invalidity of canonical acts or because of their civil unlawfulness. Consequently, all civil, administrative, commercial, fiscal and other secular norms must be followed, since failure to do so could entail civil penalties, loss of goods or of their value, the prescription of actions, the mandatory imposition of charges, costly judicial proceeding etc.

The parish priest or co-ordinating pastor will be notified that their parish for which they are responsible has been selected for a support program review. The notification letter will identify the due date for when the questionnaire (this form) must be completed and signed by them and returned to the Diocesan Finance Office addressed to the Chief Accountant. Parishes will be given a maximum of 4 weeks to complete and return the questionnaire prior to the commencement of an on-site review. The parish priest or co-ordinating pastor or their nominated representative must be present during the period of the review. The on-site review will be limited to one day only on proviso the questionnaire has been completed and returned by the due date. An internal report will be produced identifying any observations and recommendations within two weeks on completion of the on-site review. Any recommendations will be tracked to closure.

The parish support program will be published as a Diocesan Operational Procedure and made available on the Diocesan web site.

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**Parish Support Visits**

**Engagement No:**

**Parish Priest:**

**Date of Visit:**

**Author:** Graham Palethorpe

**Classification:** Diocese of Portsmouth Confidential

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**Workpapers Complete: Yes/No**

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**Distribution List:**

**Head of Department/Co-ordination Pastor/Parish Priest.**

**Secretary to the Trustees**

**Diocesan Finance Manager and Gift Aid Manager**

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#### Parish Support Visit: Comment Checklist

##### Environment specific questionnaire:

questions:	"y" or "n" Use of "n" forces use of comment field	Comments:
<b>1. Co-ordinating Pastor, Head of Department, Parish Priest:</b>		
1a. Was the support questionnaire mailed to the Parish 6 weeks prior to the audit review?	y/n	
<b>2. Support Questionnaire</b>		
2a. Was the support questionnaire completed and returned to the Diocesan Finance Office at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the support visit?	y/n	
<b>3. Preparatory Documentation</b>		
3a. Was the Co-ordinating Pastor, Head of Department, or Parish Priest present at the beginning of the review and during the wrap up session?	y/n	
<b>4. :</b>		
4a. Was all preparatory documentation made available for the review?	y/n	

### Scope Detail:

**1. Parish Accounting:** To validate that Heads of Department, Pastoral Co-ordinators and Parish Priests who have the responsibility for ensuring Financial and Accounting requirements as documented within the Diocesan Operating Procedures are followed so as to provide sound financial management, regular and accurate reporting and to satisfy the requirements of external bodies, such as the Inland Revenue, customers and banks..

**Risk:** Failure to maintain financial statements in accordance with Charity Law could result in financial misstatements that could lead to inappropriate reporting to the Board of Trustees, and/or the Inland Revenue.

The Diocese of Portsmouth has a responsibility to ensure that people, buildings and money are treated carefully and with respect and to perform our duties 'with the diligence of a good householder'. (Canon 128451). The Charities Act 1993 requires the Diocese as the charity to have standardised account procedures and records for central offices, agencies and parishes. The minimum requirements for a parish accounting system show receipts and payments written in ink and laid out in the format for the Parish Financial Return, and with:

- primary records: cash slips analysing sources of income, bank statements, cheque stubs, paying-in books, petty cash vouchers.

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- analysis cash book for receipts and payments, and petty cash book
- monthly and year end cash book summary and reconciliation with bank statements
- record of Gift Aid receipts by envelopes, standing orders and cheques
- invoices and other documents files as supporting evidence of expenditure and income.

Parishes may use a variety of book keeping systems both manual and computerised. The way funds pass through each stage of the accounts should provide a clearly documented audit trail. The audit trail is provided by a consistent coding system from the books of accounts back to the originating documents. Any system must record:

- the income of the Parish
- the cash expenditure of the Parish
- the transfer of cash to the bank account
- the expenditure from the bank account
- the monthly and year end bank reconciliation.

**2. Personnel:** To validate that Diocesan Operation Procedures for Personnel are followed by Heads of Department, Co-ordinating Pastors and Priests in the recruitment and management of staff

**Risk:** Failure to comply with legal and regulatory requirements could result in financial abuse, discriminatory practices, unsuitable and wrongful recruitment employment

**3 Environmental, Health and Safety, Data Protection, Copyright and Music Licence Policy.** The Diocese of Portsmouth is acutely aware of its need to minimise the negative impact of its activities upon the environment, to adhere to legislation relating to health and safety for all its properties and for all diocesan and parish activities. In addition, to abide by data protection legislation ensuring all personal data is collected and processed fairly and lawfully, and kept for no longer than necessary. Further, to abide by all copyright and music licence legislation.

**Risk:** Failure to abide by necessary legislation could result in personal injury or death, and any one of which could severely compromise the reputation of the Church in the Diocese of Portsmouth. Further, failing to abide by data protection legislation could result in fines up to the value of £500,000 (from 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2010).

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Parish Accounting controls to be examined.	Adequate? y, n, n/a "n" or "n/a" requires use of comment field	Comments
<b>ORGANISATION</b>		
1. Please document members of the Parish Finance Committee ( <i>DOP A2 1.14</i> ) and identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The chairman,</li> <li>• The secretary,</li> <li>• The parish treasurer</li> <li>• The gift aid organiser.</li> <li>• Is the chairman of the finance keeper either the parish treasurer or the bookkeeper?</li> </ul>		
2. Do any paid staff sit as part of the parish finance committee?		
3. Please document the frequency of meetings held by the Parish Finance Committee, and document the meeting dates over the last 12 months from today's date.		
4. Are minutes taken and approved at each meeting ( <i>DOP A1 1.16</i> )?		
5. Is professional advice taken where appropriate (for example, church property matters referred to the Diocesan Surveyor)?		
6. Is a ledger recording all transactions maintained and are all source documents kept, i.e. bank statements, invoices, weekly collection sheets, cheque book stubs, CAF Cheques, paying-in books ( <i>DOP A1 1.26</i> )?		
7. Is the ledger up to date? ( <i>within 3 months ok</i> )		
8. Are the items above kept (on parish premises) for 6 years ( <i>DOP A2 2.11</i> )?		
9. Are monthly bank reconciliations		

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carried out and retained ( <i>DOP A2 2.23</i> )?		
10. Are parish accounting records regularly reviewed by the parish finance committee?		
11. Are bank statements, books of accounts etc accessible to all members of the finance committee ( <i>DOP A1 1.18</i> )?		
12. Is the person authorising cash expenditure the same person signing the cash voucher?		
13. Is there a parish credit or debit card in use and who has access to it?		
14. Does the committee approve expenditure over an agreed limit?  If Yes please state limits		
15. Does the committee make payments without reference to the Parish Priest?		
16. Is an annual budget drawn up ( <i>DOP A1 1.11</i> )?  If yes please state when and by whom.		
17. Is actual performance measured against the annual budget if one is drawn up ( <i>DOP A1 1.11</i> )?		
18. Are significant departures from budgeted figures investigated and explanations recorded ( <i>DOP A1 1.11</i> )?		
19. Does the final authority in the decision making process reside with the committee?		
20. Does the Parish Finance Committee review and approve the Parish		

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Annual Return?		
21. Does the chairman of the Parish Finance Committee sign off the Parish Annual Return before sending it to the Diocese?		
<b>CASH HANDLING</b>		
22. Where are monies from offertories, fundraising events etc stored until counted?		
23. Are two people present when money is counted? ( <i>DOP A2 2.12</i> ). Is there a rota of counters? <input type="radio"/>		
24. Are procedures in place to ensure that the collection bags are put into the safe as soon as possible?		
25. Do collection counters sign the weekly cash sheets and are they then countersigned by the parish priest or his delegate?		
26. Is analysis of cash recorded and signed off by a person other than the counter? ( <i>DOP A2 2.12</i> ) <input type="radio"/>		
27. Are the contents of planned giving and gift aid envelopes entered onto a numbered sheet, or the envelope (without the cash) handed to the gift aid organiser? ( <i>DOP A2 2.12</i> )		
28. Is cash for Holy Souls handed intact to the Priest? If no, what is the procedure for handling ( <i>DOP A2 2.12</i> )?		
29. Are Christmas and Easter offerings (which are part of the Priest's income) counted and recorded in the Parish Bank account and cash slip completed and signed? ( <i>DOP A2 2.12</i> )		
30. Do you claim gift aid for Christmas and Easter Offerings?		
31. Do you claim gift aid for 2 <sup>nd</sup>		

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collections?		
32. Are cash slips numbered either using date or week or whatever system identifies the sequence ( <i>DOP A2 2.13</i> )?		
33. Counting errors identified by the bank at the point of paying-in the cash will be amended by the bank. Are these alterations also recorded on the cash slip ( <i>DOP A2 2.14</i> )?		
34. Are third party obligatory and special collections (CAFOD, Cabrini Children's Society etc) analysed separately from general parish monies ( <i>DOP A3 3.13 and 3.39</i> )?		
35. Is a record of receipts and payments on third party collections maintained ( <i>DOP A2 2.12</i> )?		
36. Are third party collections promptly forwarded?  If no, what is the time lag between receipt and despatch? <input type="radio"/>		
37. Is cash extracted from funds before banking?  If yes, upon whose authority? <input type="radio"/>		
38. Are cash analysis totals periodically reconciled to the bank statement?  If yes, what is the frequency? <input type="radio"/>		
39. Are reasons for discrepancies explored and satisfactorily explained? <input type="radio"/>		
40. Is cash retained on the premises always below the insured sum?		
41. Approximately, how much cash is normally retained on the premises?		
42. Are arrangements made for the		

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security of cash before its banked?		
43. What are the banking procedures:  Day.....  Time.....  People involved.....		
44. Is counting, recording, and banking of collections performed by separate people?		
<b>ACCOUNTING</b>		
45. Who is responsible for the Accounting Function?  Name:  Telephone Number:		
46. Is the accounting system computerised?  If yes, then please complete the section entitled <b>application controls</b> .		
47. How many bank accounts are in operation for general parish funds, restricted donations, capital funds and any other bank accounts used by the parish?		Bank Account No. Sort Type of A/c
48. Are parish monies ever banked into any other bank account? <input type="radio"/>		
49. Is petty cash kept securely locked in a secure container and in a secure place ( <i>minimum, a locked drawer</i> ).		
50. Are all transactions in each account posted to a cash book and featured in the main parish return or a supplementary return as appropriate ( <i>DOP A2 2.4 and 2.5</i> )?		

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51. Are bank reconciliations performed  If yes, with what frequency?		
52. Are accounts in the correct name of the Parish?		
53. Are records available for the last 6 years ( <i>DOP A2 2.11</i> )?		
54. Is documentation supporting each transaction systematically filed ( <i>DOP A1 1.26</i> )?		
55. Are accounting records updated on a regular basis? If so, please state how often.		
56. Do accounting records substantiate the figures on the annual return ( <i>DOP A3 3.4</i> )?		
57. Are checks on accounts made by a person other than the recording officer ( <i>DOP A1 1.18</i> )?		
58. Who are signatories for cheques within the Parish?		
59. Is there a policy of not pre-signing blank cheques? <span style="color: red;">○</span>		
60. Are cheque payments noted in the cash book with cheque number and nominal analysis ( <i>DOP A2 2.20</i> )?		
61. Is the payee of a cheque and the cheque signatory ever the same person?		
62. Are cheque stubs completed at the time of payment ( <i>DOP A2 2.20</i> )?		
63. Are the details of cheque receipts individually noted (drawer, donor restrictions etc)		
64. Are payments and receipts correctly analysed in the cash book ( <i>DOP A2</i>		

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2.23)?		
65. Does the parish have any permanent endowments or capital funds (e.g. Foundation masses)? If yes a. Is the capital kept separate from general income? b. Is income from these applied in accordance with the terms of the trust? c. Is a supplementary return completed for the fund (DOP A3 3.14)?		
66. Are all transactions recorded in the correct accounting period (DOP A1 1.18)?		
67. For fund raising events such as fetes, bazaars, 200 clubs etc, are fund raising receipts shown as gross (not as a netted off total after costs have been paid). Costs of fund raising must be shown under payments (DOP A3 3.15)?		
<b>CONTROLS OVER EXPENDITURE</b>		
68. Do you use Church Market Place for ordering products and services?		
69. Is supporting documentation held for all expenditure (DOP A1 1.11)?		
70. Are invoices checked before payment (All invoices should be checked for price, additions, quantity, correct vat rate and quality)?		
71. Are all invoices filed in date order and marked with date paid, how paid and reference (DOP A2 2.9)?		
72. Are payments only made against original invoices? ○		
73. Does the parish make any regular direct debit or standing order payments to outside organisations other than regular utility type bills		

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etc? Give details.		
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONTROLS</b>		
74. Does the Parish possess a valid license agreement for all software used on parish computers?		
75. Does the parish computer require a user to sign in with a userid and password in order to access parish data stored on the computer?		
76. Is a virus check program in place on the parish computer and in use and up to date?		
77. Is the information backed up, and a copy of the data retained on backup media (external disk drive, flash drive etc) and retained in a separate building ( <i>DOP A2 2.25</i> )?		
78. Is parish data stored on an encrypted memory stick when transported from one location to another?		
79. Are portable devices such as parish laptops kept secure when in use within the parish office (for example, laptops secured to the desk with a Kensington lock)?		
80. Are parish computers equipped with a time out function to ensure that devices left unattended will cease to display information and will become locked?		
81. Is the parish aware that any IT equipment that is due for disposal (including any hard drive, disk drive or solid state storage) and contains parish or diocesan data, must have the data erased and physically destroyed (and a certificate evidencing such erasure and destruction has been obtained) in accordance with the instructions from the Diocesan IT Manager?		
82. Does the parish own a website?		
83. Does the website comply with applicable UK laws (for example,		

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adhering to the data protection act)?		
84. Is the web site domain name registered to the Diocese or the Parish?		
85. If the web site is developed and maintained by a parishioner, does the parish also have administrator rights with the ability to access the website to perform administrative and maintenance functions in the event the parishioner who developed the website leaves the parish?		
<b>SPREADSHEET CONTROLS</b> <b>(Applicable if the spreadsheet is used for any accounting or controlling function)</b>		
86. If spreadsheets are used are they protected with a password?		
87. Are spreadsheet cells that contain formula protected from accidental changes or deletion?		
88. How many versions of the spreadsheet are you using and are you using the most recent version?		
89. Have the formulas and calculations been tested for accuracy?		
90. Is there education on the use of the spreadsheet?		
91. Is there an established data retention period describing how long the accounting data is retained?		
92. How is the current version of this spreadsheet backed up?		

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Personnel controls to be examined.	Adequate? y, n, n/a "n" or "n/a" requires use of comment field	Comments
1. Compensation and benefits – Financial Abuse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Who has signing authority for cheques and payments?</li> <li>b. How many signatures are required?</li> <li>c. Are there checks and balances?</li> <li>d. Do non-permanent staffs complete time sheets?</li> </ul>		
2. Appointing Staff – Discriminatory Practices. Recruiting/Selecting unsuitable or unsafe candidates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Was a complete screening performed on potential candidates, for example CRB checks if required? <i>(DOP D1.1.4, D1.1.5, D1.1.6, D1.1.8)</i></li> <li>b. Was employment law</li> </ul>		

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<p>legislation followed? <i>(DOP procedures followed)</i></p> <p>c. Is there a set probationary period of 6 months? <i>(D1.9 Letter of offer, B3.2)</i></p> <p>d. Do you appraise new employees regularly (monthly) and write to them one week prior to the end of the probationary period confirming or otherwise their employment?</p> <p>e. Were promises made to the candidate that cannot be honoured?</p> <p>f. Was a Diocesan contract completed (Terms and Conditions of Employment) and a copy returned to St Edmund House. Please Note! Contracts are now only issued by St Edmund House.</p> <p>g. Has the employee signed the terms and conditions of employment? <i>(DOP B3)</i></p> <p>h. Do you know where to find the DOP for Personnel for use within the Parish?</p> <p>i. If PAYE/NIC is handled at the parish level, then whom is responsible for ensuring the correct PAYE/NIC is performed for all employees and when will Payroll be transferred to St Edmund House? <i>(DOP 5.14)</i></p> <p>j. Who operates the PAYE/NIC procedures – the parish or St Edmund House? <i>(DOP D5)</i></p> <p>k. How many support staff are working in the parish. Has HR at the Curia been informed? <i>(Please document job location, name, job title, hourly rate, hours per week, on Diocese Payroll or Paid Locally?)</i></p> <p>l. Does the Parish maintain attendance records for employees? <i>(DOP D2.1)</i></p> <p>m. Does the Parish follow the leaving procedure? <i>(DOP</i></p>		
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<p><i>D2.3)</i> n. Do Parish staffs follow the reporting absence for sickness procedure and for holiday requests? (<i>DOP D2.6</i>)</p>		
<p>3. Occupational Health and Safety – Environmental personal injury or death. a. Are safe working conditions provided and are safety checks performed regularly? b. Is adequate training provided for staff? c. Is provision made to ensure the use of appropriate clothing and and safety equipment</p>		
<p>4. Employee Supervision –release of personal information. a. Has orientation and training been provided for new staff? (<i>DOP D1.10</i>) b. Is adequate supervision of staff provided? c. Are performance appraisals performed (<i>at a minimum annually – except in the probationary period</i>)? d. Are data protection guidelines followed?</p>		
<p>5. Employee Conduct - Abuse, reputation in the community. a. Are all job positions furnished with clearly written position descriptions including work? responsibilities? b. Has the employee received thorough orientation and any necessary training? (<i>DOP D1.10, D1.11, D1.12 and D1.13</i>) c. Has the employee been informed of the Diocesan Operating Procedures? (<i>DOP 1.10</i>) d. Have written records been retained for all performance appraisals and performance issues?</p>		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>e. Are organisation valuables secured?</li><li>f. Are cash management procedures in place?</li></ul>		
<p>6. Exiting Employee – Property, reputation in the community, compensation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Have you recently accepted a resignation or dismissed an employee from work?</li><li>b. Did you retrieve any equipment the employee may have used?</li><li>c. Have you ensured all access codes, passwords have been deactivated, and any keys returned?</li><li>d. Did you conduct an exit interview? <i>(DOP D2 Appendix C and D)</i></li><li>e. Did you record lieu time and leave balances? <i>(DOP D2 Appendix B)</i></li></ul>		

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<b>Environmental, Health and Safety, Data Protection, Copyright and Music Licence Policy controls to be examined</b>	<b>Adequate? y, n, n/a</b> "n" or "n/a" requires use of comment field	<b>Comments</b>
1. Has a parish health and safety liaison person been appointed, and trained to carry out the duties of monitoring, inspecting, recording and reporting health and safety issues? <i>(DOP E2 2.8)</i>		
2. Is a copy of the health and safety policy prominently displayed in each parish property for which the health and safety liaison person is responsible? <i>(DOP E2 2.14)</i>		
3. In the event of an accident or incident is an accident book maintained to include details of the accident and of any changes made to any risk assessment. <i>(DOP E2 2.14)</i>		
4. Are weekly, semi-annual and annual inspections undertaken and recorded? <i>(DOP B2 2.13)</i>		
5. Excluding Diocesan applications such as PAMIS, Gift Aid system etc, have you collected parishioner data and either loaded to a computer system, or retained in structured manual files?		
6. Have you a legitimate reason for collecting and using the data?		
7. Do you use the data in ways the individual would reasonably expect and delete the information when no longer required (for example, when a parishioner leaves the parish, or the parishioner requests you remove the information)?		
8. Do you keep the information secure (for example, locked filing cabinet, encrypted electronic files, or password protected database).		
9. Are accident reporting procedures followed for the reporting of an accident, major injury or fatal injury at work or not at work, arising out of or in connection with work? <i>(DOP E2 2.19)</i>		
10. Are you aware of the Diocesan copyright policy and ensure the appropriate licenses are obtained prior to copying? This includes		

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software, electronic publications, liturgical texts and music etc. (DOP E4)		
11. Do you play copyright music at public events or for other public situations and if so do you have the appropriate performing rights licence? a. Performing Right Society Licence (PRS for Music) covering the copyright on music and lyrics. b. Phonographic Performance Ltd Licence covering the copyright on the particular performance of the music which is recorded on a record, tape, CD or similar. (DOP E5 5.1)		