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# **Ely Cathedral independent safeguarding audit (June 2019)**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 THE AUDIT PROGRAMME

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is conducting an independent audit of the safeguarding arrangements of the cathedrals of the Church of England. This programme of work will see all the Church of England's cathedrals audited between late 2018 and early 2021. It represents an important opportunity to support improvement in safeguarding.

All cathedrals are unique, and differ in significant ways from a diocese. SCIE has drawn on its experience of auditing all 42 Church of England dioceses, and adapted it, using discussions and preliminary meetings with different cathedral chapters, to design an audit methodology fit for cathedrals. We have sought to balance cathedrals' diversity with the need for adequate consistency across the audits, to make the audits comparable, but sufficiently bespoke to support progress in effective and timely safeguarding practice in each separate cathedral.

## 1.2 ABOUT SCIE

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.

Safeguarding is one of our areas of expertise, for both adults and children. We have completed an independent safeguarding audit of diocesan arrangements across the Church of England as well as supporting safeguarding in other faith contexts. We are also committed to co-producing our work with people with lived experience of receiving a service/ response in the setting at hand.

## 1.3 THE AUDIT PROCESS

### 1.3.1 SCIE Learning Together and our approach to audit

SCIE has pioneered a particular approach to conducting case reviews and audits in child and adult safeguarding that is collaborative in nature. It is called Learning Together and has proved valuable in the adults' and children's safeguarding fields. It built on work in the engineering and health sectors that has shown that improvement is more likely if remedies target the underlying causes of difficulties, and so use audits and reviews to generate that kind of understanding. So Learning Together involves exploring and sharing understanding of both the causes of problems and the reasons why things go well.

### 1.3.2 Key principles informing the audit

Drawing on SCIE's Learning Together model, the following principles underpin the approach we take to the audits:

- Working collaboratively: the audits done ‘with you, not to you’
- Highlighting areas of good practice as well as problematic issues
- Focusing on understanding the reasons behind inevitable problems in safeguarding
- No surprises: being open and transparent about our focus, methods and findings so nothing comes out of the blue
- Distinguishing between unique local challenges and underlying issues that impact on all or many cathedrals

### 1.3.3 Supporting improvements

The overarching aim of each audit is to support safeguarding improvements. To this end our goal is to understand the safeguarding progress of each cathedral to date. We set out to move from understanding how things work in each cathedral, to evaluating how well they are working. This includes exploring the reasons behind identified strengths and weaknesses. Our conclusions, will pose questions for the cathedral leadership to consider in attempting to tackle the underlying causes of deficiencies.

SCIE methodology does not conclude findings with recommendations. We instead give the Cathedral questions to consider in relation to the findings, as they decide how best to tackle the issue at hand. This approach is part of the SCIE Learning Together audit methodology. The approach requires those with local knowledge and responsibility for progressing improvement work, to have a key role in deciding what exactly to do to address the findings and to be accountable for their decisions. It has the additional benefit of helping to foster ownership locally of the work to be done to improve safeguarding.

### 1.3.4 The process

The process will involve reviewing documentation as well as talking to key people, including focus groups. Further details are provided in the **Appendices**.

The site visit will be either three days or 2.5 days. Cathedrals have been selected for the three-day audit to provide a broad base, or on the scale of an operation and/or where concerns may have been raised in the past for cathedral or diocese. Standard overview text

### 1.3.5 Structure of the report

This report is divided into:

- Introduction
- The findings of the audit presented per theme
- Questions for the Cathedral to consider are listed, where relevant, at the end of each Findings section
- Conclusions of the auditors’ findings: what is working well and areas for further development
- An appendix sets out the audit process and any limitations to this audit

## **2 CONTEXT**

### **2.1 CONTEXT OF THE CATHEDRAL AND DIOCESE**

Ely Cathedral dominates the centre of Ely by virtue of its size and position. The Cathedral has its origins in AD 672 when St Etheldreda built an abbey church. The present building dates back to 1083, and cathedral status was granted it in 1109. Until the Reformation it was the Church of St Etheldreda and St Peter, at which point it was refounded as the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, continuing as the principal church of the Diocese of Ely, in Cambridgeshire. It is the seat of the Bishop of Ely. There is also a Suffragan Bishop, the Bishop of Huntingdon. Ely Cathedral's most notable feature is the central Octagonal Tower which, with the West Tower, can be seen from miles away, leading to the Cathedral being known as 'The Ship of The Fens'. Ely Cathedral is a major tourist destination, receiving around 250,000 visitors per year.

The Cathedral sustains a daily pattern of morning and evening services. In addition, there are a wealth of activities provided within the Cathedral including Edward Bear Children's Church, the Café Church, Junior Church, chorister activities, flower shows and a range of community initiatives to encourage growth of the congregation. The Cathedral would like to establish itself as a cathedral for science due to its history and proximity to Cambridge University and has recently held a very successful science festival open to all.

Ely is located in Cambridgeshire about 14 miles north of Cambridge. Ely is built on a 23-square-mile island which is the highest land in the Fens. Ely's population of 20,256 (as recorded in 2011) classifies it as one of the smallest cities in England. It is a fairly wealthy area and has benefitted from being chosen as a good place to live by many who work in Cambridge.

### **2.2 CONTEXTUAL FEATURES RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING**

Music is an important feature of the Cathedral. The Cathedral is linked to the King's School Ely (known as King's Ely) attended by its Choristers, both boys and girls. The School and the Cathedral make up a significant number of buildings within the centre of the city. The Cathedral itself is an important gathering place for community events such as the flower festival and annual science festival and seeks to be a hub for local people. The Cathedral has an unusual dog-friendly policy and welcomes dogs to visit with their owners.

The Cathedral has a very large Lady Chapel consisting of one enormous open space. This provides a place for a number of events hosted by the Cathedral such as children's activities during services, concerts and corporate events. Other activities take place in numerous buildings which form part of the Cathedral estate.

Ely is a cathedral without the function of a parish church and therefore the congregation is represented via a community forum which meets three times per year including an annual general meeting, rather than through a parochial church council. The Cathedral regularly welcomes Parish Safeguarding Advisors from

across the Diocese and held an evensong for them recently to give thanks for their work. Visitors to the building are diverse with a regular Sunday congregation augmented by tourists and those staying within the city. The high number of visitors received each year means that there is a constant flow of people through the doors.

The Cathedral shares the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) via a service level agreement and works very closely with the Diocese. The DSA has a clear remit for each role. This has worked well but the Cathedral would like also to appoint someone to work within this structure who has a good understanding of how a cathedral works in practice.

Safeguarding in the Diocese was audited by SCIE in June 2016 and some actions that resulted from, or were influenced by that audit have benefitted the Cathedral, e.g. the growth of the Safeguarding Team and the more robust arrangements for the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group.

## **2.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) provides a service to the Cathedral under a service level agreement.

The Cathedral Chapter holds responsibility for safeguarding, alongside all other areas of cathedral administration. The Chapter includes the Dean and Canons Residentiary and other lay and ordained members.

The Dean retains oversight of safeguarding and keeps in regular contact with those undertaking the work, but the lead is delegated to the Residentiary Canon for Congregation and Community. The post-holder was previously the incumbent at a large parish in a metropolitan city at the time safeguarding was beginning to change. Her move to the Cathedral was timely and she has been able to adjust from Parish Safeguarding to the wider Cathedral role very well, bringing with her new ideas which have been adopted.

The Cathedral has set up a safeguarding lead (coordinators) within each department (lay and clerical) working within the Cathedral, in order to help safeguarding become embedded in Cathedral life and to release the lead Canon for a more strategic role. Each department lead deals with minor questions such as those on DBS requirement and frequency, training and IT, escalating issues as required. Casework and any specific concerns are addressed by the lead Canon alongside the DSA, involving the Dean when necessary. Their work is further described in section 4.2.

The Cathedral has its own Safeguarding Advisory Group (CSAG), independently chaired by the same person who chairs the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group (DSLGL). It is attended by the Safeguarding Coordinators, the Canon for Congregation and Community and the DSA.

The Canon for Congregation and Community/Chapter Safeguarding Lead is the Cathedral representative on the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group.



## **2.4 WHO WAS SEEN IN THIS AUDIT?**

The audit involved reading key documentation and talking with people either individually or in focus groups. Conversations were held with the Dean, the three Residentiary Canons; Canon for Congregation and Community (the Chapter Lead for Safeguarding), Canon Precentor, with responsibility for Music, the Canon for Learning and Outreach, with responsibility for Learning, and the Director of Music. The auditors talked with the Chief Operating Officer and Chapter Clerk, who is also the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, the independent chair of the CSAG and the DSLG and the DSA. Focus groups included volunteers, the congregation, choristers (both boy and girl), child servers, Sunday School attendees and the parents of children involved in the Cathedral. The auditors observed Evensong and the arrangements for chaperoning choristers to and from the school. In addition, the auditors were able to discuss the interface between King's Ely and the Cathedral with two school staff.

### **2.4.1 Any limitations to audit**

The audit was well planned and organised with very good attendance by parents of children involved in the life of the Cathedral, volunteers and staff members.

One limitation might be that there were only two children at the focus group for Youth Church children, although they were able to give a broad view.

## 3 FINDINGS – PRACTICE

### 3.1 SAFE ACTIVITIES AND WORKING PRACTICES

Church of England policy is that the care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in church activities is the responsibility of the whole church. Everyone who participates in the life of the church has a role to play in promoting a safer church for all.

In Ely, the auditors found that a great deal of thought and care has been given to ensuring that the Cathedral is open, safe and welcoming to all. Where problems have arisen or shortcomings been identified, rapid and effective action has been taken to address them.

#### 3.1.1 Children

This section is about children who come to the Cathedral in various capacities other than as choir members. Choirs are referred to in the next section.

##### *Description*

The Cathedral seeks to involve children within the daily life of the Cathedral through various activities such as the choirs, the Junior Church, Café Church, Edward Bear, the creche, Ely Imps Choir and children as servers/acolytes and readers. School visits to the Cathedral are encouraged and children from outside King's Ely can become involved in the life of the Cathedral.

The Cathedral creche meets during Sunday morning service in a special area set aside (In the Prior's Door area). The creche is for young children to use during the main Sunday service at 10.30am. There are toys and books provided and also a sound system so that children and parents can listen to the service at the same time. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

The auditors met one of the child acolytes who was in year 11 (aged 16). She stated that she felt safe and surrounded by people who she knew had been vetted and were responsible.

School visits to the Cathedral are overseen by the Canon for Learning and Outreach and the Director of Learning. The Head of Secondary Learning is responsible mainly for secondary school and family-orientated visits to the Cathedral. During school visits, students remain the responsibility of their school.

The Cathedral facilitates holiday 'drop-in' craft sessions for children, run by the Learning Team and a group of volunteers, where parents/carers stay with their children. These sessions are popular and attendance varies, from about 100 to as many as 350 children over a two-hour period during the science festival. The sessions take place in the Lady Chapel which is a large open space and remains open to visitors during the drop in. At the time of audit, the science festival had only just finished and it was acknowledged that the risk assessment for the drop-in sessions needs to be revised.

Education volunteers who oversee activities such as the drop-in sessions, are recruited safely and trained in safeguarding (see 3.5 below).

Concerns about members of the public taking photographs of children, for example when dressed as 'mini monks' or pilgrims, or of the choir were brought up several times by individuals and focus groups. Larger events such as the science festival are stewarded and volunteers said that the stewards are available for assistance in preventing photography if required. Otherwise it falls to the vergers on duty.

Edward Bear is a toddler worship group where the children hear stories and sing songs. Parents stay with their children and the activities are held in Powcher's Hall which is one of the Cathedral buildings separate from the Cathedral itself. Approximately 15–20 children attend and the group is overseen by the Mother's Union under the management of the Canon for Congregation and Community. Staff are not in a Regulated Activity but the Cathedral has, nevertheless, carried out DBS checks on staff who have also undertaken safeguarding training.

The Cathedral has an e-Safety Policy which covers the basic information regarding use of mobile phones and technology but has not yet gone further to cover cyber safety. e-Safety is a priority area identified by the Cathedral for it to develop.

### *Analysis*

Ely Cathedral takes children's safeguarding seriously. All the children spoken with stated that they felt safe, knew where to go if they had a concern, and enjoyed their chosen activity. There were limited children to speak to who were not choristers, but those who were part of the audit advised that they would go either to someone at their school or to a member of staff at the Cathedral. They had not experienced anything that they were concerned about and stated that they knew people working within the Cathedral had been DBS checked and were part of a bigger system. They were also clear that the vergers were always on site and available if they needed them. One acolyte advised that she sometimes took the collection on her own but that this did not worry her and she felt that she could say no if she wanted to and was confident that she would be listened to.

The Youth Church focus group was small but they advised that in the Café Church, there are always adults available to talk to if required. They felt that none of the children were asked to do anything that they were uncomfortable with. The focus group spoke with great fondness for the activities they are involved in and had no concerns about who they would speak to.

All choristers attend King's Ely. Since 2006, the Cathedral has run an outreach choir for all children aged 7–13 called the Ely Imps that rehearses weekly. The Imps sing occasionally with the Cathedral choirs and independently. Otherwise, although opportunities such as being an acolyte are open to all children, it was acknowledged that the life of King's Ely is so bound up with the Cathedral that few other children take them up.

Children advised that attending King's Ely and not being a chorister was not an issue for them. The choristers were widely dispersed through the school and they did not feel that there was a divide between choristers and non-choristers. All sing in the

various school choirs such as Chamber and Chapel choir and felt that friendship groups crossed any divide between school and Cathedral life.

The Cathedral has started to look at cyber safety for children and has considered the use of social media within the Cathedral Safeguarding Handbook. There has also been discussion regarding the use of mobile phones but more needs to be done to look at risk assessing and filters. The Independent Chair of the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group feels this is an area for further development and that this could best be done in conjunction with the school.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How could the Cathedral best work with the school to develop its cyber and e-safety for children?
- Is there further action the Cathedral might take to help prevent those children taking part in activities from being photographed?

### 3.1.2 Music

The choristers at Ely attend King's Ely, a coeducational school for children aged from 2 to 18. Boy choristers are aged between 7 and 13 (years 3 to 8) and girl choristers have, until now, been aged between 13 and 18 (years 8 to 13). It was decided by the Director of the Girls' Choir that the age of choristers should be lowered to age 11 to 16 (years 7 to 11) in recognition of the burden placed on the senior girls when juggling public exams, university entrance and the choir.

The Choristers rehearse twice daily and separately. The choirs have their own directors and are differently funded and organised. This has grown up historically but the Director of Music for the Cathedral is moving now to strengthen the relationship between the choirs.

The new Director of Music for the Cathedral is moving now to integrate the choirs who recently sang at Evensong together for the first time.

The Cathedral has another choir, the Ely Imps which is for children aged 7–13 who are not Choristers. The Imps Choir is described by the Director of Music as an outreach choir and is a primary way of involving other schools in the life of the Cathedral. The Imps sometimes sing with Choristers and the Director of Music would like to grow the choir. He is concerned that there is a symbiotic relationship between the Cathedral and King's Ely to the detriment of other schools and the Imps Choir could be grown as a way of addressing this as well as being a way of recruiting to the Cathedral choir. However, he also advised that policies and procedures for the Imps Choir lag behind those for choristers. Due to the time limit placed on the audit, the auditors were unable to assess safeguarding for the Imps.

The auditors met with both boy and girl choristers in separate focus groups. The boys talked about life as choristers in a very positive way. It was clear to the auditors that they were happy and confident being choristers. They enjoyed being 'like a big family' and felt it was 'amazing when they sing'. They stated that they felt very safe and had several people they could call upon at any time. The boys cited vergers,

matron, the chaperone or the Director of Music as people they felt confident to approach and who would help if required. They said that if they felt ill or needed the toilet a verger would assist them and wait for them. They felt accompanied at all times and that 'everything is close'. One of the choristers told of a time he had an external appointment and when he arrived back at school, he had missed the walk across to the Cathedral. He was clear that he could not walk across on his own, so found a member of staff to contact the chaperone who walked back to collect him.

When robed, the boy choristers said they generally felt very safe as they are accompanied by the chaperones who follow procession. However, on one occasion, there was a member of the public who walked alongside the procession and was making noises loudly. When seated, this member of the public was behind one of the choristers who found this unnerving. Choristers advised that they have been told to continue singing whatever happens and did so on this occasion.

The boys felt that they carried the girl choristers and had some general complaints about the length of rehearsals and when they are held. Some complained that on exeat weekends, they didn't get home until very late on a Friday because of rehearsals and that this took away their Friday evening. Others felt that singing Evensong every other Friday would be helpful and that a bit more equality with the girl choristers might work.

The boy choristers go on tour abroad, which they enjoy. Recently they toured in Estonia and shared the experience with the auditors as being 'new and different' but that they had felt safe. They were enthusiastic in their story-telling and were clear who they could have turned to had they not felt safe, and advising that they felt they would have been listened to and assisted.

The girl choristers in turn felt that they carried the boy choristers. They were enthusiastic about being choristers and felt like 'sisters'. Their musical rehearsals and duties take precedence over everything and some felt sad that they often missed being selected for sports teams. When asked about friendships outside school, the girls advised that they had lots of friends who did not attend Kings Ely because they only had to rehearse on one or two weekends per month so had time to see other friends. They felt that this was important and wouldn't want to rehearse on any additional weekends.

The girls were complimentary about the new Director of Music and felt that the boys were sounding very good now. They advised that there is no favouritism but that the Director might be stricter with the boys. The girls were clear who they would approach if they felt unsafe or concerned and cited their Director, with whom it was clear that they have an excellent relationship, school staff, matron or the chaperone as people they would speak to.

The girls felt that there was a balance to be struck being a chorister. Sometimes, because they rehearse in the mornings and miss form time, they would also miss the chance to sign up for activities in which they could otherwise have taken part. The girls felt that this could be managed better. There was some negative comment about the boys being referred to as choristers and them being referred to as the Ely Cathedral Girls Choir when both groups are choristers. They felt it was unfair that the boys go on tour and they don't (although they didn't want to tour with the boys) and

they also found it unfair that in Cathedral prayers, those taking SATs are mentioned, but the girls taking GCSEs and A levels are not, the emphasis therefore remaining with the boys who stop being choristers at aged 13.

The auditors spoke with chorister parents of both boys and girls. They felt that generally there were no complaints and they felt that their children were safe. They felt that the new arrangements for starting to integrate the girl and boy choristers were positive but that it was early days. The fact that the Director of Music was previously the Deputy Director has meant that there is a high degree of continuity and it doesn't feel like a dramatic change. Some parents felt that the Director was 'on a mission' to ensure that parents are completely involved and they are receiving a good level of communication. Other parents were unaware of some of changes, such as chaperone arrangements, and felt that they had not been passed this information.

The Director of Music who oversees rehearsals for the boy choristers stated that he plans to ensure the girl choristers are seen as such. New publicity posters in the Cathedral will highlight both boys and girls being choristers. He is trying to correct any references to the Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir. He shares the concern that the girls might be seen as less important than the boys and aims to redress this. The Director was aware of some of the issues to do with parental communication and is continuing the parent liaison meetings during which parents can send in concerns (anonymously if required). There are parent representatives on the group and meetings are held termly. He is establishing a weekly parents' email and regular half hourly meetings with all parents to discuss their child's progress. He is also planning to undertake exit interviews when children leave.

One area emerged in the focus groups about which choristers and their parents were less happy. They talked about being photographed, filmed or recorded covertly by visitors while rehearsing in the Cathedral and said it made them feel uncomfortable or distracted. They recognised that the vergers would speak to people if they saw it happening but knew that there are too few vergers to be able to spot everything. Auditors feel that it was a genuine concern by almost all choristers, that this was an issue for them. There are clear signs within the Cathedral about photographs, and vergers, parents and other staff highlighted that they do approach members of the public when they see a concern but that this is something they are seeking to address further by roping off a wider area during rehearsal in the Cathedral to prevent the public having such close access.

Choristers are chaperoned to and from the Cathedral. The school staff hand over to the Director of Music within the Choir School where children become the responsibility of the Cathedral. There is a brief chance to feedback any concerns from the school day if required. The Cathedral employs two chaperones who have a clear job description. A registration book is kept in the Choir School and completed at each handover. Children are escorted to the toilets, which are some way away from the Choir School, by the chaperone on duty. While not ideal, choristers are encouraged to use the disabled toilet which consists of one separate cubicle and the Chaperone waits outside. One weak point is that the one Chaperone is also a singer and so cannot, during services, be available to the choristers. To address this, from September 2019, the Cathedral will employ a chaperone to sit within the choir stalls. Choristers mentioned that vergers also assist with this.

At the end of rehearsal and Evensong, school staff attend to collect the children and escort them back to school. At this point, there are often parents waiting outside the Song School to speak to their children or walk back to school with them.

The job description for chaperones is clear that they must adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and pass on any concerns about safety to the Director of Music or the Canon for Congregation and Community. Auditors did not see any referrals but the registration book did have space for including any concerns.

The auditors saw an Adult Singer Policy dated May 2019 that included a Code of Conduct for lay clerks and other singers. The Code sets boundaries round the use of social media, being alone with young singers, being careful about one's behaviour and recognising attention-seeking behaviour that may be sexual in nature. All the lay clerks are DBS checked.

### *Analysis*

Auditors were impressed with the views of choristers and it was clear that they felt safe. Without exception they knew who to approach should they be worried and also had awareness of how to keep themselves safe, which appeared to be reinforced by school and the Cathedral.

However, it is noteworthy that choristers advised they have been told to continue singing at all costs, regardless of what is happening around them. When the boy choristers were concerned about a member of the public who had been disruptive then sitting behind them, making them feel anxious, they still continued to sing. Auditors were left concerned that the Cathedral has not planned how to deal with an incident where choristers might be actively frightened and with reason.

Although not directly related to safeguarding, the auditors had some concerns about the perceived inequality between the boy and girl choristers, summed up by the comment that perhaps the girls don't tour because people expect to see boys and not girls. Choir tours are organised for the boys by the Cathedral but any potential touring by the girls would be solely in the hands of King's Ely to approve and fund. Feeling equal and valued is an intrinsic part of having the confidence to keep oneself safe. The auditors would stress, however, that there was no suggestion that the girls were seen as secondary to the boys in any way by either of the musical directors and the girls were clear that their musical director 'defends us'.

Related to the paragraph above, the auditors were given a number of policies and handbooks relating to the choir and, on reading them, found they concerned only or primarily the boys' choir; for example, the handbooks for choristers and chorister parents are for the boys. The Chorister Safeguarding Practice Guidance referred to the need to communicate with the boys' parents but not girls. The auditors understood that this stems from the fact that the girls' choir is funded by King's Ely and the Director is employed by King's Ely and not the Cathedral, whereas the documents referred to belong to the Cathedral. However, it seemed 'back to front' for the funding stream to be having a negative impact on the ownership and inclusion of the girls' choir by the Cathedral.

Chaperone arrangements are in the main robust. The choristers were very

complimentary about their chaperones and auditors felt there was a good relationship which served to increase chorister safety. However, there are weak points, for example when the boys' chaperone is also singing and also after Evensong when parents wait outside the Song School to see their children. This requires quick thinking and assessment by the school staff collecting the children to ensure that they know who is there and which children will walk with their parents.

The Chorister parents found it almost impossible to separate life as a chorister at school with life as a chorister at the Cathedral. Auditors took this to be a good thing and that it was evident the school and Cathedral work seamlessly together to safeguard children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Matron at the school advised that safeguarding at the Cathedral has changed significantly over the last few years and they feel confident that children are safe. Links between the school and Cathedral are strong and the chaperone system works well. The school were also very happy to sit on the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group and to input into the Strategic Plan for Safeguarding but wondered whether there was yet a sufficient level of expertise regarding safeguarding within the Cathedral context. Auditors were impressed with the working together approach between the school and Cathedral in the best interests of children.

Chorister parents raised the issue of a particular member of the congregation who has photographs of the choristers (albeit quite old). This was discussed with the Cathedral staff who are aware of the situation and will take steps to manage it further. The issues did serve to highlight that there may be a lack of communication in some areas between the Cathedral and chorister parents.

Auditors were impressed that the back row of the choir, which consists of adults working closely with the choristers, have become part of the clear DBS policy for the Cathedral and have been DBS checked as part of their role. As well as this, there is a code of conduct in place for the back row entitled the 'Adult Singers' Policy'.

A mini audit of safeguarding within the Music Department was carried out by an independent person in January 2019. This was aimed at ensuring the Cathedral knew its own arrangements and at highlighting any particular risk areas. The Director of Music is keen to ensure that arrangements already in place are now within policy and formal procedure. He cited examples of the Parent Liaison Meeting and the Tour Policy being in place, but not written down or in any kind of handbook and that this requires some work. The Canon Precentor advised that clarification in writing is essential and that this is the next stage. Auditors agreed and felt that the recognition that this was missing added to the sense of Cathedral staff understanding their department's weaknesses and seeking to redress these.

The Imps Choir has fewer safeguards in place. The parent helpers for Imps are now all DBS checked but this hasn't always been the case and it is difficult to track when helpers move. The policies and procedures required are not yet in place which could be a risk area.



**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How might the Cathedral better communicate with chorister parents regarding arrangements for their children?
- Is there anything further that the Cathedral might consider to safeguard choristers from being photographed?
- Should there be an additional person present at the end of Song School to assist in identifying parents and ensuring choristers are safe?
- How might the Cathedral further develop the level of expertise required to enable the culture of safeguarding across all elements where children are involved, in particular the Imps Choir?
- How can the Cathedral ensure that choristers feel secure in the knowledge that they can raise a concern during a service?
- How might the Cathedral consider better including girl choristers within policies and handbooks?

### 3.1.3 Vulnerable adults

Ely Cathedral seeks to be inclusive and welcoming. The Cathedral receives in excess of 250,000 visitors per year and charges an admission fee per visitor. There is a policy in place for those who live locally who are not required to pay and those on the admission desk are trained to recognise individuals who might need to come in to pray or who have a learning or mental health need and for whom there is also no fee.

The auditors heard about a small number of vulnerable people who visit regularly and are known to vergers and volunteer welcomers. The vergers have radios because the phone signal is not good within the Cathedral and this enables them to alert those on duty in case they are required to help. Volunteers are provided with information to use as sign-posting should they notice someone distressed and the Day Chaplains are usually present on the Cathedral floor should they be required.

Welcomers on the Cathedral floor are always available and are trained in safeguarding. They work in pairs in order for one to support and another to seek assistance.

Cathedral floor staff and vergers have all advised that they work closely together when a concern is noted. A recent case involving a member of the public who was in clear distress but who wanted to take a tour up the Cathedral Tower was managed successfully and highlighted the system working well.

The Cathedral has taken a novel approach to engaging with all. The K9 Café, a dog-friendly ethos and pet service, has involved people who might otherwise not approach the Cathedral. The Cathedral has contributed to Ely Food Bank which aims to support those in need as well as other local charities. It has also completed the installation of CCTV throughout the Cathedral building which further serves to support care of vulnerable adults.

Recognising concerns such as domestic abuse or poverty are part of the C1 training

that all staff and some volunteers receive as part of their induction. For example, volunteers at Edward Bear toddlers have good links with the congregation and have approached the Canon for Congregation and Community if they see a parent struggling for any reason. In the same way, the Junior Church reported that they would look for any changes and are confident in either passing on concerns to the Canon for Congregation and Community, or seeking more information from the individual themselves.

### *Analysis*

Ely Cathedral is actively inclusive and aims to help people who are struggling for whatever reason. People recognise that this carries risks to and from a small minority of vulnerable people and, when risks are known, they are managed. For example, during the case file audit, auditors were impressed by the response to those clearly suffering from mental health issues. One such response extended over several hours and involved several external agencies and local businesses around the Cathedral. The response by Cathedral staff did not waiver and as a result, the individual was safeguarded. A good level of communication between vergers, safeguarding and admissions teams was evident, as was the prior knowledge by Cathedral staff of the individuals who might come into the Cathedral, indicating the importance and effectiveness of the daily briefings.

The auditors heard about practical support for local charities and the food bank but staff within focus groups raised concerns that the response from external services to crises being managed by the Cathedral was not immediate and that they had found themselves managing situations for a considerable length of time before help arrived.

The DSA advised that safeguarding has improved greatly within the Cathedral over the last four years and there has been a higher number of referrals from an increasing variety of people within the Cathedral volunteer staff over this period, indicating that the understanding of safeguarding is growing.

The auditors heard that some volunteers, by virtue of age or infirmity, were becoming vulnerable themselves. This is a difficult situation to deal with and something the Cathedral is currently considering in a sensitive way. One suggestion from the Chief Operating Officer is to introduce a regular review for all volunteers to address any concerns they might have and to check whether a volunteer is vulnerable themselves.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the Cathedral, in tandem with the Diocese, work with external agencies to better manage and assist vulnerable adults in crisis?
- Should the Cathedral consider a form of regular review for volunteers?

## **3.2 CASEWORK (INCLUDING INFORMATION SHARING)**

When safeguarding concerns are raised, a timely response is needed to make sense of the situation, assess any risk and decide if any action needs to be taken, including whether statutory services need to be informed. In a Cathedral context, this includes helping to distinguish whether there are safeguarding elements to the situations of people receiving pastoral support.

The casework files seen by the auditors were strong in all cases and it was evident that the DSA is aware of the issues faced by the Cathedral. There was not a high volume of casework, as opposed to the raising of concerns, and the DSA said that, in the main, her role is to provide advice. She is notified of concerns in a timely way.

### **3.2.1 Quality of recording**

The auditors were able to audit all cases provided by the Cathedral. These included case files for concerns affecting members of staff and non-recent child protection case work. All files were deemed to be good, well ordered and clear. Actions taken were relevant and timely and were escalated to the correct level when required. There was evidence of discussion and advice between the DSA and Canon for Congregation and Community as well as safeguarding leads within each department of the Cathedral.

One case reviewed was that of the Assistant Organist at Ely between 1999 and 2002 who was charged and convicted of offences against children. The charges were brought after he left Ely but the Cathedral cooperated with external agencies throughout the investigation and were considerate of the fact that people would remember him and that he was seen as a trusted member of staff at the time. On 29 May 2019, following a Court hearing in which the accused admitted guilt, the Dean issued a statement within the *Ely Cathedral News* regarding people who might be affected by this case.

Recording was strong in all cases reviewed. The auditors also looked briefly at several safeguarding responses that did not become cases and the rationale for these was clear.

One area of concern for auditors is record keeping for some of the wider groups such as Junior Church and Server's Rotas, where records are not kept securely at the Cathedral, but in a private home. This includes storage of information that could be regarded as confidential. It is a concern that other areas may be similar.

### **3.2.2 Effectiveness of risk assessments, safeguarding agreements and the risk management plan**

Safeguarding Agreements are a key mechanism to support offenders who wish to attend church, to do so safely. They should be underpinned by a risk assessment that details the risks posed by a worshipper, the measures in place to manage those risks, and therefore the reasons for the Safeguarding Agreement. Having a clear rationale for any restrictions helps people enforce the agreements with the level of diligence appropriate to Safeguarding Agreements. Clarity about the risks that a Safeguarding Agreement is intended to address, also allows for a robust reviewing

process, which allows Safeguarding Agreements to be strengthened where needed, or indeed terminated if appropriate.

Currently there are no Safeguarding Agreements in place but auditors did speak separately to Cathedral staff regarding a potential case which is currently under management and information has been appropriately shared.

The auditors looked at a Risk Assessment for activities which has been put in place following concerns regarding a decision made previously. The Risk Assessment tool is strong and used now for all activities as a direct result of previous casework.

### **3.2.3 Quality of engagement with the people who disclose abuse, share concerns of unsafe people or practice, or ask for help to keep safe for any reason including use of any targeted resources e.g. authorised listeners.**

Despite widespread highlighting of the SCIE audit and encouragement by the Canon for Congregation and Community and other senior staff for anyone in the congregation who was a survivor of abuse to come forward to talk with the auditors, none did.

### **3.2.4 Information sharing practice**

Within the Cathedral, there is a daily briefing with the Canon in Residence (one of the three canons on rota), the Director of Operations, the vergers on duty and the Visitor Experience Manager to run through the day and flag up any potential safeguarding concerns. Vergers are equipped with radios and can be contacted quickly.

As well as the daily meetings, the Dean has also put in place a weekly meeting with all heads of department to go through calendar events and check for any concerns, as well as to ensure that all departments are aware of people likely to be in the Cathedral at various times.

The Diocese, via the DSA, has good links with external agencies and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The DSA sits on the Cathedral Safeguarding Group as well as the Diocese Safeguarding Liaison Group as does the Canon for Congregation and Community. Links with the Local Authority are evident on the Diocese Safeguarding Group which includes representation from the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO), Health, Probation and Social Care. The Cathedral therefore shares these links through the service level agreement that guides that guides the work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Information sharing has been much improved by having the Independent Chair of the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group also chairing the Diocese Safeguarding Liaison Group. Also in existence is the Cathedral Safeguarding Working Group which was specifically put in place to address areas of concern for safeguarding within the Cathedral. Information is therefore passed quickly to safeguarding leads within each department and areas for concern are addressed. Having a volunteer manager also assists with this.

Risk from individual visitors is shared appropriately across staff and volunteers on a need-to-know basis. Those with whom information is shared were clear why they needed to know and did not appear anxious. All are in receipt of the Cathedral's Pocket Guides to Safeguarding and are clear to whom they should speak further if they had a concern.

Both the Congregation Focus Group and the Auxiliary Staff and Volunteer Focus Group were able to confirm that where they had raised issues regarding members of the community or congregation related to safeguarding, these had been listened to and managed in a supportive way. They were clear that information is shared both top down and bottom up in a sensitive way and this gave them confidence within their roles.

Information sharing with external agencies via casework was also evident from case files and included adult mental health services, emergency services and the police.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the Cathedral seek to engage any other victims relating to the highlighted non-recent abuse, particularly once sentencing is complete and they might feel safer to come forward?
- How are records relating to wider areas of Cathedral life such as Junior Church, Café Church, Imps Choir managed and kept? How can the Cathedral ensure that these files are up to date?

### **3.3 CLERGY DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

No CDM complaints were seen.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- There were no considerations in this area.

### **3.4 TRAINING**

Training on safeguarding is important within the Cathedral setting to raise safeguarding awareness and instil confidence in staff and volunteers within their roles. It should be relevant to the job role and updated at regular and set intervals. The Cathedral should plan to identify priority groups for training, including training needs/requirements of people in different roles, and an implementation plan for training over time that tracks what training has been provided, who attended and who still needs to attend or requires refresher sessions.

#### **3.4.1 Quality of content**

Cathedral staff and volunteers at Ely all receive safeguarding training as part of their induction package. The Head of HR and her team have created a database which includes induction, training requirements and dates when training is completed. All volunteers undertake the Church of England C0 training and it is of note that for new volunteers, this must be completed before they are allowed to start in role. For those

who were in role before this became a requirement, the Cathedral is working to ensure volunteers complete this training and is clear that refusal to do so would mean they can no longer remain in their volunteer role. This has been a large task to complete and at the time of the audit, 91 per cent of those requiring C0 training have undertaken it.

For those in higher volunteer roles or paid roles throughout the Cathedral, the relevant training is in place for new starters and again the Cathedral is working towards ensuring all training is completed for those who are already in role. At the time of the audit, 98 per cent of those requiring the Church of England's C1 training had completed it. Face-to-face training is carried out by the DSA.

Key volunteers also receive training from the Director of Operations on areas relevant to their role such as mental health awareness.

### **3.4.2 Strategic training programme and delivery plan**

Ely Cathedral's comprehensive Safeguarding Handbook sets out clearly which roles require which level of training, choosing from: C0 Basic Awareness training for all and as a prerequisite to any further training, C1 Foundation training for anyone with contact with children, C2 Leadership training for those with safeguarding leadership responsibilities, C3 for those who have a Licence to Officiate, C4 for senior staff in key roles and C5 for those undertaking a refresher.

The Cathedral has over 100 paid staff and over 400 volunteers so the task of ensuring that training is current and completed needs strategic overview. Training has a section within the Cathedral's Strategic Plan and those volunteers spoken to as part of the audit stated that they feel part of a 'tight infrastructure' which includes training.

The training plan forms part of the Strategic Plan for Safeguarding which is overseen by the Cathedral Safeguarding Group, linked to the Diocese via the Independent Chair. Auditors saw evidence that the plan is in place and the 100 per cent training record target is very nearly complete. Those who are either trained by the Local Authority, for example County Council Chaperones, or Day Chaplains from other denominations who have received training through their own church, are still required to undertake training in line with the Cathedral's training plan.

The auditors did not see evidence of more specialist training other than Safer Recruitment which is a requirement for some roles and Mental Health training provided by the Director of Operations. However, staff receive regular updates from the Diocese on specific training events. Some of the Clergy have accessed these (e.g. Domestic Abuse).

### **3.4.3 Tracking system**

The Cathedral uses its new database to track training and the newly formed HR Compliance Team is responsible for adding the data. Lists of people requiring specific training courses are clear and for this year especially, the training requirement is high due to a large number of staff requiring refresher training at the same time.

### Questions for the Cathedral to consider:

- Now that the Strategic Safeguarding Plan is in place and there is a system to monitor it, how can the Cathedral best ensure that those within departments with a safeguarding lead work together to implement the plan for all staff and volunteers?
- How can the Cathedral best deliver and encourage take-up of specialist training in order to upskill staff and volunteers?

## 3.5 SAFER RECRUITMENT

The Cathedral's Safer Recruitment practice is laid out clearly within the Cathedral Safeguarding Handbook and is in line with the House of Bishop's Safeguarding Policy which states: *'The Church will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church'*.

Each staff file, including those for volunteers, contains a checklist for recruitment which includes all aspects of safe recruitment including interviews, references and DBS. Records for paid staff are transferred onto the database newly created within HR.

A huge amount of work has been done recently to bring all HR files up to date and to move from a system where there were no formal recruitment or induction procedures to a system where Safer Recruitment is embedded. This is particularly challenging where appointments are temporary, e.g. seasonal staff, but the HR and Compliance Manager has the backing of the Chief Operating Officer and the Chapter and progress is being made.

The Safer Recruitment records seen were good and all contained a checklist to ensure actions are completed, which is particularly helpful. Discussion with HR staff highlighted that there is now a database in place, similar to the Single Central Record required under legislation by schools which has assisted identifying those staff without contracts, or for whom no working hours are recorded. Case files are colour coded and have been moved from Finance to the Cathedral Office. Staff are now very confident that all files are relevant and up to date.

Staff files indicated that interviews were carried in line with safe recruitment. Relevant safeguarding questions were asked, and handwritten notes from the interviews were kept on file. References were included within the files. Unfortunately, an error on the reference forms stated that references must be repeated every five years. This was clarified as an error by the DSA and the correct forms are now on the Diocese and Cathedral websites.

Clergy Blue Files were not seen as part of this audit and are not stored at the Cathedral.

### 3.5.1 Volunteer appointments

Volunteer recruitment and retention is handled by the Director of Operations who is responsible for managing the 'floor' of the Cathedral, including security, counter terrorism and the verger team.

The responsible manager decided to mirror the process used by HR and uses the same Safer Recruitment checklist that sits on each file and gives an immediate account of the stages achieved towards a start date. A retrospective operation is also being undertaken to bring all 400+ existing volunteers up to the same standard.

For volunteers recruited by the Operations Department, files when completed are sent to HR who run a double check that all aspects of safe recruitment and induction, including training, have been completed and the files are now kept with all staff files in HR.

### 3.5.2 Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS)

DBS checks are managed by the Diocese on behalf of the Cathedral under the service level agreement, including advice on the management of blemished disclosures.

The auditors saw no evidence of any problems arising from DBS checks.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- There were no considerations in this area.



## **4 FINDINGS – ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORTS**

### **4.1 POLICY, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE**

All parts of the Church of England must adopt or take account of the House of Bishops Policy Statement (2017) Promoting a Safer Church within their own safeguarding policy. The Policy Statement must actively underpin all safeguarding work within the Church and the drive to improve safeguarding practice.

This has been supplemented by more recent practice guidance Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies (2017) which sets out more explicitly than before the safeguarding expectations for cathedrals.

#### **4.1.1 National policies**

The Cathedral has a comprehensive Safeguarding Handbook which acts as the policy for both safeguarding children and adults. It was adapted from Parish Safeguarding Handbooks and sent to the National Church for comment. It includes procedures for those working with children and adults around the Cathedral as well as roles and responsibilities. It also acts as policy which has been difficult to balance but works well. The Handbook is clearly written and regularly updated, overseen by the Cathedral Safeguarding Working Group and ultimately the Dean and Chapter. The Handbook clearly references the national policy statement, Promoting a Safer Church.

The Cathedral website page on safeguarding links to the Safeguarding Handbook, and includes other policies such as training, safer recruitment and whistleblowing. The website also links to very comprehensive quarterly safeguarding newsletters and to policy documents on the Church of England safeguarding pages.

#### **4.1.2 Diocesan policies**

The Diocese does not have a separate Safeguarding Policy but there are clear website links to the Church of England's Promoting a Safer Church and other national policy documents. In addition to this, there are links to other practice guidance such as: 'Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations that relate to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults', dated November 2018.

#### **4.1.3 Cathedral-specific policies**

The Canon for Congregation and Community advised that there had been much of work to get Cathedral policies and procedures up to standard, using the National Church of England diocesan Parish Safeguarding Handbook as a template. The Handbook is on the Cathedral website and is given to all volunteers. Changes to policy now go to the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group for approval and then to Chapter.

The Cathedral Safeguarding Handbook is strong on safeguarding children and adults and acts as a toolkit for staff and volunteers. It sits distinct from the diocesan guidance and is very Cathedral focused.

The Handbook contains reference to safeguarding children and adults as well as being clear on what they mean by young adults.

All staff and volunteers are issued with the Cathedral's Pocket Guide to Safeguarding Children, which lists both internal and external contact details relating to safeguarding, what to do if you have a concern about possible abuse including allegations, and things to remember about your own conduct. Focus group members were all provided with the pocket guide and felt it was useful and relevant to them. It is provided to all during induction.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the Cathedral ensure that the Handbook is used by all those who require it and is seen by all as the guidance it is intended to be, embedding it into the culture of Cathedral staff and volunteers?

## **4.2 CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR AND TEAM AND THEIR SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT**

### **4.2.1 Roles and responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor (CSA) are undertaken by the DSA under a service level agreement (SLA) between the Diocese and the Cathedral. The DSA is a qualified social worker formally working in children and families roles, and a former LADO. She is employed by the Diocese full-time and is line-managed by the Diocesan Secretary. The DSA receives independent professional supervision from a social care service manager within the Local Authority. The DSA does not have any supervision from the Cathedral which also does not feed into her appraisal process. There is no formal diarised time for the DSA and Cathedral Chapter Safeguarding Advisor (Canon for Congregation and Community) to meet.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team has recently increased its capacity and the DSA feels able to devote enough time to safeguarding issues within the Cathedral as required. The SLA is renewed annually in the spring and runs from 2018 to 2021. Services are clearly set out in the SLA.

In addition, the Canon for Congregation and Community is the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter and there is a Safeguarding lead in each of the Cathedral departments. These leads are the Residentiary Canons; Canon Precentor for Music, Canon for Learning and Outreach and Director of Operations covering volunteers, security and the Cathedral Floor and the Cathedral Administrator. They do not handle casework but focus on promoting the awareness of safeguarding across all Cathedral functions and feed into the independently chaired Cathedral Safeguarding Group. Their aim is to embed safeguarding and to champion training and effective practice, but some raised the concern that there is no formal mechanism for them to work together across the departments and therefore 'silo' working sometimes occurs.

## 4.2.2 Adequacy of resources

The DSA advised that she inherited the current arrangements but feels that they are adequate and work well, with enough resources to cover the work. However, there is a move by the Cathedral to consider a Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor post on a part-time basis to field day-to-day concerns and offer advice in context. The rationale for this is that the Cathedral would benefit from a named person for sustaining safeguarding work in context and in a focused way as much of the current work is spread across diverse portfolios. This perceived need was highlighted to the auditors by the Director of Music, the Canon for Congregation and Community and the Director of Operations because of the need to understand the role of choristers and the unique set of circumstances this brings, coupled with the large number of volunteers and their differing roles.

The auditors asked about sustainability of roles within the Cathedral for safeguarding children. There was a view that current roles have been overtaken by safeguarding to the detriment of other important areas and that this is not sustainable, particularly as visitor numbers and the congregation numbers increase, which is the long-term plan. There was a view from senior leaders that a new role of Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor is required who would give support to the safeguarding leads from each department.

### Questions for the Cathedral to consider:

- Should the Cathedral seek to be part of the 360-degree feedback/appraisal for the DSA role?
- How can the Cathedral seek to encourage cross-departmental working and information sharing to avoid silo working?
- How will the Cathedral seek to address the perceived lack of safeguarding expertise on the workings of the Cathedral raised during the audit process?

## 4.3 RECORDING SYSTEMS AND IT SOLUTIONS

The Cathedral has recently put together a comprehensive database for recording recruitment, training and DBS information. The Canon for Congregation and Community keeps a basic excel log for concerns, but these are usually linked to formal 'Log of Concern' or email trails. A Log of Concern is sent to the DSA, for advice and the DSA records every concern that raised. The DSA usually refers to the LADO if needed and assists in casework as it progresses.

The Cathedral does not have a high number of records relating to safeguarding. The records themselves were well ordered and the requirement to keep them securely stored was evident. However, in one file seen of a historic case, it included information that was not related to safeguarding. This was because the file was as handed over to the police but old HR information should now be separated out.

In recent years, Chapter has invested extensively in high-quality colour CCTV cameras and monitoring equipment, which have been used successfully in identifying criminals and are intended to discourage other undesirable behaviour in and around the Cathedral. Chapter regards these systems as making a crucial

contribution to safeguarding the Cathedral's community.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- Would a shared electronic recording system be more efficient?

## 5 FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### 5.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Good quality assurance enables an organisation to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Quality assurance needs to be strategic and systematic to support accountability and provide information on whether things are working well or there are areas of weakness. Potential sources of information are numerous and should be part of strategic planning.

#### *Description*

Chapter is required (as specified in the Church of England Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance 2017) to review safeguarding progress annually. Chapter requires evidence of activity and its impact. Evidence seen by the auditors includes annual safeguarding reviews and a report sent to Chapter for discussion. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for all Chapter meetings. There are also good links between the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison group and the Chapter through the DSA and the Canon for Congregation and Community.

Chapter commissioned an independent audit of the Music Department in November 2018 because it felt that it was considered higher risk. This was carried out by an independent safeguarding professional, who was previously chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group. The audit provided actions and advice on policies which have been discussed and accepted by Chapter via the Cathedral Safeguarding Group, which created an action plan in response.

#### *Analysis*

Each department having a safeguarding lead means that pockets of resistance to change, concerns from staff and volunteers and the number of referrals or concerns raised are easier to monitor, providing better quality assurance for the Chapter, particularly as the department safeguarding leads sit on Chapter meetings.

The Diocese Safeguarding Liaison Group includes the DSA and Canon for Congregation and Community. This provides a level of quality assurance from a wider range of external professionals regarding the work of the Cathedral. It also draws together strands of work that are relevant to both the Diocese and Cathedral.

In addition, the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group is now independently chaired by the same chair as the Diocese Safeguarding Liaison Group. This provides insight into the work being undertaken by the Cathedral in conjunction with that of the Diocese by an independent person who can directly challenge when required. The group has written a comprehensive strategic plan for safeguarding. The Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group reports to Chapter. Quality assurance for the CSAG therefore comes from Chapter but the CSAG may wish to consider whether setting up a quality assurance sub-group might strengthen challenge for each department and therefore with embedding of safeguarding in Cathedral culture. Auditors felt that challenge might arise when the recent media case is completed and survivors may contact the Cathedral.

Ely Diocese had already started to look at its Past Case reviews ahead of the publication of Sir Roger Singleton's report and concluded that some of them had not been handled well. The Diocese recruited four independent consultants to look again at practice and review 1,700 files, the lessons from which have been seen by the Independent Chair.

The Cathedral seeks external quality assurance through various other groups such as the National Cathedrals' Counter Terrorism Group and the Forum for Volunteer Managers.

However, by its very nature, the Cathedral needs to recognise the enormity of its safeguarding remit and to embed the strategic plan via safeguarding links in each department. Auditors felt that these could be strengthened to include information sharing, monitoring and challenge to greater degree.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the Cathedral be braver and more imaginative in its quality assurance? For example, by using other mechanisms such as benchmarking against similar-sized cathedrals; self-assessment and audit, casework learning, survivor feedback; staff and volunteer questionnaires; complaints, feedback from children and choristers to assess, learn and further develop safeguarding practice?
- How can the Cathedral better embed safeguarding into culture by effective inter-department working and challenge?
- How might the Cathedral strengthen challenge for each department and therefore with embedding of safeguarding in Cathedral culture?
- How might the Cathedral consider hearing from visitors, schools and the congregation regarding how they feel about safeguarding?
- How is the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group monitoring the implementation of recommendations from the Independent Audit of the Music Department?

## **5.2 COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE SAFEGUARDING SERVICE**

### **5.2.1 Clarity and accessibility of how to make a complaint about safeguarding work**

It is clear within the Safeguarding Handbook that if complaints are about the way a concern has been handled by the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer or Departmental Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor should be contacted. If the complaint is against the Cathedral's Safeguarding Officer or the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, the Dean or a member of Chapter should be contacted and the Diocesan Secretary informed.

However, the Cathedral has its own complaints policy that covers any sort of complaint and seems to contradict the information in the Safeguarding Handbook. The route to find it on the website is counter-intuitive, although if 'Complaints' is

written into the search engine bar, the reader is taken to the right place.

The policy makes insufficient distinction between information needed by a member of the public, that needed by a member of staff and that needed by both. For example, at one point it refers to complaints being logged by the HR and Compliance Manager without giving her contact details (information for staff) and later on it directs all complaints to the Chief Operating Officer with contact details (information for the public).

The process allows for two stages, both internal. Stage Two complaints are assessed by two people drawn from Chapter and department heads. In such a small team, this is unlikely to achieve independence. The Cathedral Administrator (Chief Operating Officer) adjudicates on complaints, including deciding whether a complaint is too minor to merit treatment under a formal procedure, but an appeal can then be made to the Dean.

The auditors found the process quite convoluted and thought that someone wishing to point out, for example, poor behaviour by a volunteer could easily give up.

## 5.2.2 Quality of complaints process in practice

The auditors saw no complaints about the Cathedral Safeguarding service.

### Questions for the Cathedral to consider:

- How can the complaints process for the Cathedral be clarified and properly linked with the Diocese policy and how might this be best disseminated?
- Would it be useful for the Cathedral clarify how complaints against volunteers are managed?

## 5.3 WHISTLEBLOWING

Effective whistleblowing procedures enable paid employees to raise concerns regarding areas such as bullying, abuse and fraud, without worry that raising such concerns will have a negative impact on them personally or be detrimental to their employment.

The Cathedral Safeguarding Handbook provides a link to the Government's advice on whistleblowing and references the Diocese Whistleblowing Policy but with no link. As above, the policy is easy to find on the Cathedral website by using the search facility but difficult to reach by the intended route.

The policy is based heavily on the diocesan policy, which makes sense, and is clear and well written.

### *Analysis*

The Whistleblowing Policy is more than adequate but the auditors saw no evidence of its use.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the Cathedral clarify the Whistleblowing Policy it is using and provide easy links to it via the website or within the Cathedral?

## **5.4 CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY GROUP**

Based on the national guidance in Roles and Responsibilities for Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panels, the panel should fulfil a key role in bringing independence and safeguarding expertise to its oversight role, and should be expected to contribute to a strategic plan. No specifics are provided in relation to cathedrals, with the apparent assumption being that they are part of diocesan structures.

### *Description*

The Cathedral has a Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group which meets regularly and is chaired independently. Membership of Diocese Safeguarding Liaison Group (DSLGL) ensures that the Cathedral is strategically in step with the Diocese while the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group (CSAG) translates the strategy into practice.

The CSAG is chaired independently by the same chair as the DSLGL. The current chair has been in place for DSLGL since March 2018 and for the CSAG since November 2018 so is relatively new. The role is paid and there are no identified conflicts of interest. He is a former police officer with a 30-year history of safeguarding experience from joint services teams, Serious Case Review management and police work.

The CSAG links well with the Diocese through the Chair and also because the Canon for Congregation and Community and DSA represent the Cathedral and Diocese respectively on both groups. Both also sit on the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group with the Dean. Feedback from all was that this is working well. The DSLGL maintains a wider multi-agency representation including LADO, Health and Children's Social Care, but the Independent Chair advised that he was able to draw on these representatives for the Cathedral if required. Survivors are not however represented on the group. Minutes are taken and actions are noted.

The CSAG has a remit to meet three times per year and reports directly to Chapter. In addition to the CSAG, there is currently in place a Cathedral Working Party whose function has been to identify areas of concern to be addressed within the Cathedral first. This too is chaired by the Independent Chair.

### *Analysis*

The CSAG has clear terms of reference which outline its purpose as being: to manage safeguarding arrangements in the Cathedral within the framework of the House of Bishops' Policy on safeguarding children and the vulnerable and to ensure that the highest standards of safeguarding are being met by:



- making sure that appropriate policies and processes including Safer Recruitment are in place and are being rigorously implemented
- monitoring and auditing policy and practice of the same across the wider Cathedral community, working with and learning from King's Ely School, which has its own safeguarding processes in place
- assessing and managing risk through the development of a risk and issues register on safeguarding
- developing and managing an action plan to address the issues raised
- developing and monitoring key performance indicators of activity
- sharing best practice with the Diocese of Ely, King's Ely and other relevant safeguarding bodies.

From the independent mini audit of the Music Department a year ago, the CSAG and working party created an action plan which has grown to become the Strategic Safeguarding Plan, currently in draft form. The Independent Chair advised that the group used the existing plans, House of Bishops guidance and themes from previous SCIE audits in order to create the Strategic Plan which appears comprehensive, well thought out and in line with the terms of reference above.

#### **5.4.1 Effectiveness of scrutiny and challenge function**

The Safeguarding Strategic Plan covers areas such as: Safer Recruitment, training, policies procedure and guidance, casework and information sharing, caring pastorally for survivors of abuse, caring pastorally for those who have an allegation made against them, responding to those who may pose a risk of harm to others, governance, leadership and accountability, quality assurance and risk assessment. The plan is broken down into smaller areas, each with identified actions and those responsible for these actions. All volunteers and those within the congregation stated that the change in culture has begun and that they can see an impact on safeguarding because they are supported, trained and listened to should they have a concern.

Challenges are identified by the Independent Chair as the Church itself being a nebulous entity with no set membership and which by its very nature is forgiving and welcomes all. The number of people coming through the doors to visit the Cathedral is increasing year on year and with this, comes more work of a safeguarding nature. However, the Chair also advised that he feels the leadership team within the Cathedral is strong and that the cross-over between Diocese and Cathedral is robust. The safeguarding leads in each department have added a level of ownership which the Chair feels may now be drawn upon and increased.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How might the CSAG increase its quality assurance?
- Could the Cathedral consider how survivors could be represented on the group and how they might react to any survivors coming forward from the recent media case?
- Should the CSAG seek to support survivors who do not now attend the Cathedral?

## 5.5 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Safeguarding can only be embedded within the Cathedral culture if the theological and practical leadership and management ensure that it is held at the centre of all actions.

Safeguarding leadership falls in the first instance to the Dean, in that he leads on all aspects of life in the Cathedral. However, safeguarding leadership takes various forms – strategic, operational and theological/spiritual – with different people taking different roles. How these roles are understood, and how they fit together, can determine how well led the safeguarding function is.

The SCIE team finds it useful to reflect on what they have learnt about the actual meaning of 'leadership' and 'responsibility for safeguarding' in the Cathedral; in particular how this breaks down in terms of strategic, operational and theological/spiritual leadership and how well each is defined and understood.

### 5.5.1 Theological leadership

The remit for theological leadership in relation to safeguarding is clearly always with the clergy and especially with the Dean of the Cathedral. This is extremely valuable in helping congregations and clergy to understand why safeguarding is a priority and intrinsic to the beliefs of the Church of England. This aspect of the leadership role is the foundation for the culture of the Church and is critical in terms of making it a safer place for children and vulnerable adults.

The Canon for Congregation and Community advised auditors that she felt the safeguarding team needed now to do more regarding the theology of safeguarding and seek to embed this further into every aspect of Cathedral life, including drawing in survivors. Although Cathedral sermons address inclusion and diversity, she felt they might be 'braver'.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the theology of safeguarding be further embedded into Cathedral life – especially drawing in survivors?

### 5.5.2 Strategic leadership

The House of Bishops Roles and Responsibilities practice guidance assigns different and overlapping roles to Dean and Chapter, with the former having a clear leadership role in relation to safeguarding, and Chapter having a strategic and oversight role in relation to the Church of England's Promoting a Safer Church safeguarding policy. This includes the requirement to have a Promoting a Safer Church action plan in place that sets out, in line with national and local priorities, how the policy is being put into action and is reviewed regularly.

The Dean takes an active and open role in safeguarding. He is clear that he is accountable; "All roads lead to me," and is as visible as possible within the Cathedral. The Dean introduces face to face training when he can and 'walks the floor' talking to guides and volunteers 3 or 4 times per week. He ensures that he has regular contact with the lead Canon of Safeguarding and with the DSA.

The Cathedral seeks to be inclusive and welcoming to everyone, despite charging a fee for entry. This is a balancing act and auditors felt that people who choose to worship there, either as a visitor or a regular member of the congregation or who support the Cathedral, did so because they want to be part of the message of inclusion. The Dean's message is that the Cathedral wants to be seen as safe and welcoming, but that staff and volunteers must have their eyes and ears open to what might be threatening.

The Dean described an escalation system used within the Cathedral which means that managers come to him regarding difficult situations and ask for assistance e.g. people not undertaking the required refresher training. The Dean's readiness to have a difficult conversation seems to be sufficient to obtain compliance, as he does not compromise.

The appointment of the current Canon for Congregation and Community has been influential in driving forward safeguarding, a point that was made to the auditors by everyone from her colleagues to volunteers. All advised that processes are much clearer and more well defined and that the number of minor concerns have decreased. Volunteers, the school, congregation and other senior leaders all felt that the presence of the Dean and Residentiary Canons within the Cathedral representing safeguarding has increased the positive message.

The Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group has been instrumental in driving safeguarding forward. This reports directly to the Chapter which has a strategic leadership role and function. The Safeguarding Strategy is a recent development based on a commitment to adopting best practice, but challenge to the CSAG could possibly be developed further

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How might the Cathedral strengthen the strategic leadership function of the Chapter for safeguarding in order to assist in the development of the Strategic Plan?
- How can the Cathedral ensure that the congregation is drawn into the safeguarding culture, especially when attendance varies widely?

### **5.5.3 Operational leadership and management**

The Dean, while keeping overall oversight, delegates the lead for safeguarding to the Canon for Congregation and Community. In practice, auditors could see that they operate as a team with all the Residentiary Canons and the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Operations. The Canon for Congregation and Community is very clear about the limits of her role which has recently changed from Cathedral Safeguarding Officer to Chapter safeguarding lead, tying in with the creation of safeguarding leads in each department. The Canon for Congregation and Community assists in some casework but works jointly with the DSA.

The auditors wondered whether the sharing of responsibility for safeguarding across the Chapter might have the unintended consequence of diluting it or leading to confusion. In fact, it is seen as a strength by those who work in and for the

Cathedral. More than one person said that sharing the lead makes everyone own it. The Canon for Congregation and Community described herself as a 'systems person' and she approached safeguarding as a system that needed structures in order to become embedded.

People across the Cathedral community were clear that the Canon for Congregation and Community has made a step change in the management of safeguarding in the four years she has been at Ely. Staff from Kings Ely said she established a common agenda for safeguarding with the school, but also indicated 'softer' skills when they said that she is very good at 'unlocking' people and getting their goodwill.

Concerns regarding the behaviour of members of staff or volunteers are referred to the LADO in line with the Church policy but via the DSA who takes the lead on casework.

The auditors saw evidence that safeguarding is on the agenda of every Chapter meeting, introduced by the Dean or the Canon for Congregation and Community.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider:**

- How can the Cathedral ensure that the safeguarding leads from each department communicate with each other as a group to strengthen working arrangements and to ensure that concerns do not slip between departments?

#### **5.5.4 Culture**

The Cathedral recognises that a critical aspect of safeguarding relates to its culture. In the context of a Cathedral this means the extent to which priority is placed on safeguarding individuals as opposed to the reputation of the Church, or the ability of all members of the Church to think the unthinkable about friends and colleagues. Any cathedral should strive for an open, learning culture where safeguarding is a shared responsibility, supported by those with a safeguarding lead, and which encourages people to come forward and highlight any concerns about how things are working in order that they can be addressed.

SCIE's experience auditing safeguarding in faith contexts more broadly suggests that in areas where there is experience amongst senior clergy of previous serious abuse cases, a culture of openness and humility in approaching safeguarding issues can be stronger, along with a cultural move away from responses which give too much attention to reputational issues and the welfare of (alleged) perpetrators, as opposed to the welfare of victims and survivors.

The Dean saw a safeguarding culture as the creation of a place where everyone is safe, and talked of having eyes and ears open. Volunteers in focus groups talked of situations where they had been the eyes and ears and acted on situations that they didn't feel were quite right or posed a potential risk. They said that they were listened to and action was taken, with the result that they felt validated and the safeguarding culture became further embedded.

Volunteers also talked enthusiastically about how much more open and friendly the congregations at Ely are now, compared with earlier decades. The congregation was

described in a focus group as, 'caring and inclusive'. Much of the credit was given to the Dean and Chapter; the canons are 'more in the real world' and support is strong when people find themselves in a difficult life situation. The auditors were made aware of one such situation.

The auditors saw good examples of communication about safeguarding. They were shown the Pocket Guide several times and saw three issues of a comprehensive safeguarding newsletter. Safeguarding is easy to access on the Cathedral website.

Training is an important building block in a culture of safeguarding and Ely's current 90 per cent attainment of C0 by every volunteer is an achievement. So too is the fact that none of the volunteers in focus groups questioned the value of training but described a tight infrastructure of selection, training and mentoring for volunteers that has been in place for about three years and works well.

The Dean talked about how, in the early days of training and large-scale meetings about safeguarding, he would make the time to introduce the session and reinforce the importance of safeguarding. He does seem to have set the tone and the auditors found a high degree of unity between the atmosphere and expectations that senior clergy aim to achieve and what was reported by volunteers.

When talking about the culture of safeguarding, the Canon for Congregation and Community said that while much has been done there is still room for improvement. High-profile cases across the Church of England mean that there are still lessons to be learned.

To summarise, the auditors felt that the Dean and senior staff within Ely knew themselves well. They work in a reflective way and can identify areas of strength as well as having plans in place to identify and address areas of weakness. Auditors found a strong culture of safeguarding at Ely Cathedral which is beginning to embed and is led from the front by a strong leadership team. Evidence of this includes: comments made by chorister parents, the school, adult focus group members, the congregation and volunteers, feedback from children involved in the Cathedral, and a range of printed evidence such as the safeguarding newsletters and annual report to Chapter.

**Questions for the cathedral to consider:**

- How might the Cathedral continue to find ways to embed safeguarding into their culture, constantly reinforcing the safeguarding message for all, while also finding a suitable baseline of knowledge for all staff and volunteers which continues to be reinforced?

### **5.5.5 Links with the National Safeguarding Team**

Links with the NST are made via the DSA.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The auditors fully agreed with Ely Cathedral's self-identified areas of strength in safeguarding practice:

- The close and integrated working relationship with the Diocese is a source of strength to both.
- The senior leadership team consisting of the Dean, Residentiary Canons, the Chief Operating Officer, and Director of Operations is strong.
- The Cathedral is considering a new part-time safeguarding role to increase expertise in safeguarding within the Cathedral remit.
- The culture of safeguarding is consciously being increased via training, bespoke services, the newsletter, the pocket guide, safeguarding policies being disseminated (e.g. Chaperone Policy, Chorister Tour Policy).
- Clergy and lay staff work closely together with an absolute sense of teamwork.
- The Strategic Plan, while in its infancy, is good and forms the beginning of a roll out of robust actions to increase the effectiveness of safeguarding and inclusivity, helped by an Independent Chair.
- Safer recruitment is used for staff and volunteers and all receive an induction. The strong management of volunteers, their training and support is of note.

Areas of concern shared with the Cathedral at the end of the audit were:

- Auditors felt that more could be done on the 'theology of safeguarding' – actually bringing it into the culture/fabric of the work here and embedding it.
- Could the Cathedral be braver in helping people really understand the reasons behind actions, linking this to diversity and inclusiveness in that everybody has the right to be safe?
- Consideration should be given to an annual appraisal for volunteers in order to assess their suitability for role and ensure that they are safe.
- Cyber safety is in its infancy and is insufficiently robust and comprehensive, a view agreed by the Cathedral as it was a concern for them.
- The Music Department has acted on findings from the mini audit but now needs to consolidate and write down within policy things that have always been done but only agreed verbally.
- Choristers need to be placed first and foremost over different funding arrangements. A more children-centred approach is required.
- The Cathedral needs to be clear which policies from the Diocese it is adopting and ensure links to these can be found on the Cathedral website.

## APPENDIX: REVIEW PROCESS

### 6.1 DATA COLLECTION

Information provided to auditors in advance:

- Self-assessment 2019
- Annual Reviews for 2017 and 2018
- Chapter minutes (Safeguarding items) from 2014 to 2019
- Safeguarding Annual Report to Chapter 9 May 2019
- Chapter Agenda April 2019
- Committee and Chapter Membership
- Ely Cathedral Chapter Strategy September 2018
- Edward Bear and Junior Church Role Descriptors and Risk Assessments
- Current evacuation procedures and floor plan
- Hirers' confirmation of safeguarding provision
- Cathedral Governance and Management Structure
- Current organisational chart for safeguarding
- Ely Cathedral Strategic Safeguarding Plan 2019
- DBS check proforma, policy statement and flowchart 2019
- Ely Cathedral complaints and whistleblowing policy
- Ely Cathedral application form template 2018
- Confidential Declaration form 2019
- Safer Recruitment procedure 2018
- Training modules 2019
- Ely Cathedral role descriptors
- Music Department mini audit 2018
- Minutes of Choir House meeting 28 April 2018 and 7 February 2019
- Cathedral and school child protection liaison minutes 2018 and 2019
- Safeguarding risk assessments for the music department February 2019
- Visiting choirs' safeguarding statements (over and under aged 18)
- Adult Singer Policy May 2019
- Choir chaperone policy January 2019
- Choir handover protocols May 2019
- Chorister photograph consent form
- Ely Cathedral Octagon Magazine February and May 2019
- Safeguarding Advisory Group meeting minutes Mar and November 2018
- Safeguarding Working Party meeting minutes February, March and May 2019
- Service level agreement between Ely Diocese and Cathedral
- Volunteer role descriptors and training documents
- Volunteer policy guidelines 2016
- Floor plan

During the audit, a Learning Together session was held at the start and end of the site visit, to discuss Ely Cathedral's safeguarding self-assessment, and the auditors' initial impressions. The auditors were taken on a tour of the Cathedral and its associated buildings. The auditors observed a mixed evening choir rehearsal and an evensong service, at which the mixed choir sang.

Conversations were held with:

- Dean
- Diocesan safeguarding advisor
- Three Residentiary Canons – Canon for Congregation and Community (the Chapter Lead for Safeguarding), Canon Precentor, with responsibility for Music, the Canon for Learning and Outreach, with responsibility for Learning
- Chief Operating Officer
- Ely Cathedral Safeguarding Chair
- Learning Director
- Sunday school leader
- Security and Volunteer lead
- Director of Music
- King's Ely Safeguarding liaison lead and choir school House Mistress
- Head of Human Resources
- Cathedral Safeguarding Officer
- Cathedral Safeguarding Administrator

Six focus groups were held with:

- Chorister boys
- Chorister girls
- Chorister parents
- Cathedral auxiliary staff and volunteers
- Cathedral congregation
- Sunday school children

The auditors looked at seven case files, relating to persons who may pose a risk to others, and vulnerable adults.

Four recruitment files were seen.