

# Section 2: Safeguarding Learning

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# Elements of safeguarding learning

Core safeguarding learning pathways (Basic Awareness, Foundation, Leadership and Senior Leadership) have been developed as a modular programme which builds learning according to role. Therefore, these pathways should be completed in consecutive order until an individual has reached the required highest level of learning for their role.

Additional safeguarding learning pathways have been developed to further enhance safeguarding knowledge in specific practice areas, or for specific roles.

For consistency of delivery and content, safeguarding learning pathways will be produced and released for implementation by the National Safeguarding Team by way of 'training for trainers' sessions. Church bodies will be asked to identify trainers for training by the National Safeguarding Team. Safeguarding learning support visits will be offered to Church bodies at regular intervals by the National Safeguarding Learning and Development Managers.

It is expected that people work to achieve the required level of learning as soon as is practicably possible upon starting a new role. For example, PCC members often end up standing for election on the day and their appointment takes effect immediately. It is not therefore realistic to say that they must be trained before they start. The required core safeguarding learning pathways should be a priority with Basic Awareness and Foundation being completed as part of an induction process and the remaining core pathways being completed within six months of an individual taking up a post.

Refresher learning should be completed at a three-yearly interval and will keep knowledge and skills up to date. It is expected that everyone will have been trained to the required level within each three-yearly cycle. Refresher learning should be undertaken at the highest required level (as per safeguarding training in the statutory sector) for core pathways. Additional pathways should also be refreshed on a three-yearly cycle.

National learning pathways will be updated as required by changes in practice and to supplement the programme of learning.

## National Safeguarding Training Portal<sup>1</sup>

The Safeguarding Training Portal hosts the core Basic Awareness and Foundation online learning pathways, and the additional Safer Recruitment and People Management and Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse pathways.

During 2021 the portal is being developed to provide a basic learning management function for Church bodies to co-ordinate their delivery of the Leadership Pathway. The portal's reporting function enables those with the required level of permission to run reports detailing completions of each course for their Church body.

The portal also contains the in-person pathway materials for download and use for local delivery. The additional resources area of the portal includes a virtual library of resources, signposting to other safeguarding related learning opportunities (e.g. The Clewer Initiative materials on modern-day slavery), useful websites and helplines for further information and support.

## Planning

Each Church body should develop a three-year Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy to capture the numbers of people requiring each learning pathway which will in turn inform the number of learning opportunities and level of resources required to meet the assessed levels of need.

The questions below could be used to inform your learning strategy and structure your analysis.

1. In addition to the Church's learning pathways, are there local needs we need to plan for?
2. Which roles require which pathway/s?
3. How many people do we have in each role?
4. When did those people last receive training?
5. How many times do we need to run the pathway each year to meet the assessed level of need?
6. What is our local resource / capacity? Have we got the right skills and volume – including direct delivery, administrative support, equipment, IT systems etc?
7. How do we secure additional resources if needed?
8. Our plans to develop a pool of experienced and skilled volunteer facilitators.
9. How are we going to involve survivors and relevant organisations (e.g. domestic abuse organisations) in the delivery of learning pathways?
10. How does this strategy relate to the safeguarding learning strategies of other local Church bodies and of multi-agency safeguarding partnerships?

To ensure that safeguarding is embedded across the Church, the Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy, and how it is delivered, should be developed in conjunction with the broader training strategies of other relevant Church bodies. For ordinands and trainee readers, all safeguarding pathways should be integrated into Initial Ministerial Education (IME) phases 1 and 2, and this will require partnership between TEIs and dioceses. As an example, an ordinand would be expected to complete the Basic Awareness and Foundation pathways during discernment,

prior to any placement and certainly before the Bishops Advisory Panel. The Leadership Safeguarding Pathway should then be completed prior to ordination. They would then repeat the Leadership Pathway at three-yearly intervals and participate in additional safeguarding pathways as appropriate.

## Delivery

### Numbers and ratio of participants and facilitators for safeguarding pathways

- There is a direct correlation between the ratio of facilitators/trainers to participants, the depth of engagement and quality of dialogue that can be achieved, and the consequent impact of the pathway.
- In traditional classroom training, where the trainer talks to a group with the aid of many PowerPoint slides, the ratio is less of an issue as participants are not being engaged in a dialogical or self-reflexive mode – rather, they are on the whole passive recipients of information. Such training can be useful e.g. to explain a process and to impart a set of facts. However, it is not “transformative”; it will not deliver cultural and behavioural change.
- The principles of this learning model do require depth of engagement and dialogue, as well as a trusting space, so ratios matter. The main reason is that this is intended to be transformative learning. In other words, it is intended to affect people’s beliefs, values, and behaviours (rather than just imparting knowledge) and that requires a deeper level of engagement, reflection, trust, and dialogue than can be achieved with traditional “classroom / PowerPoint” approaches with larger numbers.
- With transformational learning the trainer’s task is different compared with previous training: the primary focus is on facilitating dialogue and reflection so that the participants together develop safeguarding wisdom and meaning - rather than just delivering information. This means that to enable the trainer to be completely tuned in to each participant and how they are receiving and responding to the material, and then be able to support their engagement, smaller numbers are necessary. The safety dimension is also extremely important; responding well to people who are triggered / become distressed in a virtually delivered learning session is vital - too many people and even with two facilitators it will be difficult to respond well.
- The basic building blocks are:
  - that safeguarding pathways are delivered (virtually and in person) on a 1:6 ratio i.e. one facilitator working with up to six participants.
  - that any session with more than six people must have two facilitators.
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Each pathway then has an optimum number of people who can attend. For example, in the Leadership Pathway, when delivered virtually the optimum is 12. This means there needs to be two facilitators.

- To maximise available facilitation capacity, Church bodies can book more than the optimum attendance levels. If the target attendance level is 12, 16 participants can be booked. It is recognised that this means that on occasions the 1:6 ratio and optimum number attending will be slightly exceeded.
- With pathways that are delivered in-person, the intention is that group sizes can increase from 12 to 24. The facilitators will still work with participants in groups of 1:6 but because participants and facilitators are physically in the same space it should be possible for one facilitator to monitor and engage with two groups of six. As soon as in-person delivery is possible this will be trialed to identify the impact.

Summary of ratio and number of facilitators requirement

Optimum number of participants in the group	Optimum ratio of facilitator to participant	Maximum number that can be booked	Number of facilitators required
12 for virtual delivery	1:6 <i>(Each facilitator working with one group of up to six)</i>	16	2 (if more than six people participating)
24 for in-person delivery  <i>To be trialled when in-person delivery is possible.</i>	1:6 <i>(Each facilitator working with two groups of up to six.)</i> <i>To be trialled when in-person delivery is possible</i>	28	2 (if more than six people participating)
<i>It is accepted that there will be occasions when these numbers are exceeded if a high number of those booked turn up</i>	<i>It is accepted that there will be occasions when these ratios are exceeded if a high number of those booked turn up</i>		

Who delivers

Safeguarding learning must be facilitated by experienced and skilled people who understand safeguarding in respect of children and adults in a Church context and have the requisite training and facilitation expertise. No matter how good the actual pathway, it is the skills of the person facilitating delivery that will determine the actual learning impact achieved.

Diocesan / Cathedral Safeguarding Advisers must only lead on delivering training if they have the requisite skills to do so. If they cannot deliver training directly, they must ensure that they provide or coordinate the provision of training on safeguarding matters, as per their regulated responsibilities.<sup>2</sup> Many dioceses and cathedrals now have dedicated professional safeguarding trainers as part of their safeguarding team; this does represent best practice.

Capacity

Facilitation capacity can be increased through the development of a pool of skilled volunteers. Several dioceses have already done this and have found that their capacity for delivering has increased significantly as a result. For example, in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, volunteers have been recruited in each deanery to lead the delivery of safeguarding learning in their specific locality. In Chichester, volunteers are commissioned by the Bishop as a way of marking the significant impact they have in extending the diocese’s resources for training.

Ongoing oversight and support should be offered to volunteers to ensure that they are resourced for the important work they are undertaking and that learning standards are maintained. Oversight and support should include observations of delivery. In Sheffield, the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer has a programme of training and ongoing support and supervision in place for their volunteers which is very well established.

In the different Church bodies consideration should be given to the best model to deliver the learning pathways. In some contexts, learning could be delivered across parishes or deaneries utilising volunteers and officially commissioning them where appropriate. Cathedrals and TEIs should consider, together with the dioceses, the best methods for ensuring that all relevant Church officers are engaged in the appropriate level of safeguarding learning, either by delivering independently or by sharing resources. Arrangements between Church bodies should be agreed and monitored by those involved to ensure that they are meeting identified needs.

**Needs of participants in learning pathways**

Those delivering safeguarding learning need to recognise that some participants will have needs which need to be understood and responded to appropriately and creatively.

<b>Needs of Participants</b>	<b>Possible response</b>
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**Participants may have experienced abuse or trauma themselves and be at risk of the learning pathway triggering them.**

Ensure that participants are aware that they are engaging in safeguarding learning and therefore there is a possibility that those who are victims/survivors may be triggered.

Ensure that there is opportunity for participants to raise issues with facilitators before, during or after sessions.

At the start of virtual sessions explain that it is possible for participants to turn off their video, mute themselves or withdraw if they need to.

Ensure that any group of more than six people (for both virtual or in-person delivery) is facilitated by two-people.

Offer an alternative way to access the learning, e.g. 1:1, rather than in a group context.

<p><b>Visual or hearing impairments</b></p>	<p>Where training is completed online, the format of the material is such that all written content is also available audibly at the click of a button. Transcripts of audio files are also available.</p> <p>Large print versions of materials can be produced.</p> <p>For the pre-work elements of the learning pathways, it is possible for participants to record their responses in audio format and submit them in this way. They could also have a supporter who records their responses for them.</p> <p>In-person training of more than six participants must be delivered by two people as explained in section 2.4 in order that appropriate support can be offered.</p> <p>Participants may also wish to bring along a supporter or require a signer who can assist them during the training to engage in the materials. This should be arranged in advance of attendance at safeguarding training.</p>
<p><b>Lack of access to computers or other equipment</b></p>	<p>The Basic Awareness and Foundation pathways are available in both online and in-person training formats.</p> <p>Arrange for participants to attend an agreed office or location to access computer equipment.</p> <p>It is also possible for participants to complete pre-work in audio format, by hand and submit them by post.</p> <p>Learning sessions could be completed on a one-to-one basis via telephone.</p>



<p><b>Literacy or other learning needs</b></p>	<p>For the pre-work elements of the learning pathways, it is possible for participants to record their responses in audio format and submit them in this way. If available to them, participants could use dictation software to enable them to say their responses to questions and have software write this for them – this functionality is available using the ‘dictate’ function in Microsoft Word for example. They could also have a supporter who records their responses for them.</p> <p>In-person training of more than six participants must be delivered by two people as explained in section 2.4 in order that appropriate support can be offered.</p> <p>Participants may also wish to bring along a supporter who can assist them during the training to engage in the materials, this should be arranged in advance of attendance at safeguarding training.</p> <p>Trainers could produce material on different colour backgrounds or provide overlay laminates for people with dyslexia.</p>
<p><b>English is not a participant’s first language</b></p>	<p>Materials could be translated into an alternative language.</p> <p>A supporter/translator could be provided either in-person or via telephone system.</p> <p>Consideration could be given to running sessions for those who speak specific languages, if appropriate or if demand warrants it.</p>

## Pathway fidelity and local flexibility of delivery

The expectation is that Church bodies will deliver safeguarding pathways in a way that retains fidelity to the core elements of the pathway. Each pathway will specify what constitutes fidelity to the core elements – please see the tables in sections 3 and 4.

Should a Church body implement the pathways without fidelity, they will no longer be pathways approved by the NST.

This is important because there needs to be consistency across the Church that people are having the same learning experience. Without this, the Church is not able to give account to the wider community, survivors, or other parts of the Church as to the quality and efficacy of its safeguarding learning. To say a certain number of Church officers have completed a particular pathway becomes meaningless if core elements are different between different Church bodies. The Church will have no way of delivering Church-wide quality assurance of its safeguarding learning as it would not be comparing like with like.

At a local level, lack of fidelity has other risks. For example, when a priest moves from one area to another, if the Safeguarding Leadership Pathway they have experienced in the diocese / cathedral they came from is different to that in the diocese / cathedral they are going to, then the receiving diocese / cathedral has no way of knowing what learning that person has and whether they have completed learning to the required standard.

Moreover, without these standards, there is a real danger that decisions on safeguarding learning will be based on current resource availability rather than what is needed to make change happen.

Core material will be provided for each pathway, and facilitators' notes and training-for-trainers materials will be included. These base materials can be supplemented with locally relevant resources, case studies, exercises, etc. to bring the learning to life for the participants on each pathway delivered.

Flexibility in delivery is permitted in several ways:

- To maximise resources and ensure consistency of practice. For example: dioceses, cathedrals or Theological Education Institutions may wish to consider joint appointments of safeguarding trainers or sharing resources.
- To make material specific for the needs, demands, culture and location of the participant group. For example, case studies within a pathway could be altered for a role specific group to ensure that the examples used are specific to the context in which attendees are working. Different communication methods can be used when, for example, some participants might struggle with written work.
- To schedule and deliver learning opportunities in the best way possible to achieve maximum engagement. For example, utilising virtual delivery methods, in-person learning sessions or a combination of the two.

Where such amendments are proposed, the National Safeguarding Learning and Development Managers must be consulted.

## **Evaluation**

The history and experience of evaluation in “safeguarding training” across all sectors, not just the Church, is that it tends to focus on the immediate self-reported capturing of people’s experience of the session itself. The limitation of this is that we do not know if it is having any impact – do people just “attend” the event, tick that box, and carry on as before?

The evaluation that really matters is whether the “learning experience” has affected someone’s beliefs, values and understanding at a deep level so that there is a change in the person’s behaviours - they now do things not because they must do something, but because they really want to exhibit those behaviours. This is “second order” change – when people do things because there is an inner motivation. The purpose of evaluation, then, is to try to find out if any difference in behaviours has indeed been achieved. The level of evaluation required varies dependent on the pathway. Evaluation will be undertaken using The Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model. This was created by Donald Kirkpatrick, Ph.D., to define the four levels of evaluation. The four levels of evaluation are:

- Level 1 - the reaction of the participant and their thoughts about the learning experience.
- Level 2 - the participant’s resulting learning and increase in knowledge from the learning experience.
- Level 3 - the participant’s behavioural change and improvement after applying the learning and skills; and
- Level 4 - the results or effects that the participant’s performance has on the organisation.

## **Monitoring attendance, successful completion, and engagement**

### **Attendance**

Attendance at safeguarding learning and development pathways needs to be recorded consistently and accurately to ensure that all attendees have a learning record. These records will enable refresher cycles to be identified and will facilitate the monitoring and quality assurance of safeguarding learning and development.

For clergy, their record of learning will be included in their personal file (‘Blue File’) and transferred with them if they move between locations throughout their ministry. Safeguarding learning information will be included by the Bishop in the Clergy Current Status Letter (CCSL).<sup>[3](#)</sup>

Paragraph 37 of the Personal Files Relating to Clergy Guidance, 2018 edition, states ‘A record of a cleric’s safeguarding training must be retained on the personal file, including the exact nature of the training, the date the training was received and who provided the training.’ Details of attendance must be passed from the Safeguarding Team to the Bishop’s office to ensure that clergy files can be kept up to date. The record must certify whether the training received is compliant with NST requirements for fidelity. For ordinands and readers in training, safeguarding learning completed should feature in the final reports issued by TEIs. Where it is not, dioceses and cathedrals should be requesting this information to

ensure that learning records are complete.

## Definition of “successful completion”

Each pathway will specify what constitutes “successful completion”. The Basic Awareness and Foundation online pathways have a ‘pass’ mark which must be achieved; this is set at 75%. Throughout the materials there are several questions to check knowledge ahead of the final assessment. Each of the questions contributes to the overall pass score. A certificate is automatically generated for those who reach or surpass the pass mark. Those who do not achieve the required pass mark are issued a ‘certificate of referral’<sup>4</sup> which indicates that they must have a conversation with the DSA / CSA. As a result of this conversation a participant may be asked to take the whole pathway again to repeat the learning and achieve the pass mark, or the DSA / CSA could request that an individual is given a further attempt at the final assessment.

For safeguarding Leadership and Senior Leadership, completion means that individuals have engaged in all preparation work, submitted work required, engaged with all sessions, and completed the evaluation stage evidencing impact on behaviours. All of this is required before someone receives written confirmation of completion via the issue of certificates. The renewal date for these pathways is then three years from the certificate issue date.

Successful completion of the additional pathways is determined within the fidelity to the model for each. This is detailed in the tables in Section 4.

## Engagement

Where participants do not engage or are deliberately difficult or disruptive the facilitators are responsible for ensuring this behaviour is not accepted. Anyone attending who fails to participate or engage should be spoken to privately by the facilitators to ascertain if there are specific reasons for this. Where there are justifiable reasons for a person not participating or engaging, the person should be offered support or guidance including signposting to appropriate agencies/people and be offered the opportunity to complete their learning later. For those who do not have justifiable reasons it will be necessary and appropriate to report their non-participation or disengagement to the appropriate person, such as their diocesan bishop (for clergy), parish priest (for parish officers), supervisor or manager (for employees/volunteers). Those who do not fully participate or engage in the safeguarding learning requirements should not be issued with a certificate of successful completion and should be requested to repeat the learning later.

- <sup>1</sup>The National Safeguarding Training Portal is found at <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org>
- <sup>2</sup>See section 4 paragraph 1a-o of the <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/dsa-regulations-as-amended-2017.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup>For information about Clergy Blue Files and CCSL, see <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021->

- 4Certificates of referral are issued in less than 1.5% of course completions. For example: from 1 October 2020 to 8 January 2021 there were 6247 completions of the Basic Awareness Pathway. 79 certificates of referral were issued).

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