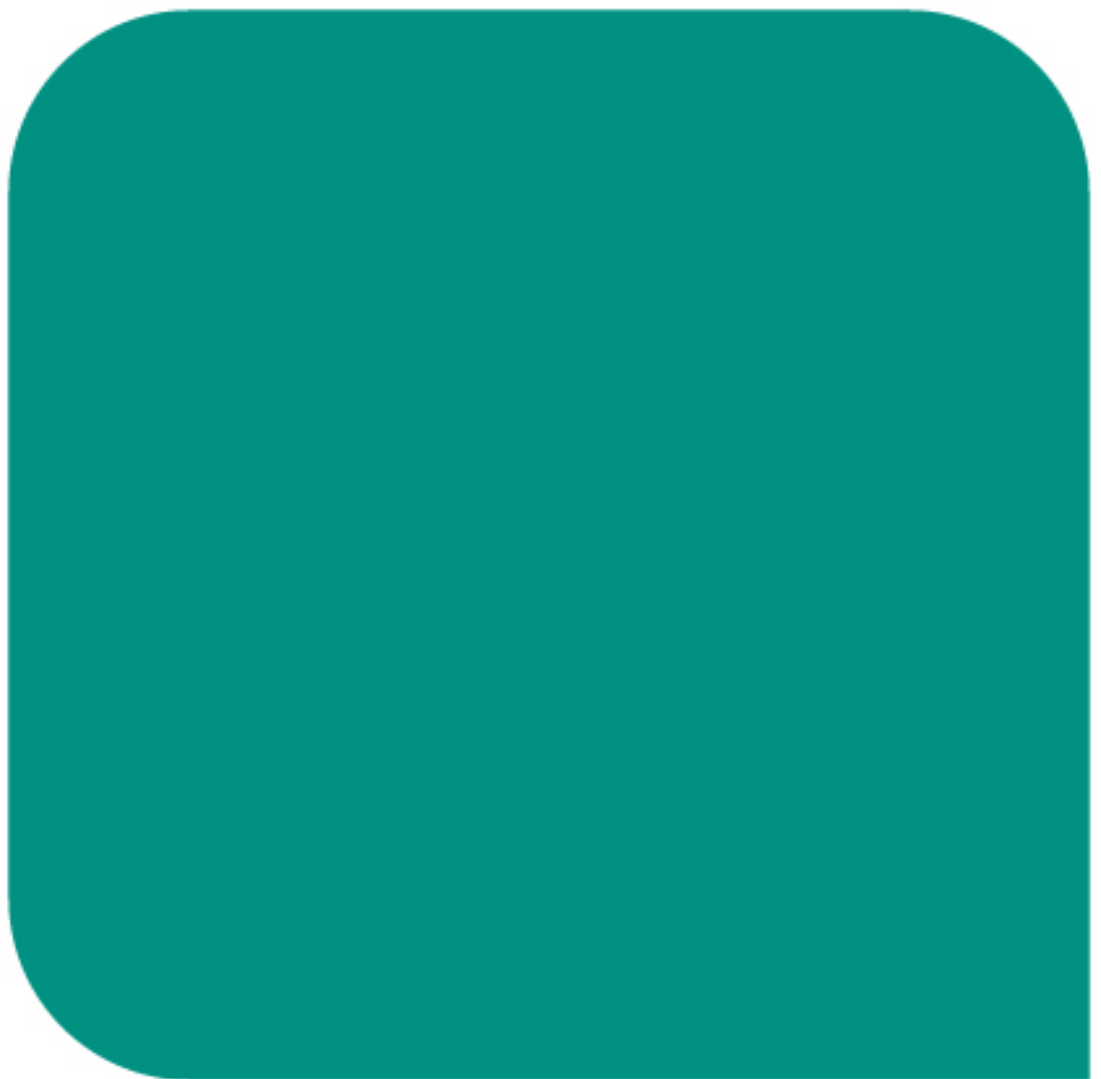




social care  
institute for excellence

# Durham diocese independent safeguarding audit



The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) improves the lives of people who use care services by sharing knowledge about what works.

We are a leading improvement support agency and an independent charity working with adults', families' and children's care and support services across the UK. We also work closely with related services such as health care and housing.

We improve the quality of care and support services for adults and children by:

- identifying and sharing knowledge about what works and what's new
- supporting people who plan, commission, deliver and use services to put that knowledge into practice
- informing, influencing and inspiring the direction of future practice and policy.

# **Independent auditing of diocesan safeguarding arrangements for the Church of England**

Programme of independent safeguarding audits of Church of England dioceses; commissioned by the House of Bishops through the National Safeguarding Team

## **Durham Diocese Audit**

8, 9 and 10 September 2015

**Edi Carmi, Susan Ellery and Hugh Constant**

First published in Great Britain in January 2016  
by the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the Church of England

© Church of England

All rights reserved

Written by Edi Carmi, Susan Ellery and Hugh Constant

**Social Care Institute for Excellence**

Kinnaird House  
1 Pall Mall East  
London SW1Y 5BP  
tel 020 7766 7400  
[www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Overview .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Findings .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Learning from case audits .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix: Review process.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## 1. Introduction

This is the fourth and final Social Care Institute for Excellence [SCIE] pilot audit of diocesan safeguarding arrangements for the Church of England. The aim of these audits is to work together to understand the safeguarding journey of each diocese to date and to support the continuing improvements being made.

The framework for the audit (and the consequent report) has been specified by the National Safeguarding Team of the Church of England and links to section 11 Children Act / Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 requirements as they apply to faith organisations and the House of Bishops safeguarding policies and guidance documents. The National Safeguarding Team specified the national expectations and the auditors evaluated the progress the diocese was making in reaching these standards, applying them to the safeguarding of both children and adults.

The project is being started with the cooperation of four pilot sites to check the planning, conduct and output of the audit approach. The dioceses which have volunteered to be part of this pilot are Salisbury, Portsmouth, Blackburn and Durham.

The evaluation of the methodology (including using s.11 as the basis of the report structure) will be published in a separate pilot evaluation report. An overview report will also be published bringing together the learning from all four pilots and highlighting any systemic issues that are of wider significance.

Following evaluation of these pilots and any consequential adjustments to the methodology, the audits will be rolled out nationally during 2016 and 2017.

The fieldwork audit of Durham diocese was undertaken by Susan Ellery and Hugh Constant on 8, 9 and 10 September 2015. The audit process involved examination of case records, group and individual conversations along with consideration of local policies, protocols and guidance, within the context of leadership arrangements for safeguarding.

### Structure of the report

**Section 2** provides the overview of the auditors' findings about the culture and quality of safeguarding practice within the diocese.

**Section 3** of the report provides the findings structured using the section 11 Children Act 2004 / Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 requirements as they apply to faith organisations. The eleven headings set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 are applied to the safeguarding arrangements for children and for vulnerable adults, with recommendations provided at the end of each of the eleven headings.

**Section 4** provides the headline findings from the case file audit. The diocese has been provided with the detailed audit material on the individual cases: this is not included in this report due to the confidential personal information contained.

The methodology employed in the audit is explained in the **appendix** to the report.

## 2. Overview

### What is working well?

The culture within the Durham diocese is one where safeguarding is embedded as part of everyone's responsibility, rather than a specialist service. This came through powerfully from the parish focus group; the members of which demonstrated an understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and limitations. The fact that the focus group came from different parishes, indicates that the safeguarding culture is not just in particular areas of the diocese, but has been generally integrated into Church life.

The Bishop of Durham has the national lead for safeguarding in the House of Bishops and his strong leadership on safeguarding and 'child-centred' approach is seen as having enabled the dissemination of clear messages. The Bishop sees his role as setting the safeguarding agenda and taking clear responsibility for it, meeting regularly with the diocesan safeguarding advisor (DSA). The DSA considers that within this strong safeguarding culture, she is well supported by the Bishop, the Suffragan Bishop and the archdeacons.

The DSA's work is consistently good. The case work demonstrates sound judgement in often difficult situations. There is also evidence, crucially, of good liaison: with parishes, police, local authorities, senior clergy, other denominations, schools etc. She generally has good ecumenical links and is part of the DSA network.

A real strength is the excellent working relationship between the DSA and the Archdeacon of Sunderland (the Bishop's Staff Team lead), who is her manager. He delivers clergy and reader safeguarding training jointly with the DSA sending a powerful message about the priority of safeguarding as well as facilitating the message to be more easily heard by clergy, including senior members of the diocese.

Overall, the diocese is comparatively well along the safeguarding journey, in part because this process started early with a diocesan safeguarding management group (DSMG) having been in place for more than 15 years. The meetings retain a clear focus on action, so people value participation.

There is a good awareness that safeguarding relates to vulnerable adults as well as children, and commendably there have been previous audits of cases and of the extent to which parishes have moved along the safeguarding journey, such as having trained and experienced people in critical roles.

There are positive links with police and local authority social care services. The case audit and local authority feedback has demonstrated a willingness in the diocese to listen and learn.

### What needs to work better?

The safeguarding function within the diocese would benefit from greater structure through the use of reliable systems for case recording and an overall diocesan safeguarding strategy. A strategy would include policy/protocol development, training, the recruitment, training, supervision and use of authorised listeners (as in the proposal dated April 2015) and the role of the diocesan safeguarding management group (DSMG). The current reliance on one self-employed person working from home without administrative support is dependent on that person's

ability to network and communicate effectively. The current post holder is able to do this, but the working arrangements makes this process more challenging.

A linked weakness of the system is the lack of diocesan database and recording formats for safeguarding. The DSA's files are stored on a laptop, as opposed to being part of a diocesan recording system.

The current diocesan safeguarding policy was written in 2008, and all agreed needs revision. This is currently on hold whilst waiting for the new national policies, and there was some discussion about the duplication of effort writing local policies, as opposed to adopting the national ones.



### 3. Findings

1. A clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults who are vulnerable

#### **The adoption of the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies**

The Bishop of Durham is committed to best safeguarding practice in the Church and has been the national lead on safeguarding since 2010, when he was in his previous diocese, Southwell and Nottingham.

It is anticipated that the Diocesan Synod meeting in November 2015 will adopt all the House of Bishop's Policy statements. The current diocesan policy is from 2008 and needs to be revised in line with the national policies.

#### **Structure for management of safeguarding in the diocese**

The Bishop is clear that he has lead responsibility for safeguarding and is supported in this role by the Archdeacon of Sunderland, holding the role of Bishop's staff safeguarding lead. He manages the diocesan safeguarding advisor (DSA). The Archdeacon is experienced in having responsibility for safeguarding having undertaken this role prior to the arrival of the current Bishop.

This contract management responsibility for the DSA has the advantage of providing a strong link to senior clergy. In other dioceses that have participated in this pilot audit, the management of the DSA has been by the Diocesan Secretary or the Deputy Diocesan Secretary, who has the overview of allocation of resources and experience of writing bids/ proposals for funding. Both management arrangements have their advantages.

The DSMG functions well, having been established for more than 15 years. People value attendance as perceived as focused on actions. The involvement of a lawyer as a member of the group is seen as a strength, as is the appointment of the new chair, an academic from the local university, with a high standing in the safeguarding arena. He brings expert knowledge in the field of child abuse to the group.

#### **Appointment of suitably qualified and experienced DSA and staffing of service**

The DSA is suitably qualified and experienced as a social worker, with extensive practitioner experience prior to her appointment. The auditors observed that the role of the DSA involves the ability to operate effectively at a senior level in a complex organisation, but it is not yet clear whether most DSAs have such experience or not prior to being appointed. Within the pilots two of the four DSAs had held previous management experience.

The DSA has full access to clergy files and other confidential material, in line with DSAs in all pilot dioceses.

#### **Reporting of concerns and risk assessments**

As elsewhere, it is not known what is not reported to the DSA or to senior clergy, although the DSA in Durham is confident that, if senior clergy knew of a

safeguarding concern, they would all share it with the minimum delay. The case audits provided evidence of one case where an incumbent had told no one when he was interviewed about a historical allegation and the DSA learnt from the police but this was seen as very unusual.

### **Monitoring of safeguarding of parishes as part of archdeacons' responsibilities**

The auditors thought that the fact that safeguarding forms the first set of questions in both the Bishop's Visitation Articles 2014 and the Archdeacon's Visitation Articles 2015 demonstrates the priority it is given. The questions are agreed within the diocese and the archdeacons plan to incorporate safeguarding as a set of questions in future Visitations. This now needs to incorporate adult safeguarding, as well as children.

The information supplied before the audit (the Church of England national audit tool) dated 12 August 2014, said that roughly 75 per cent of parishes had a safeguarding policy in place, with a further 20 per cent working on their policy. A year later, when the pre-audit information was submitted, 6 per cent of parishes had no policy in place (14 out of 230) and at the point of audit active follow-up had reduced this to 0 per cent.

### **Safeguarding record keeping systems**

The DSA's files are on her own laptop, which she explains is used solely for her self-employed business but is not the property of the diocese. These records can currently only be accessed via the DSA and are not part of any existing diocesan safeguarding record system. Effective safeguarding often relies on being able to construct reliable histories and piece together information. Sometimes the significance of records may alter as new information is added, so it is vital that all are held as diocesan records and are available now and in the future to relevant others.

The Disclosure & Barring Service checks are undertaken by the diocesan office and no problems were mentioned about this.

Currently records of clergy and principal officers are kept on a database in the diocesan office, but the database will be migrated to an updated and more secure platform early in 2016.

The auditors had access to the 'blue files' for the clergy who had been the subject of allegations or concerns. This was the first time this was provided in the pilots. The diocese follows the protocols laid out in the March 2015 House of Bishops' guidance in relation to 'blue files', but the auditors noted some inconsistencies around what is or is not entered in these files and how content is expressed and cross referenced with safeguarding records. For example, in one case there was no mention of the safeguarding concern. In another, which involved malicious and totally unfounded accusations, the auditor was concerned that there was no evidence of an opportunity for the clergyperson to debrief or discuss the impact on him, although we are advised that this was provided through other means.

One of the 'blue files' was not located in the audit, despite the Bishop's Chaplain having checked with both Lambeth and Bishopthorpe. There is no evidence to say that this file was ever received by the diocese and has been missing since before the current Bishop's Chaplain came into post. The responsibility for the maintenance and

safe keeping of the blue files rests with the Bishop's Chaplain. Overall, practice showed an improving picture and bears out the fact that the Bishop's Chaplain has worked hard to match the quality of blue files to the requirements of the House of Bishops' guidance.

The national practice guidance in relation to risk assessments has only recently been provided and as yet the diocese risk-assessment process currently lacks a formal and shared structure. Good practice seen elsewhere is for a written assessment to be contributed to and shared with probation, the police, local clergy (and sometimes the parish safeguarding representative) and the offender or person who is causing concern. The assessment then informs the actions and/or prohibitions agreed in the contract or agreement (the name for such contracts varies from diocese to diocese). The DSA does undertake risk assessments of registered sex offenders and completes the necessary signed contracts, shared appropriately. From these agreements one can deduce the identified risks, but these are not specified, and are not available as part of an assessment. The DSA does have good relationships with the police and probation service and describes discussions about the risks involved, but there is as yet no shared written assessment.

### **Provision of training and support**

The DSA and the Archdeacon jointly trained all clergy and readers in 2013. The Archdeacon used the theological element of the Chichester Report to stress the place of safeguarding within the whole context of the gospel message and living.

The DSA trains face to face but has realised that the training programme expected by the national team cannot be delivered in this way within the timescale. Consideration is being given to how to address this, such as buying in trainers and/or training volunteers.

### **Complaints procedure**

There is no complaints procedure. A sentence has been added to the safeguarding section of the diocesan website instead:

*'If you are not happy with the way in which a safeguarding issue or abuse concern has been dealt with you may contact the independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group in writing and send your concerns to Cuthbert House, Stonebridge, Durham, DH1 3RY.'*

This would be improved if it was more inclusive through the use of email and telephone numbers, along with an explicit procedure setting out expectations of how the complaint will be dealt with and timescales.

### **Information sharing**

One of the cases audited provided a good demonstration of information sharing across three dioceses. In another old 'blue file' there was historical safeguarding information missing, which was thought to have been removed because of the Data Protection Act.

### **Recommendations**

1. *The diocese to prioritise the development of a shared database on safeguarding cases along with the development of comprehensive recording systems for safeguarding, which:*

- provide for the secure storage and maintenance of records*
- are compliant with data protection requirements for those working from home*
- provide consistent cross-referencing systems for safeguarding concerns between different records.*

2. *The diocese to develop local procedures for risk assessments of registered sex offenders, to include a risk-assessment process agreed with local stakeholders (in line with the national practice guidance) and a system to ensure resulting assessments and contracts are recorded at diocesan level and re-assessed at intervals agreed in the first contract.*

3. *The archdeacons to consistently ask about child and adult safeguarding in the Articles of Enquiry.*

4. *A local complaints policy to be written and implemented.*

### **2. A senior board level lead to take responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements**

Diocesan responsibility for safeguarding arrangements is absolutely clear in Durham, with the Bishop owning this and delegating various operational issues to the Archdeacon of Sunderland and the Diocesan Secretary.

The archdeacon accepts this role and the responsibilities that go with it. He is realistic about the limitations of the DBS as a 'backstop', but that 'vigilance and good practice' is key to safeguarding. He is also aware that there remains a need to win 'hearts and minds', but on occasion there may be a need to use a more forceful strategy. He has a thoughtful and reflective approach, and keen for others to also think carefully, and if in any doubt to consult the DSA.

An area for improvement would be to develop an overall safeguarding strategy for the diocese that includes policy/protocol development, training, authorised listeners and the role of the DSMG.

### **Recommendation**

5. *The Bishop's Leadership Team, working with the DSA and the DSMG to develop an overarching safeguarding strategy to be adopted by the Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod.*

### 3. A culture of listening to children and adults who are vulnerable and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services

The Bishop is an advocate of getting the provision right for authorised listeners, following a positive experience of this service in his previous diocese. There had though been concerns that the diocese would recruit and train people as authorised listeners, who might not then be called upon for months or years. Consequently it has been decided to use a Christian counselling service to provide the authorised listeners on behalf of the diocese. The rationale is that because this service already provides counselling to clergy and lay people, the authorised listeners will be trained, supervised and practising.

The plan is to meet the seven counsellors who expressed an interest in the role and train those who still want to do it after exploration of the task. However, the plan was on hold following the departure of the Bishop's Advisor in Pastoral Care & Counselling, but (since the completion of the audit) the post was filled, so it is anticipated this plan will shortly be implemented.

The diocese has an advisor for the children's ministry and a diocesan youth worker (post currently vacant) who take the lead for hearing the views of young people. There is no formal advocacy service.

#### ***Recommendation***

*6. Diocesan leadership to complete implementation of plans to support survivors.*

4. Clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in Sir Robert Francis's Freedom to Speak Up review and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children [and adults] to be addressed<sup>1</sup>

There is a new whistleblowing procedure for the Diocesan Board of Finance staff; however, this is not applicable universally and the auditors were unable to locate via the website.

***Recommendation***

*7. A universally applicable whistle blowing procedure to be agreed, which is easily accessible to everyone via the website.*

5. Arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Adults<sup>2</sup> and Children Board<sup>3</sup>

There is no information sharing protocol in place.

***Recommendation***

*8. The Diocesan Secretary to ensure there is an information sharing protocol in place with the Local Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards in the seven local authority areas covered by the diocese.*

---

<sup>1</sup>Sir Robert Francis's Freedom to Speak Up review report can be found at [https://freedomtospeakup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/F2SU\\_web.pdf](https://freedomtospeakup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/F2SU_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Safeguarding Adults Board is a multi - agency partnership which provides strategic leadership for the development of adults safeguarding policy and practice, consistent with national policy and best practice.

<sup>3</sup> Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) were established by the Children Act 2004 which gives a statutory responsibility to each locality to have this mechanism in place. LSCBs are now the key system in every locality of the country for organisations to come together to agree on how they will cooperate with one another to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The purpose of this partnership working is to hold each other to account and to ensure safeguarding children remains high on the agenda across their region.

6. A designated professional lead for safeguarding. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children and adults who are vulnerable, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

There is clarity in the role of the DSA in her role description. She is self-employed and works from home. This works because the current DSA is good at making links and networking. However, this might not be so successful for any future DSA without such skills, and could risk the post holder being isolated.

The DSA lacks administrative support, which became difficult when she was piloting the national training, and having to undertake all the linked administration herself. She also takes the minutes from the DSMG, which is a problem if she is expected to contribute to these meetings herself and risks the view that her professional skills may be devalued by some. Communication with parishes via newsletters has also been impeded by the lack of administrative support to the DSA role. This problem should be resolved as there was administration support agreed in the September budget round and subsequently additional resources are in the 2016 budget.

The DSA has a flexible contract, recently renewed, and her invoices are agreed by her contract manager, the Archdeacon. He is clear that there is no cap to the number of hours he would sign off if they were needed for the DSA's tasks to be completed.

The DSA's self-employed status is perceived as a strength within the diocese, because being independent may mean she is in a stronger position to provide effective challenge. The auditors were not totally convinced of this as a principle, as self-employment can bring with it job insecurity and consequent disincentive for challenge. However, this was not perceived to be the case in the current arrangement. What is not at issue is the diocese's commitment to the role of the DSA and the respect afforded to it.

The DSA has access to both the Bishop and the Archdeacon whenever she wants this, but she does not have professional supervision. The Diocesan Secretary has agreed that funding for this should be provided. Cover for the DSA is provided through a neighbouring DSA.

### **Recommendations**

*9. The DSA to be provided with regular professional supervision, preferably from someone with background in local authority safeguarding management.*

*10. The DSA to be provided with administrative support.*

**7. Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children and adults who are vulnerable, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check**

The diocese is working to Safer Recruitment (2015), the Church of England's Practice Guidance issued in June 2015. This has been sent to parishes but not yet been able to be followed up to determine its consistent use; this will be followed up by a question in next Articles of Enquiry.

Scrutiny of clergy blue files suggests either that safer recruitment has developed in recent years or that the evidence has not been added to the file; there was an example of a rector's file in 2011 with no application form or references on file (2011) in contrast to a recruitment in 2014 with an application form and three references on files plus a CCSL which specifically states no safeguarding concerns. There was also patchy evidence of safer recruitment on lay files.

***Recommendation***

*11. Diocesan Leadership to undertake further audits to establish the consistency of safer recruitment practice within the diocese.*

**8. Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training: employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who are vulnerable and creating an environment where: staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role; staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has anyone has concerns about a child's or adult's safety or welfare; and all professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time**

Across the whole diocese, no one applying for Permission to Officiate (PTO) is accepted until s/he has completed the safeguarding training provided by the DSA. Such training is given four times a year and aims to meet the learning needs of new clergy in the diocese (including new curates), other applicants for PTO and lay readers.

All clergy have a Ministerial Development Review (MDR) on an annual basis. The evidence suggested by the audit of a small number of blue files suggests that this process has become more in depth in recent years. It now includes '360 degree' feedback from parishioners which might be expected, over time, to help parishioners develop confidence should they need to speak out. Although the focus of the MDR is on the ministry of the individual in the context of her/his congregation, the changes to the MDR should support safeguarding by encouraging greater transparency and/or providing a forum in which anxiety might be voiced to the Archdeacon or her/his representative.



9. Clear policies in line with those from the Local Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards for dealing with allegations against people who work with children or adults who are vulnerable. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or vulnerable adults who has behaved in a way that has harmed a child; or may have harmed a child or adults who is vulnerable; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults who are vulnerable.

It is acknowledged that both the current children's and adult's safeguarding procedures (both produced in 2008) are dated and the DSA has been waiting on the publication of national policies and procedures. As far as the auditors were aware, a decision is still to be made as to whether a local framework will refer people on to the national documents or whether the national documents will be 'customised'. The auditors did not have a preference at this point in the programme, having not seen enough examples to form a view of what works best.

Meanwhile, allegations are dealt with in line with Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Regarding Church Officers (June 2015).

***Recommendation***

*12. Diocesan Leadership to consider the role of local as opposed to national procedures and policies and to review what diocesan policies need to be written and how to make these accessible.*

10. Employers and voluntary organisations should ensure that they have clear policies in place setting out the process, including timescales, for investigation and what support and advice will be available to individuals against whom allegations have been made. Any allegation against people who work with children should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the organisation. The designated officer, or team of officers, should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police. Any allegation should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the organisation.

As above, the diocese works in line with Responding to Serious Situations. The DSA reports immediately to the Archdeacon or the Bishop any allegation concerning a member of the clergy or a church officer, and reports that the response is always made as quickly as possible. As in the other dioceses audited, there are sometimes delays in information and/or allegations reaching the DSA and this was seen by the auditors in one case audited (albeit the delay in this case did not make a difference).

11. If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children or adults, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason

There are policies in place regarding the making of referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Whilst these have been made in the past, there has been no need to do so in the last four years.

#### **4. Learning from case audits**

The auditors examined 17 case files, selected as described in the methodology (see appendix). The balance was selected by the auditors to provide a spread over time and involving both clergy and lay people. The headline findings are that:

- Overall, there is evidence of good awareness in the parishes and appropriate actions by DSA.
- One case shows how current professionals can be hampered by poor practice/poor awareness in the past, when earlier concerns of domestic violence were not followed up.
- Evidence of good liaison and working relationships between dioceses in relation to a person of concern who moved between areas.
- Proactive practice of an incumbent who reported concerns, despite their parish safeguarding representative advising this was not necessary.

The confidential detailed audit material has been provided directly to the Archdeacon and DSA. This provides full comment and if appropriate suggestions for further action.

## Appendix: Review process

The framework for the audit links to the requirements of the Children Act section 11 / Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 requirements as they apply to faith organisations and the House of Bishops safeguarding policies. The National Safeguarding Office specified the national expectations, so that the auditors could evaluate the progress the diocese was making in reaching these standards.

### Data collection

#### Information provided to auditors

Prior to the audit the DSA provided the following documents for the auditors:

- 2013 and 2014 responses to annual national safeguarding return
- blank copy of Bishop's Visitation Articles 2014 (safeguarding first item)
- blank copy of Archdeacon's Visitation Articles 2015
- spreadsheets of information provided for the three Archdeaconries of Durham, Auckland and Sunderland. (e.g. is there a safeguarding policy)
- a governance chart
- DSMG notes for last three meetings
- membership list for DSMG
- Safe and Secure – the children's safeguarding policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy
- a two-page guide written for the auditors explaining local practice guidance, policies and procedures
- a proposal for authorised listeners April 2015 and a one-page explanation of this membership list for DSA team
- a one-page account of training delivered and planned
- DSA person spec
- additional information – explaining identified gaps and plans to fill them
- Proposed timetable for auditors.

#### The audit

The audit involved both an examination of records as well as conversations with individuals and groups. 15 safeguarding case files were audited, along with 2 blue files for clergy

The audit approach includes seeing five types of cases:

- allegations of abuse against a Church officer
- people in the congregation who are known to potentially pose a risk of abuse
- other scenarios where there may be a risk of abuse e.g. domestic violence, adult safeguarding
- scenarios where a risk of harm has been identified in respect of a child
- complaints about the diocesan response to safeguarding concerns
- the DSA was asked to identify five cases ones that would help develop learning.

The DSA selected five cases of each type and the balance were chosen by the auditors from the last four years' records. These were chosen to try to cover various facets of the work – cases involving adults; cases involving children; very recent cases as well as older ones; cases that involved clergy; cases involving worshippers/parishioners; cases involving other church posts, e.g. church wardens.

**Participation of members of the diocese** was undertaken via individual face-to-face conversations, individual telephone conversations and group interviews.

Those who participated are:

- Bishop of Durham
- Bishop's Chaplain
- Archdeacon of Sunderland (Bishop's staff representative)
- Diocesan Secretary
- Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor
- Current and past chair of the diocesan safeguarding management group (DSMG)
- DSMG members: Children's Ministry Advisor and Panel member
- Head of Children's Services for Durham County Council
- Strategic Manager for safeguarding and disability services, Durham County Council
- Parish focus group, involving five representatives of different parishes, including the following functions: priests, sub-warden, DBS validator, CSO, Children and Family leader.

### **Preliminary feedback**

At the end of the three days, the auditors provided headline findings from the audit, broadly similar to the overview section of the report.