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institute for excellence

Hereford Cathedral independent safeguarding audit (September 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 services.

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.

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

Hereford Cathedral is the cathedral church of the Anglican Diocese of Hereford. It is a large, Grade I listed building in the centre of Hereford city, dominating the skyline. It is dedicated to two saints, St Mary the Virgin and St Ethelbert the King who is buried in the Cathedral.

The site of the Cathedral became a place of worship in the eighth century or earlier. The Cathedral's most famous historical treasure is the *Mappa Mundi*, a medieval map of the world created around 1300. The map is listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

The Cathedral also houses the *Chained Library*, in a specially designed chamber in the New Library Building. There has been a working theological library at the Cathedral since the 12th century and the oldest book in the Chained Library is the eighth century Hereford Gospels. The wider library continues to serve the Cathedral's work and as a research centre and, coupled with the Mappa Mundi, is a considerable tourist attraction.

Hereford Cathedral has 10 bells which are regularly rung. The bells are sometimes known as the 'Grand Old Lady' as they are a unique ring of bells. The Cathedral is the main tower of the Hereford Diocesan Guild.

2.2 CONTEXTUAL FEATURES RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING

Hereford is a cathedral city, civil parish and county town of Herefordshire, England. It lies on the River Wye, approximately 16 miles east of the border with Wales, 24 miles southwest of Worcester, and 23 miles northwest of Gloucester. With a population of 58,896, it is the largest settlement in the county. Hereford is mainly affluent but with pockets of severe deprivation. The number of homeless in the City has increased in the last few years and the level of crime including drug crime, seen within the Cathedral vicinity has increased. County Lines is having an impact on the city, in line with many other small towns and cities¹.

The Cathedral made a successful bid to the Lottery fund to upgrade the cloister building used by the choristers. This work is underway and means that the choristers are currently housed in a temporary building adjacent to the song school. Hereford Cathedral has very little available space for activities and office space due to almost all of the cloisters being needed to house Cathedral staff, including the Deanery and vergers.

A recent audit of accessibility has enabled the Cathedral to work closely with relevant groups within the community and to change policies and practice to ensure accessibility for all.

¹ The term County Lines is used to refer to the practice of trafficking drugs into rural areas. In 2018, National Crimes Agency figures showed there were 1,500 drug trafficking routes of this sort in the UK.

Music at the Cathedral is very important and is very well supported by the local community and tourists alike. There are regular organ recitals in the day and concerts in the evenings. The links with Hereford Cathedral School are strong and the choristers, currently all boys but with a view to introducing girls, are extremely visible. Recent activities for the choristers include being invited to sing for the Pope in Rome and singing at the 75th anniversary celebrations of the D-Day landings in Normandy. Hereford Cathedral Choristers are part of the annual Three Choirs Festival hosted in turn by Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester cathedrals. This reflects a significant commitment made by children, chorister parents and the music department although the Festival is actually run by a standalone company not affiliated with any of the cathedrals.

The Dean and Chapter work carefully to make the Cathedral an open and welcoming place which is free for all to enter, apart from the Mappa Mundi and Chained Library exhibition for which there is a charge.

2.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE (INCLUDING LINKS WITH THE DIOCESE)

The Dean is clear that he holds ultimate responsibility for safeguarding but has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Safeguarding Lead on Chapter who is a Lay Canon of the Cathedral and was previously the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor (DSA). This arrangement has been in place for 2 years but is changing significantly with the recruitment of a new Chief Operating Officer (COO) who will gradually take on the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role and report directly to the Dean. The introduction of a new human resources/safeguarding post, which the Cathedral has not had before, has also ensured that Safe Recruitment will continue under a paid member of staff.

The Cathedral has a Safeguarding Management Group which is chaired by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter although it is planned that there will be an independent chair. The group is fairly new but meets regularly and is attended by the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) as well as the Schools and Family Learning Officer, the Chorister Tutor, Hereford Cathedral School, the DBS Administrator, and the Volunteer Liaison Officer. The Dean, Director of Music and the Canon Precentor do not attend.

The SCIE independent safeguarding audit of the Diocese of Hereford, published in May 2017, found that; *'in general terms there were good links between the Cathedral and the Diocese and a very good working relationship between the Dean of the Cathedral and the Diocesan Bishop. However, in terms of safeguarding there is need for the arrangements to be strengthened and formalised.'* Since then, a service level agreement (SLA) has been in place between the Diocese and the Cathedral which partly formalises the relationship in relation to safeguarding.

The Chapter Safeguarding Lead in on the attendance list for the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) as the Cathedral's representative, however, the DSAP itself has no formal role in relation to the Cathedral.

2.4 WHO WAS SEEN IN THIS AUDIT?

Key documentation put together by the Chapter Safeguarding Lead was provided to the auditors prior to the audit. Auditors also spent 2.5 days talking with people either individually or in focus groups to understand more about safeguarding across all areas of Cathedral life. Conversations were held with the Dean, the Canon Precentor, Director of Music, the Canon Chancellor (whilst conducting a tour of the Cathedral), the Chief Operating Officer and Human Resources/Safeguarding Officer, the Chorister Tutor, Head of Education and Learning, Chapter's Lead for Safeguarding, the Head Verger, Event and Communication Officer, choristers, chorister parents, the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor (DSA), the Volunteer Coordinator and DBS Administrator, congregation representatives and a range of employed and voluntary lay and ordained people with a safeguarding role.

The auditors also spoke to a member of the congregation who had sought advice on a safeguarding concern about their experience of the Cathedral's response.

Auditors observed Evensong and the handover for choristers moving between school and Cathedral staff's responsibility.

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

Auditors did not speak to bell tower representatives during the site visit, but did speak to the Tower Captain in the days following the audit.

More details of the audit process are given in the Appendix.

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 Hereford, the auditors found that the Cathedral has put in place detailed thought and care to ensure that it 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 and this work continues.

3.1.1 Children

This section is about children who come to the Cathedral in various capacities. It does not cover choristers who are referred to in the next section.

Description

Hereford Cathedral is unusual in that it does not run a Sunday School or Youth Church for children. Instead, families with children are welcomed to Sunday services and advised that should they wish, they can use a room in the main body of the Cathedral where there are resources and activities for them to make use of on the understanding that a parent/carer will remain with the child. Chapter feels that there has not been the demand for a regular Sunday school.

The school and family learning department of the Cathedral welcomes a large number of children via school visits (and through other organisational visits such as holiday clubs). Children are invited to undertake activities which support the curriculum in school and to undertake workshops. Approximately 3,000 children per year access these resources. School visits account for the majority of children coming to the Cathedral as part of an organised visit. Schools remain responsible for their children at all times but are supported by members of the learning department. Recently, with the closure of several public toilets in Hereford town centre, the number of people using the toilets in the Cathedral has risen. These toilets, whilst some distance from 'The Barn', a dedicated building slightly off site where schools visitors meet, are also used by children undertaking activities run by the schools and family learning department.

Children also visit the Cathedral for services such as the Carol Service, and the Donkey Service at Christmas for Key Stage 3 children and to visit the Mappa Mundi with family.

Included by the Head of Education and Learning as activities for the children are: mini visits for reception aged children, three standard visits for Key Stage 1 children a special place, story time and shapes and spaces trail, stained glass windows workshops, calligraphy workshops and the Mappa Mundi and Chained Library exhibition. Schools may also put together bespoke visits and activities to cover the

subjects they are currently studying. Visits are highly interactive incorporating use of props and costumes, investigation, reflective activities and stories. A risk assessment is carried out for each visit and staff ratios are adhered to.

The Cathedral also welcomes children who wish to be acolytes to servers. Currently there are a few aged between 16 and 18 who remain under the pastoral care of the Canon Precentor.

Auditors did not see a written policy about taking photographs of children in the Cathedral, but this is discouraged by the verger team who are visible on the Cathedral floor at all times.

Analysis

Auditors saw clear arrangements in place to safeguard children who come to the Cathedral on school visits. The Barn is a restored building used exclusively for school and other children's visits. Relevant information is shared in advance with the schools, through provision of a booking form, generic risk assessment checklist and detailed information. It is made clear that children attending the Cathedral on school trips remain the responsibility of the school at all times and schools are also asked to complete their own risk assessment, usually following a visit to the Cathedral and a meeting with the Head of Education and Learning. The school and family learning department are specifically mentioned in the Cathedral's safeguarding policy under 'safeguarding in specific areas of ministry'.

Visitor welcomers and the verger team are made aware of any forthcoming school visits and there are between 25 and 30 specific education volunteers, most of whom have completed safeguarding training. The majority of these volunteers are retired teachers or professionals from another area whose skills are matched with the various volunteer posts available at the Cathedral. To address the fact that welcomers change shift every couple of hours, staff in the children and family learning department have ensured that as well as the activity timetable being emailed to all, they also physically place a paper copy of the timetable on the welcome desk. Following school visits, each lead completes an assessment form alongside another team member in order to address any concerns and ensure all objectives were met. Staff and volunteers were clear who they would speak to if they recognised a concern about a child.

It was clear to auditors that the interests of children are completely at the heart of the education and learning team and their associated work. Activities for schools have been carefully written to compliment what the school are doing as part of the national curriculum, and safeguarding is an integral part of this.

Security for the Barn, which is a short distance from the main Cathedral building was raised as a concern for staff and volunteers. The building is old and whilst there is a phone line and an alarm, the gate is difficult to open from the inside and may cause a concern should children need to be evacuated quickly. Toilet breaks are built into the timetable for each activity and children are accompanied should they need to walk across to the toilets at any time. However, there remains concern about drug users and associated paraphernalia in the Cathedral toilets used by the children. The Cathedral has considered this carefully and to address this, children and family

education staff and volunteers regularly 'sweep' the toilets, looking for anything which might indicate a hazard. A new policy and very detailed instructions have been written to cover this. Vergers check the toilets at the beginning of each day and cleaning staff have been trained to recognise and handle drug paraphernalia safely. The Cathedral provides a 'school visit kit bag' to be worn by whoever is leading the visit. This includes the risk assessment for the particular visit and a sign to attach to the toilet door should they need to be closed. Auditors were impressed that whilst the situation is not ideal, every safeguarding aspect had been considered and all areas of the Cathedral work together to minimise risk.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the Cathedral better consider the safety of children within the Barn during activities?
- Could the Cathedral consider an addition of toilets accessible only to the Barn?
- Could the Cathedral do more to ensure that it is clear that photographs or choristers are discouraged and that advice on what to do in this situation is clear?

3.1.2 Choir

Description

There are 18 choristers within Hereford Cathedral, all attend the Hereford Cathedral School which is in close proximity to the Cathedral. The school is a co-educational day school catering for pupils aged 3–18 years. Choristers in the Cathedral are currently boys only, ranging in age from 7–13 years, depending on when their voices break. All boys, regardless of this, finish being choristers at the end of Year 8.

Hereford does not currently have girl choristers and this makes it one of only two cathedrals outside of London not to receive girls. In the summer of 2018, Chapter and governors of the Cathedral School established a working party to consider how financial arrangements between the Cathedral and the school might work together to facilitate the introduction of girl choristers. If possible, the director of music is planning to introduce two top lines to the choir, one girls and one boys, with both lines sharing the workload equally. Various models of girl and boy choristers have been introduced across the country but the view of the director of music is that many have found that completely mixed choirs do not work because boys simply leave.

After Year 8, many of the choristers join the choir at Holy Trinity Church where their sisters and other ex-choristers sing. Hereford Sixth Form College also runs the Academia Musica Choir which has a rapidly expanding reputation both in Hereford and further afield. This is a mixed choir which sings Choral Evensong in Hereford approximately 20 times per year, as well as services further afield, including Salisbury Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey.

The 'back row' of the choir, consisting of adult singers (lay clerks), have minimal contact with the choristers and this was codified in 1992 when the song school was

brought in and it was made clear that the back row would not supervise choristers. Despite this, they are DBS checked.

Every three years, choristers go on tour. They have visited America, France and Rome recently, singing for the Pope at the Patronal Festival Eucharist in St Peter's Square and at the 75th anniversary celebrations of the D-Day landings in Normandy. Risk assessments for each visit are put in place and arrangements are made to safeguard choristers. Most recently in France, choristers stayed at homestay placements rather than in hotels. The choristers have a chorister tutor who is employed on separate employment contracts by both the school and the Cathedral to support, provide pastoral care, chaperone and safeguard the choristers. This post was brought in following the cessation of boarding at the Cathedral school in 2001 and is a role previously carried out by the house parents. The current chorister tutor has been in post since 2015 and attends chorister tours as well as supporting the choristers on a day-to-day basis. She is first aid trained and keeps a daily diary of any concerns.

Hereford Cathedral has three choral scholars and an organ scholar who live together in a house off site. All are over 18 and are DBS checked. They regularly support the chorister tutor in supervising the choristers walking across from school and having their tea. Sometimes this is augmented by the gap year students at the Cathedral school. Children are not used as page turners for the organist and do not go up into the organ loft where there is no CCTV.

Choristers practice daily during the week, apart from Wednesdays, going directly to the song school from home in the mornings. Junior pupils are escorted to school following practice. After school, all the choristers meet for tea at the junior school and are then escorted to the song school for rehearsal and Evensong. On Fridays there is an additional practice following Evensong. Usually the choristers drop bags and have refreshments at the choristers' house which is situated within the Cathedral cloisters. However, due to the current building work, their room is a temporary wooden building (the 'hutch') which has been placed next to the song school. The building is small but has heating and is likely to be in place for the next year. Choristers are usually offered Sunday lunch each week so that they do not have to travel home between services. This cannot be offered in the hutch which is too small.

Chorister parents receive a timetable of practices and 'red' weeks where choristers are expected to sing in additional services and practices for example during Holy Week and at Christmas. The Cathedral provides an annually updated choristers' handbook for parents and choristers which provides information regarding supervision, uniform, anti-bullying, details of the types of services and what they mean, pastoral care and safeguarding.

When they first join, choristers have a probationary period and during this time, do not attend all rehearsals and services. The probationary period lasts from between two and three terms depending on their progress. They do not wear the white collar (ruff) worn by other choristers until they are deemed to have passed their probation, they are given a short test and admitted as a full chorister ('ruffed') at a special service usually at the end of the summer term.

Choristers at Hereford Cathedral also take part in the annual Three Choirs Festival

held between Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester cathedrals. The Three Choirs Festival is an ancient tradition and is the oldest music festival in Europe having been running for over 300 years. The cathedrals host the festival in turn. All choristers from the host cathedral are involved along with the top eight by age from each of the other two cathedral choirs. The festival runs for a week and involves visiting choristers staying over in order to sing Evensong.

Outside term time, the Cathedral's voluntary choir sings on five Sundays of each year, conducted by the Assistant Director of Music. The majority of the voluntary choir are adults, however, student members are welcome. The choir is covered by the Cathedral's safeguarding policy, which states that appropriate travel arrangements are to be put in place and the Assistant Director of Music consults with the Chapter safeguarding lead about arrangements.

Analysis

The auditors observed a handover of choristers from school to song school via the chorister tutor and a sung Evensong. The atmosphere was good humoured and structured. Choristers appeared happy and enthusiastic even during the warm-up scales and arpeggios which can be repetitive.

Choristers spoken to by the auditors said that it was a busy role, that they had to get up early and sometimes missed things that other boys were able to do, citing sport as an example, but that overall they greatly enjoyed being a chorister. They described the role as fun and that they were able to do things that would otherwise not be open to them such as the tours and meeting sometimes quite famous people. Despite some reservations by the Chapter lead for safeguarding and the chorister tutor regarding homestays on tour rather than hotels, the choristers said that they had felt safe and had enjoyed this aspect. They described being given mobile phones which worked abroad along with a small card detailing contact numbers for various staff. They enjoyed staying with the families and were clear that they knew what to do if they didn't feel safe or there was an emergency. Chorister parents were equally happy with these arrangements and said that they had been provided with email and phone contact for the families their children were staying with prior to the tour and so had been able to contact them regarding arrangements.

Choristers described Sundays as being long and tiring. Those who live outside Hereford town, did not have time to go home between services and so are provided with Sunday lunch. This is usually in the chorister house, but because this is currently subject to building work, it will be served in the hutch. The Cathedral has considered this to be too small and so has asked chorister parents who do live in the vicinity of the Cathedral whether they would be willing to host Sunday lunches for who can't get home and back in time. Parents had some reservations about this. They were under the impression that the chorister house was to be closed for up to 12 months. They also raised a concern that the choristers, for their own wellbeing, needed to be able to go outside and play during this break. The Cathedral reassured auditors that this issue is now resolved and that chorister parents will be made aware.

Chorister parents were extremely complimentary regarding the appointment and role of the chorister tutor who they felt had been beneficial to the mental wellbeing of their

sons. Parents did however, feel that the Cathedral may have become risk averse. They mentioned that the annual cricket match between choristers and Cathedral staff had been cancelled and their perception was that this was following an incident, about which there remain strong feelings. The Cathedral reassured auditors that the cricket match was a school event which was cancelled due to a change in Independent School Inspectorate regulations prohibiting mixed sport. Despite this, parents felt that this had been an important social event for choristers and their families in what is otherwise quite a regimented existence and that cancelling it had been a huge loss.

Choristers felt that the Director of Music was fair and had a sense of humour. They were happy that if they were not singing well, he would ask them why, possibly after Evensong and that any sanctions he put in place were reasonable and warranted. This was also reflected by chorister parents who spoke to the auditors.

Choristers stated that they felt safe in the care of the chorister tutor and that they would talk to her if they were worried about anything. They described occasions when the chorister tutor had taken a child out of Evensong because they were unwell and when asked who they would go to once the chorister tutor was absent, they felt they would approach the Director of Music, or go and find a vergers, the Assistant Director of Music or the director's wife who is their singing tutor at school.

Auditors had some concern regarding the choristers seeking advice from vergers in the Cathedral. The remit of the vergers, who all live on site, is to ensure the smooth running of the Cathedral, to ensure that furniture and equipment is moved when necessary and to support the Cathedral staff with any difficulties raised by visitors or those using the Cathedral at all times. They are also responsible for security and locking/opening the building plus responding should the security alarm be activated (see section 3.2 on Precincts and buildings for further information). However, when speaking to the verger team, auditors heard that they did not take responsibility for children and that they actively removed themselves from arrangements relating to the choristers. Auditors were left with the feeling that there was a mismatch between the expectation of choristers and those who would normally be responsible for them and the understanding of the responsibilities of the vergers.

Choristers advised the auditors that sometimes they did think about terrorism and questioned what they would do should there be an incident in the Cathedral. It is noteworthy that choristers advised that they are told to keep singing at all costs, regardless of what is happening around them. Choristers advised that there has never been a time when they felt frightened whilst singing but auditors were left questioning whether the Cathedral has adequately planned how to deal with an incident where choristers might be actively frightened and with reason.

Lay clerks (the back row) within the choir are DBS checked but do not have any supervisory capacity for choristers. There is no code of conduct in place and lay clerks, who are seen as very professional and responsible, are not spoken to about social media or any contact they may have with choristers outside the Cathedral.

Auditors questioned on occasion the rationale for DBS levels of various groups within the Cathedral, including chorister parents who are DBS checked but who didn't not know the reasons why. DSB checks are explored further in section 3.6 under Safe Recruitment.

Whilst Cathedral scholars, and the organ scholar are DBS checked and very visible in the Cathedral, Hereford does not have a Scholars' Code of Conduct in place to provide clear guidelines for scholar-chorister relationships. The Director of Music agreed that further thought may need to be given to relationships between music department staff such as lay clerks and scholars, and choir members, including the requirement for clear guidelines on boundaries and social media. The auditors agree that it would be useful to develop a code of conduct which includes all choirs and music department members and reflects the reality of their day-to-day interactions as well as their age and experience.

The division in role between school and Cathedral for the chorister tutor is laid out in great detail in a description written by the Canon Precentor which is useful. However, the status of this document isn't clear. It isn't a policy and isn't published on the Cathedral website so does not appear to be available for chorister parents. It also isn't signed and so doesn't appear to be a contract between the school and the Cathedral.

The role of the chorister tutor is clear but what happens to the information or concerns raised with her is less so. Auditors saw the daily diary in which details of minor illnesses, incidents (such as a tooth coming out), questions and information is recorded. One such recording was felt by auditors to be more serious and were advised that the chorister tutor was planning to meet with the parent and provide advice. Auditors felt that a system where either school or safeguarding leads were shown the diary on a regular basis was missing and, as a consequence, the chorister tutor might be taking on responsibility for issues which had not been looked at through a safeguarding lens.

The chorister tutor is also completely integral to the daily routine for the choristers. There is no formal provision for cover for this role between the school and the Cathedral should the chorister tutor be absent due to sickness.

The Cathedral, in its own self-assessment, raised concerns about arrangements for the Three Choirs Festival. This year, the Festival was hosted by Gloucester Cathedral meaning that arrangements were made for Hereford choristers to stay overnight. Homestays were provided by Gloucester and arrangements for safeguarding were provided by the Three Choirs organisers. The chapter safeguarding lead tried hard to engage with the festival organisers and with the other cathedrals to ensure arrangements were in place and felt that there should be more onus on the Festival organisers to ensure safeguarding policy and procedures are in place. No concerns regarding arrangements were raised by chorister parents or the choristers themselves.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Are there other ways to ensure that those choristers living outside Hereford town can be supported on Sunday during the closure of the chorister house to ensure their safety and wellbeing?
- In what ways might the safeguarding arrangements and expectations for all members of the choirs and music department be strengthened and formalised, including the role of vergers in the life of children and

arrangements for the Three Choirs Festival?

- How can the Cathedral improve links between it, choristers and their parents in a way that is safe but increases wellbeing?
- How can the Cathedral improve the exchange between it, school, and parents via the chorister tutor, of personal pastoral and safeguarding information about choristers?
- How might the Cathedral formulate a code of conduct for lay clerks, choir boys and all members of the music department to cover expectations around their behaviour, including the use of social media?

3.1.3 Vulnerable adults

Description

Hereford Cathedral is proud that it is based on being a community. The Chapter is proud of its commitment to keep the Cathedral as an open and welcoming place which, apart from the Mappa Mundi exhibition, is free for all to enter.

Hereford City is a mainly rural community where there are adults who have additional vulnerabilities and are, or may be at risk of, abuse and neglect, including self-neglect and self-harm. This includes people in need of pastoral support, people who are homeless, and those who have care and support needs arising from mental health problems, learning disabilities, or other cognitive impairments such as dementia. Several people in volunteer roles within the Cathedral fall into this category by virtue, for example, of increasing frailty as they age.

There is a mental health unit within the vicinity of the Cathedral and auditors were also told about a growing number of regular visitors from the city's homeless community and rough sleepers. The city of Hereford provides meals for the homeless throughout the city every day, some of which are supported by volunteers at the Cathedral, and a number of homeless or rough sleepers use the building as a safe place for sleeping during the day or a place to warm up during the winter months.

The safeguarding lead for Chapter currently has the lead role in Chapter for vulnerable adults. A day chaplain or lay minister is available every day during the week to offer pastoral support and the Dean is visible within the Cathedral and often available. Vergers are on duty every day and will assist in finding a chaplain or residential Canon when needed.

Training for those providing pastoral care is provided by an ongoing programme devised by the Cathedral Chaplain who organises skilled speakers to address the groups at their regularly termly meetings. Anyone wishing to join the team will be given induction training both by Cathedral Chaplain and by HR/Safeguarding. The Cathedral has a pastoral care strategy which is covered in the Cathedral health and safety document, this also covers lone working (Annex R to Health and Safety Policy entitled Lone working). The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter has also delivered training to pastoral visitors.

Analysis

The Dean and Chapter have developed a culture within the Cathedral community that is supportive, caring and inclusive. This approach is appreciated and supported widely across the Cathedral community including the congregation, volunteers and staff.

It is likely that there will be pockets of vulnerability amongst an ageing congregation and volunteer groups, due to the potential decline of both physical and mental health. The creation of a part-time volunteer manager post has brought a link between the various groups of volunteers and has enabled the Cathedral to better support them. Auditors were advised about a visitor suffering from dementia who became separated from their carer. Cathedral volunteers were among those who helped to look for the individual who was quickly found and had in fact not entered the building itself. However, the Volunteer Manager was then able to support the volunteers who were concerned and worried about whether their reaction had been good enough or whether they had done the right thing.

The Volunteer Manager periodically checks with a member of staff in each volunteer section to ensure all is well and picks up on any concerns. Should a volunteer decide to leave or feel they can no longer undertake their role, the Volunteer Manager puts in place visits either through Cathedral staff, or via the local parish priest to ensure that the volunteer remains connected with the Cathedral. This involves active planning and record keeping which, although in its infancy because of the newness of the role, auditors did see evidence of and recognise.

The pastoral care team itself comprises 30-day chaplains, who are a mixture of clergy and lay chaplains, the Cathedral Chaplain and 14 pastoral visitors who are all lay and who undertake home visits. All of the pastoral care team are DBS checked. Pastoral visitors meet three times per year and visit those who might be ill, or unable to attend services for another reason. The Dean may ask them to visit specific people, particularly if a person has been identified as missing services when they are a regular attendee. The Cathedral Chaplain visits any vulnerable adults with more complex needs. Records are kept of who is being visited and by whom and usually the Cathedral Chaplain also ensures that the parish priest is aware to provide additional support. The team have all received safeguarding training and information on lone working. There is no lone working protocol, but it is mentioned in the Cathedral's health and safety policy. Day chaplains advised auditors that if they had a concern about an adult in the Cathedral, they would approach the chapter safeguarding lead or the Cathedral Chaplain in the first instance. They felt that within their role it was difficult to 'follow things up' in any other way because they are only on duty perhaps once per month and so don't get to know people who visit the Cathedral well. However, they also felt that in some way this could be an advantage because they provided a new face that people didn't know and perhaps felt more able to 'offload'. The Cathedral Chaplain advised that she would approach the Chapter safeguarding lead, the residentiary canon or the Dean with any concerns. Day chaplains who spoke to the auditors gave a clear indication that they felt the Cathedral was moving forward and providing better care of vulnerable adults.

Cathedral staff, in particular the vergers, know the very vulnerable people who are regularly in and around the building and were confident that they were able to

support them. Sometimes this can be frightening for those on the Cathedral floor though and auditors heard that panic alarms are to be installed around the Cathedral, linked to a pager for vergers on duty. Auditors heard examples of support for the homeless including allowing members of the homeless community to sit quietly in the Cathedral and use the heating system to warm themselves during the day and providing drinks and a meal to those in need. One particular individual had clearly touched the hearts of members of staff and they were frustrated that other agencies were not able to assist.

There was evidence of understanding that any conversations with vulnerable people, adults or children, should be conducted in a place away from the main body of visitors, but in line of sight of others. What to do in order to raise a concern or make a referral seemed less clear however, particularly out of usual office hours. Auditors heard that for volunteers and day chaplains, the first port of call would always be the verger team who are on site and who were highly praised by those working or volunteering in the Cathedral. The verger team advised that they would keep an eye on anyone felt to be alone or vulnerable and possibly approach them if they were an adult. The Chapter lead for safeguarding would be the verger's first contact if required but vergers were mindful that often an adult would just leave and the likelihood of seeing them again was small. No Cathedral staff mentioned the out-of-hours service provided by the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) or appeared to know how to contact her directly if required. This is further explored in section 4.2.

Auditors heard from one member of the congregation who had been placed in a difficult position and who was potentially vulnerable. The individual felt well supported by the Chapter lead for safeguarding and the Dean and wanted auditors to know how much this was appreciated.

Auditors also heard that occasionally, vulnerable disabled people attend services and are noisy and disruptive, causing distress to others. The Cathedral does now put notices in the pew sheets, available at every service, which are aimed at carers and give advice about most suitable services to attend. However, in some circumstances, vulnerable adults have been quietly ushered out of the building during a service and auditors were left wondering whether the Cathedral has achieved the right balance between responding to the needs of an individual and safeguarding the wellbeing of others, including potential victims of harm. Whilst this can never be prescribed, it is an issue which needs to be kept under constant review.

Auditors were concerned that the Chapter lead for safeguarding has, in effect, become the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor. This brings with it some conflicts of interest and a concern that, as a volunteer, this level of support might not be sustainable. It also highlighted some potential difficulties in the relationship between the Cathedral and the Diocese in their arrangements for safeguarding both children and adults.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What further steps can the Cathedral take to strengthen its approach and responses to vulnerable people, some of whom are volunteers?
- How can the Cathedral better link with out-of-hours services provided by the

Diocese and ensure that those working or volunteering in the Cathedral are aware of them?

- How might the Cathedral assure itself that it is getting the balance right between caring for a vulnerable adult and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of others who may be vulnerable?

3.1.4 Bell ringing

Description

The Cathedral has a team of bell ringers who ring on Sundays and practice weekly. Access to the bell tower is from within the Cathedral via a spiral staircase. Unusually, the Cathedral has 10 bells. The bell tower is open to all ringers but under 18s who might wish to ring or to join the team would be expected to be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is one young person under 18 in the team at present.

The Tower Captain has undertaken safeguarding training and whilst the rest of the team have not, plans are in place for them to have training in line with all Cathedral volunteers. There are no separate safeguarding procedures operating within the bell tower, but activities are mentioned in the Cathedral's overall safeguarding policy which states that the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers covers the safeguarding procedures and health and safety matters.

The Canon Chancellor chairs the AGM for the bell ringers.

Analysis

Safeguarding arrangements in the bell tower are regulated by the Cathedral and would appear to be adequate. The Tower Captain assured auditors that she does hold a DBS check and has received safeguarding training but the level of this was unclear and did not appear to have been recorded by the Cathedral. Auditors found it difficult to get contact details for the Tower Captain as these were not immediately known by Cathedral staff.

The Cathedral's safeguarding policy does mention bell ringing but relies on the policy from the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers being followed. However, whether safeguarding in the bell tower is compliant with this policy is not checked or recorded by the Cathedral.

Auditors were made aware of one case relating to safeguarding in the bell tower where concerns were not shared when they first arose and communication between the DSA and the Chapter safeguarding lead was not clear. One aspect of the concerns had not been adequately followed up. Details of the Cathedral tower practice times and location are included on the Herefordshire bellringing website. The use of the tower by visiting ringers and the potential for anyone to be vulnerable at times, means it is entirely possible that someone vulnerable will attend and therefore it follows that safeguarding is an important issue. Whilst, on paper the Tower Captain has had safeguarding training, and training is also planned for the bell ringers, having considered the case, auditors were left with concerns about whether safeguarding is embedded into the culture of the bell ringers

The newly appointed Volunteer Manager has begun to put in place a system for engaging volunteers and the bell ringers have been invited and been represented at the first of the volunteer forums. Focus groups spoken to as part of the audit reported that bell ringers were pleased with this development and felt that they were being included for the first time.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might communication between the bell tower, Diocese and Cathedral be strengthened especially on individual safeguarding casework?
- Is the Cathedral satisfied that information regarding activities in the bell tower is sufficiently known and recorded and that safeguarding oversight is as robust as it might be?

3.2 PRECINCTS AND BUILDINGS

Description

Hereford Cathedral is in the centre of the city of Hereford and is surrounded by buildings, most of which are privately owned. The main Cathedral building incorporates the Cathedral itself, its cloisters which house the Deanery, Cathedral offices, the chorister house and the vergers houses, the Cathedral courtyard and gardens which extend to the river, the shop, restaurant, and the Mappa Mundi and Chained Library exhibition. A short distance away is the Barn which houses the Cathedral education centre. The chorister song school is within the cloister buildings and the bell tower is accessed from inside the Cathedral. There is also College Hall, a large meeting place used for various activities such as lectures and meetings which is located next to the song school and accessed from the cloisters. The chapter room also provides meeting facilities and is situated on the first floor of the College Cloisters, along with the Friends of Hereford Cathedral offices.

There are very few additional buildings meaning that as extensive building work and repairs are carried out, the Cathedral has little space to move. This has led to the choristers being currently housed in a small temporarily constructed wooden building whilst the chorister house is restored.

The Cathedral is opened up in the morning at 07.00 until after Evensong. There is a team of four full-time vergers who all live in within the Cathedral buildings. Sadly at the time of the audit, one of the team had very recently passed away and staff were understandably distressed about this. The Cathedral has recently employed a part-time verger, meaning there are currently 3.5 verger posts to manage the Cathedral.

Vergers look after all services, clean and tidy the building ready for concerts, move furniture and set up equipment. Vergers stagger their working hours to ensure that two are present for the majority of the day, but from 07.00 to 10.00 there is only a single worker. One verger is also on call each night alone to deal with any concerns, the intruder alarm and fire alarms should they be activated. The fire alarm is reported to be old and sometimes activates for no apparent reason. The intruder alarm rarely activates but police no longer attend on the occasions when it does. The Cathedral hosts approximately 30,000 visitors each year, the majority of whom are tourists.

CCTV cameras have been installed at key points within and outside the Cathedral, and oversight is maintained by the vergers team and Cathedral offices. The cameras have proved useful in helping address some anti-social behaviour issues in the less overlooked areas, particularly external to the toilets in the area outside the café in which there have been drug issues.

Analysis

Vergers are a clear and visible presence within the Cathedral whilst it is open. There is good oversight using CCTV cameras and auditors heard of incidents where these have been put to good use to find vulnerable adults who have been reported to staff as missing.

Vergers undertake a sweep of the building at the end of the day before locking up and are mindful of who has attended the Cathedral that day when undertaking this task. There are some individuals who have managed to evade the sweep by moving around the Cathedral and so have slept in the building overnight and surprised the vergers on duty the next morning. Should the intruder alarm be activated during the night, the vergers on call attend, having notified the resident off-duty vergers. This can be a frightening experience because they must enter the building alone to deactivate the alarm. The Head Verger reported that whilst it happens rarely, he does take a stick with him should this be required, and the alarm which is connected to the company managing it who can call the police. The vergers on call then reports back to the resident off-duty vergers when the incident has been dealt with. Auditors were concerned about the safety of lone working vergers during the night should the intruder alarm be activated and felt that they were potentially very vulnerable.

Vergers advised that sometimes children come into the Cathedral and behave badly, screaming, lighting candles and throwing things. Vergers steer clear but keep a watchful eye, hoping they will become bored and move on. Auditors noted that there didn't seem to be a process for approaching children to see why they were in the building or to support them if required, rather that they were viewed as a source of trouble. Vergers reported that there were situations in the building that they did not feel equipped to deal with and that they would like more training on de-escalation and reading body language.

Volunteers and day chaplains within the Cathedral were complimentary and appreciative of the vergers team and several said they felt secure and very lucky to have such support. Vergers reported that whilst there are few serious issues, there have been concerns regarding increased anti-social behaviour. Other volunteers advised that the alarm that used to be on the welcome desk has disappeared and they sometimes did feel vulnerable. Volunteers do not have access to personal alarms but there is a plan to introduce panic buttons.

It is not possible for vergers to be constantly visible and so at times, they will be unaware of the presence or location within the Cathedral of a volunteer. There is no effective protocol in place to ensure that volunteers working in all areas are safe. Given the potential vulnerability of volunteers, many of whom are comparatively elderly, it is important that existing policies and procedures, including the Lone worker section in the Health and Safety Policy, are reviewed to ensure they are comprehensive, well understood and consistently applied.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Is the Cathedral satisfied that vergers opening and locking up the Cathedral buildings are as safe as they can be?
- How might the Cathedral up-skill the verger team to assist with de-escalation of incidents?
- Is the Cathedral confident that volunteers in all roles associated with the Cathedral are aware of the Lone worker section of the Health and Safety Policy, and have received an appropriate level of safeguarding training, and that procedures are in place to ensure their safety?
- Is the Cathedral confident that the balance between offering sanctuary and maintaining safety in the Cathedral is maintained?

3.3 CASEWORK (INCLUDING INFORMATION SHARING)

Safeguarding casework needs to be timely and accurate, ensuring that an early assessment of risk in any situation is undertaken and any actions agreed, including referrals to statutory agencies. In the Cathedral context, this includes ensuring information is shared appropriately with safeguarding leads to assess whether there are elements of safeguarding for people receiving pastoral support, or for children attending activities or visiting the Cathedral.

It is usual in this context for the Cathedral to work closely with the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor (DSA). In Hereford, requirement for safeguarding casework is limited and any such work is carried out by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter. Consultation with the DSA does happen, but this usually takes place if required once casework is underway and the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter feels it is necessary. A service level agreement (SLA) for casework between the Diocese and Cathedral has recently been signed.

A total of seven Cathedral case files were reviewed, which were a mix of files relating to those who may pose a risk to others, vulnerable adults and concerns raised regarding children.

3.3.1 Quality of recording practice

All Cathedral case files reviewed were in paper format. Files are kept securely and access to them is strictly limited. The files seen included a chronology and on occasion letters received, but often little else and some were missing relevant information. There was little and often no communication with external statutory agencies and it was not always easy to establish the basic facts of the case, and what had been done, by whom, and when. However, auditors have since been advised that casework files are also stored in electronic form – passworded with restricted access. The electronic version has some email trails which were not printed.

Recording was not entirely in line with Church of England guidance in that none of

the files contained a front sheet outlining basic information, such as name/details of the person of concern, or the referrer, outline of the concerns etc. (Safeguarding Records, June 2015)

3.3.2 Effectiveness of response to allegations against clergy and people in church related roles including volunteers

Three allegations cases were reviewed. None had been referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). One case did mention the Herefordshire LADO in a chronology provided by the person against whom the allegation was made. Auditors could not find evidence of consultation with the LADO or referrals. All cases were discussed at some point with the DSA but action was taken by the DSA and Safeguarding Lead for Chapter separately following this consultation. The outcome of one case was then not recorded on Cathedral file, despite this potentially requiring some closing action. The lack of action in another case meant that a potential safeguarding risk was not addressed or risk assessed at the time and in the third case, casework appeared to focus on protecting the member of staff rather than the child.

A welcome element in some case files was the inclusion of a pre-written press release ready should it be required. This link between safeguarding and the media/communications lead within the Cathedral is relatively new and recognised by auditors as good practice.

3.3.3 Effectiveness of responses to reports of abuse not related to Cathedral officers e.g. familial, domestic

One case related to a domestic abuse situation reported to a member of staff. The response was not felt to be effective because of the time delay in responding due to the weekend.

Auditors explored knowledge of domestic abuse with both staff and volunteers and felt that the level of awareness of the implications of domestic abuse on victims, and on children living in a household where it occurs, might mean their ability to recognise it within the Cathedral community was limited.

3.3.4 Effectiveness of responses to vulnerable people or anyone in crises

Auditors saw one case which appeared well actioned and recorded and the person considered vulnerable was well supported, advising auditors that they felt once the Dean had been contacted, he and the safeguarding lead for chapter had been extremely supportive and moved to manage the situation very quickly. What wasn't so evident was whether the other person involved was also vulnerable and whether this also should have been explored, although it was noted as good practice that family members were involved.

3.3.5 Effectiveness of responses to information about unsafe people or feedback about unsafe practices

See section 3.1.4 Bell ringing for comments and considerations regarding such a case.

3.3.6 Effectiveness of risk assessments, safeguarding agreements and the risk management plan

Safeguarding Agreements are a key mechanism to support offenders who wish to attend the Cathedral, 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 appropriate level of diligence. Clarity about the risks that a Safeguarding Agreement is intended to address also allows for a robust reviewing process, which allows agreements to be strengthened where needed, or indeed terminated if appropriate.

The auditors were told that there are no individuals currently subject of a formal Safeguarding Agreement. However, three of the cases seen by auditors concerned persons in a Cathedral-related role who may pose a risk to others. None of these cases were managed under a Safeguarding Agreement, although one which had been taken over by the DSA following conviction is now managed elsewhere with an agreement (although the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter advised that she was not aware of this).

The link between the Cathedral and the Diocese, whilst developing, is not yet robust. This may be due to funding issues, but safeguarding casework and the assessment of risk did not feel to auditors as safe as it could be. The Dean and Chapter have a strong commitment to pastoral support, but auditors felt that in some cases, this was clouding the ability to maintain a clear view of potential risk with the need to manage this and take appropriate action. It is possible that the boundaries between Chapter oversight and safeguarding casework is blurred because the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter is also undertaking the casework. Action is underway to ensure that this situation changes with new appointments to safeguarding roles which are outside the Chapter, but this has not yet had a chance to embed.

3.3.7 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 efforts by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter to encourage anyone in the congregation who was a survivor of abuse to come forward to talk with the auditors, none did. One member of the congregation did contact auditors to provide a view of their response to a concern raised which was positive and very welcome. One chorister parent also shared their views about the pastoral care of choristers.

3.3.8 Information sharing practice

Discussion with individuals and in focus groups indicated a good awareness of the need to share information appropriately about matters or individuals of concern. However, there did appear to be confusion over who should be approached first, with many citing the vergers as their first point of contact and only one person mentioned that they might contact the DSA directly.

Case files did show that the DSA was contacted in each case by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter, but little further interaction and little oversight of casework by the DSA. Casefiles also indicated little external advice being sought from statutory agencies or with other places of worship when someone about whom there are concerns moved away. The LADO was not contacted in several cases where they could have provided support and where a statutory process should have been followed. The auditors were also made aware of a situation at a Cathedral event where a child was assaulted which should have resulted in the police being called, but they were not and civil action ensued.

However, information sharing between Cathedral staff is happening and staff and volunteers had a good understanding of the reasons why they needed to pass on information. This was well supported by a number of casework-type discussions held with staff and volunteers by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter in order to increase knowledge and 'make things real'. Auditors also felt that initiatives being put in place, such as the volunteer manager post and the volunteer forums, would provide a good opportunity to help with this.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Can Cathedral safeguarding leads and the DSA better work together to ensure effective and well-managed casework in the future and how can both be provided with effective oversight to ensure that the SLA is delivered?
- How will Chapter ensure that its commitment to the pastoral support of staff, volunteers and the wider Cathedral community does not cloud its ability to maintain a clear view of potential risk and take appropriate action?
- How can the Cathedral ensure that those working or volunteering within its community are clear on where concerns should be first raised and what they should expect?
- How can Chapter be reassured that external statutory agencies are consulted and referred to at the earliest opportunity?

3.4 CLERGY DISCIPLINARY MEASURE

No CDM complaints were seen.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- There are no questions in this section.

3.5 TRAINING

Safeguarding training is an important mechanism for establishing safeguarding awareness and confidence throughout the Cathedral. It requires good quality content, based on up-to-date evidence, with relevant case studies, engaging and relevant to the audience. It also requires strategic planning to identify priority groups for training, details the 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.

Description

Training on safeguarding for those working and volunteering in the Cathedral is provided by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter who is an accredited trainer for the NSPCC. This comprises delivery of the nationally specified safeguarding training, adapted in order to assist the flow, as well as training more specifically tailored to the Cathedral context which has taken the form of case studies and discussion.

Training records for paid staff are kept as part of an electronic spreadsheet recording who was trained and the date. However, there is no tracking system in place to record those who require training. More recently, the ongoing programme of safeguarding initial and refresher training has been put on hold because of lack of administration. The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter has no set hours, but advised that she volunteers for approximately 16 hours per week and it has proved impossible to cover everything. The DSA has not been involved for delivering training to the Cathedral staff and volunteers.

For volunteers, records are less clear and training has not been formally recorded. Most volunteers have nevertheless completed some form of training. The Volunteer Manager and DBS Administrator are in the process of creating files for each volunteer which will include their level of training and the date it was completed. A spreadsheet as a quick reference guide for volunteers is also being developed so that training can be tracked. Some volunteers viewed training as optional and Cathedral staff were mindful that there are still those volunteering in the Cathedral who have not yet had any level of formal training or whose training is extremely dated.

It is planned that the newly formed posts of Chief Operating Officer/Safeguarding Lead and HR/Safeguarding will provide a better oversight of training. The training programme itself is due to restart in September 2019 because of the creation of these posts.

Analysis

The Cathedral's self-assessment identified training as an area which needs to be addressed, to ensure that training levels are maintained and that a scheme for refresher training is produced. The auditors agree with this assessment.

A high number of staff have undertaken training but very few could advise on the level of training they had received or when it took place. Under Promoting a Safer Environment and Culture, the Cathedral's safeguarding policy commits to providing safeguarding training to staff but the programme for this training has been on hold due to lack of administrative staff. The Dean and Chapter are concerned that this means there are certainly volunteer staff who have never completed safeguarding training and who therefore may not be able to recognise a concerns for a child or vulnerable adult. A new programme of training (including refresher training for staff who will begin to require it) is due to begin in February 2020.

Auditors felt that the level of training required might be usefully reflected in the job descriptions for each role, person specifications and associated information (e.g. staff handbook). The newly launched Church of England training programme may

assist with this, particularly as lower level courses may be accessed online.

Most volunteers were happy to have received safeguarding training and found it useful, but some volunteers felt that training was optional for them and they did not see its relevance. The new training to begin in February will help with this but without a clear understanding of what is required of them, it is possible that volunteers might not come forward to undertake training.

The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter has used safeguarding scenarios and case studies to assist in providing understanding for various groups of Cathedral staff. Whilst not formally part of the Church of England practice guidance, this has proved very useful and was well received.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How will the Cathedral achieve a systematic approach to assessing and allocating the appropriate level of safeguarding training to all clergy, staff and volunteer posts in the Cathedral with appropriately timed refresher training?
- How might the Cathedral and Diocese work better together under the SLA to ensure the quality and relevance of the various levels of safeguarding for staff within the Cathedral?
- How can the Dean and Chapter properly quality assure both that training is being completed and that it is of an appropriate standard?

3.6 SAFER RECRUITMENT

Description

Recruitment of staff and volunteers is overseen by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter with DBS checks completed by the DBS Administrator. This is set to change with the creation of the HR/Safeguarding role which will ensure that all aspects of Safer Recruitment are undertaken, including the required DBS checks.

The outgoing DBS Volunteer Administrator used to undertake DBS checks for both the Cathedral and the Diocese. However, the Cathedral has made the decision to outsource the DBS checks themselves to 31:8 (previously the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)). The Diocese will continue to undertake DBS checks itself.

Individual staff files for paid staff include Safer Recruitment and are part of an ongoing system. Files and recruitment for volunteers are in their infancy but a plan is in place to bring these up to date.

Each staff file contains a comprehensive proforma which is split into 10 sections:

- Pre-employment checks
- Contract of Employment
- JD and Employee handbook
- Appraisal document

- Induction and Training record
- Sickness record
- Holiday, TOIL, leave
- Pay and Tax
- Pension
- Disciplinary

The Cathedral also has a list of staff for whom DBS checks are required which forms part of the safeguarding policy (Appendix 2) and which has been applied using national guidelines issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Three recruitment files were examined as part of the audit, all relating to paid staff. The Cathedral follows the Church of England Safer Recruitment policy which is in place for paid staff and is being further developed for volunteers. Files are currently being set up for the 400 existing volunteer posts and a system is being put in place by the Volunteer Manager with assistance from the current DBS Administrator who is also a volunteer. References are sought for both volunteers and paid staff and recorded on each file along with personal details and a confidential declaration. The Cathedral has a list of those posts which require a DBS disclosure and if a post falls under this category, a DBS check is requested. Only when all of the checks and references have been received, does a member of staff (either paid or volunteer) begin in post.

Auditors looked at the list of posts requiring a DBS disclosure and felt that in the main this was correct. However, there was some confusion from staff themselves about who should and should not have a disclosure. It was unclear on job/role descriptions for staff and volunteers whether they would require a DBS check and which level of safeguarding training they would need. For example, chorister parents are all DBS checked but were unsure why. The Cathedral did not think that the Tower Captain had been formally DBS checked yet she herself assured the auditors that she had. Job descriptions were included and available in each file and one, which was the most recent recruitment file provided, also contained the interview list of questions and marking sheets which is good practice but this was not present in other files.

Analysis

Recruitment files seen as part of the audit showed evidence of being split into relevant areas and had the proforma as a front sheet. Not all of the files contained information about who was interviewed, what questions were asked, how things were explored and the outcome. Auditors were concerned that one case file confirmed that a candidate had ticked that they had been the subject of a previous safeguarding investigation, but that this had been missed within the recruitment process and so was not explored in a timely way.

Despite this, all senior leaders and managers were committed to Safe Recruitment and could understand why this was necessary as part of a safeguarding culture. The safeguarding policy makes this clear, as does section 1 Working life, within the employee handbook. It is also referenced in the staff handbook.

Whilst there is a clear list of staff requiring DBS checks, contained within the safeguarding policy, individual files did not contain a rationale for the decision made on requirement for a DBS check for each post. This means that some staff are being DBS checked but don't really understand why. Auditors felt that a clear rationale for each post, regardless of whether it is paid or voluntary might contribute to the safeguarding culture and raise awareness of expectations of the role.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can Safer Recruitment processes be quality assured and what needs to happen to ensure that all recruitment and record-keeping practices meet the standards specified within the national and Cathedral-specific policy and practice guidance?
- How can the Cathedral be reassured that steps taken to more safely recruit volunteers are in place and effective?
- How might the Cathedral provide a clear rationale for DBS checks on each of the posts for which this is relevant?

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.

Description

Hereford Cathedral has a safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually by Chapter and was last updated in July 2019. It reflects the House of Bishops' policies and provides a framework for promoting the welfare and protection of children and vulnerable adults. The policy is on the Cathedral's website and so accessible to the public. It is also referenced within the employees' handbook for Cathedral staff.

There is a dedicated safeguarding section on both the Cathedral and diocesan websites, which contains a wide range of resources and information available publicly.

The SLA between Hereford Cathedral and the Diocese is an agreement only on casework and allegations. There is no agreement in place for the provision of training.

The Cathedral safeguarding policy contains a series of policy statements, which include reference to Safe Recruitment, training, management of offenders, and commits the Cathedral to review the policy annually. The policy document also contains guidelines/procedures in relation to a range of relevant matters including DBS vetting, training, responding to concerns and managing allegations. Other relevant subjects are referenced and briefly described. A series of appendices include promoting a safer church; learning from the past, promoting a safer culture, safely recruiting, responding to concerns or allegations, caring pastorally for victims, caring pastorally for those alleged against, responding to those who may pose a risk, DBS and specific areas of ministry.

There are also links to in the policy to more detailed procedures such as whistleblowing and personal harassment.

There is guidance in place for chorister parents which is regularly reviewed.

Analysis

Hereford Cathedral's safeguarding policy has been well thought out and covers all areas where children may be involved in the life of the Cathedral including servers, bell ringers, employees and volunteers under the age of 18, the choristers, voluntary

choir and visiting choirs. What is less clear is how well the policy is disseminated and understood by the Cathedral community. The majority of volunteers spoken to during the audit were aware that there was a policy but had not read it and did not know where to find it. They were clear however, that they would speak to vergers should they have any concerns at all.

Procedures relating to the choir are well understood and consistently applied. There is very detailed guidance regarding the handover for chorister between school and Cathedral and the guidance for chorister parents is very clear and full of useful information which does not assume a level of knowledge already regarding types of service and timetables.

Lone working is covered in the employment handbook but auditors were advised that perhaps this needed strengthening and this was highlighted in the Cathedral's self-assessment. Certainly the concerns about lone working for vergers would support this assessment.

The bell tower works within the National Guild of Bell Ringing policy but there isn't a reported overview of this and there is no separate set of procedures for the bell tower. There is currently one known child within the ringing team and the potential for others, as well as for vulnerable adults, to be there as visitors. A proactive response to ensure that all appropriate safeguards are in place would be desirable.

Cathedral staff have shown a commitment to development of policy for example when an adult went missing in the Cathedral recently, which happily ended well. Staff were clear that policies on what to do regarding a lost adult or child should be brought up to date and disseminated to all.

4.1.1 Information sharing protocols

There is no information sharing protocol in place within the Cathedral itself. However, there is a good understanding of the need to keep sensitive information confidential, for example personal files, training records and casefiles.

There is no reference within the SLA with the Diocese to information sharing protocol in relation to casework, which auditors felt to be an omission.

Information relating to the health and wellbeing of choristers is communicated between parents, Director of Music, the chorister tutor and the school. This enables all concerned to maintain close oversight of the children's wellbeing and be aware of any particular pressures or difficulties. This system appears to work well, with both choristers and parents expressing confidence. However, the status and purpose of the chorister tutor's daily record book is not clear. Where the information it contains is shared and with whom remains uncertain.

Complaints policy

The Cathedral's employee handbook contains a grievance procedure (at section 13) which provides information on raising problems or concerns about employment. Protection for whistleblowers is also contained within this handbook (section 9) which sets out qualifying disclosures and the procedure for whistleblowing.

The volunteer handbook (undated) does not refer to complaints or whistleblowing or provide information on resolving problems. It is useful but geared more to conduct required of a volunteer. The Cathedral's safeguarding policy does make reference to complaints and whistleblowing.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Should the SLA between the Cathedral and Diocese contain a statement regarding what is agreed about information sharing?
- How can the Cathedral ensure that information sharing protocols and standards are properly understood and complied with by staff and volunteers?
- Should there be more specific information for volunteers on whistleblowing and complaints?

4.2 CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR AND THEIR SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT

Description

The House of Bishops' Practice Guidance *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies* (December 2017) requires cathedrals to appoint a safeguarding professional as Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO) to work with the Dean, the Chapter and Cathedral staff to implement House of Bishops' policy and guidance. In Hereford, although representing Chapter, this function is delivered by the Chapter safeguarding lead. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) has a SLA agreement in place to undertake casework but this is very new and yet to be tested or further developed.

The Cathedral safeguarding lead is a qualified but not currently HCPC (Health and Care Professionals Council) registered social worker and is managed by the Dean who takes ultimate responsibility for safeguarding. The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter is a volunteer who, whilst they have no set hours, works for approximately 16 hours per week and sometimes undertakes far more hours than this.

Recently the Dean and Chapter have appointed a Chief Operating Officer (COO) and a HR/Safeguarding post to replace the role currently performed by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter. The timescale for the changeover of roles is yet to be set and training for both roles is required first. The COO will oversee the HR/Safeguarding post and will himself be supervised directly by the Dean. There are no known arrangements for professional safeguarding supervision for the new posts and this is not currently in place for the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter.

Analysis

Auditors remain concerned that links between the Cathedral safeguarding lead and the DSA are not as strong as they might be. It is difficult to know the reasons behind this but it is possibly due to workload for both. Whatever the reasons, it is impacting on the quality of both casework and information sharing across the Cathedral and

Diocese which could have a detrimental effect on safeguarding.

The current Safeguarding Lead for Chapter is clearly extremely knowledgeable and dedicated to her role. She has implemented systems within the Cathedral which were not previously well developed, such as links between the school and Cathedral in order to better safeguard choristers, and has provided training across all staff for a number of years. Auditors were impressed with the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter's tenacity and determination to improve safeguarding across all areas of the Cathedral in a short space of time. However, there remains the fact that the Safeguarding Lead is an active member of Chapter and therefore there is potentially a conflict of interest in her role. The Safeguarding Lead is also a volunteer and so auditors were left with a concern regarding sustainability of such a post.

To address this, the Cathedral has appointed two new roles, the COO/Safeguarding Lead and the HR/Safeguarding role. These are very new (only weeks into their new posts) and training is still ongoing. Neither of the new post-holders have safeguarding experience in their previous roles. The Cathedral has recognised the potential conflict and the issues with sustainability but timescales for handover of the roles and levels of training for the new posts have yet to be formalised. Barriers to working with the DSA have not been addressed and the SLA remains unusual and based on a financial arrangement which has not been formally tested or clarified, and which auditors felt might prove a barrier to reporting concerns to the DSA or requesting support with casework.

The SLA will be reviewed after a year and would probably benefit from some tightening up in terms of who does what. In particular, the auditors thought that the DSA role should be strengthened to comply with the expectations in *Roles and Responsibilities*, and that the DSA should be consulted about concerns at an earlier stage and undertake casework for all cases that meet an agreed threshold, rather than the role being restricted to giving advice that the Chapter might or might not follow. Auditors also felt that the SLA should include arrangements for policy provision which includes reference to the DSA. At present, the DSA is referenced in policies which she feels she has not been consulted on, although she is copied in to them prior to policies being placed on the Cathedral website.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might the Cathedral work with the Diocese to ensure that its requirements for a safeguarding service, to include casework, are adequately assessed, provided for and reflected in the SLA?
- How might the Cathedral work with the DSA to ensure that safeguarding-related responses by Cathedral staff and volunteers are appropriate, consistent with good practice standards, and suitably recorded?
- How can the Cathedral ensure that appropriate training and ongoing professional supervision is provided for the new safeguarding leads?

4.3 RECORDING SYSTEMS AND IT SOLUTIONS

Description

Having effective, safe and useable IT systems supports good recording and makes sure that information is secure, but accessible to those people with a legitimate need to see it.

Hereford Cathedral has in the main a paper-based record keeping system. All files are paper based although there is an IT system in part for training and recruitment. Recruitment and DBS checks, training and casework files are kept securely by either the DBS Administrator (soon to be the HR/Safeguarding post-holder) or the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter. Blue Files (records relating to clergy) are held within the Diocese.

There is no shared casework system between the DSA and the Cathedral Safeguarding Lead, meaning that files can, and as evidenced during the audit, do hold different information about the same case.

The Cathedral school uses a risk management IT system called Evolve in order to risk assess schools visits etc. and this has been adopted by the chorister tutor and is used to risk manage visits, outings and tours for choristers. The new HR/Safeguarding post-holder appointed by Chapter has started to develop a database to record training records, DBS disclosures, identity and other recruitment checks akin to the single central record used for safeguarding in schools. The Volunteer Manager has also begun to populate a database showing similar records for volunteers.

The music department keeps records of information about choristers which is relevant to their safety and wellbeing, including medical details and contact numbers. The auditors did not see similar details for acolytes or child servers as part of the audit.

Analysis

Training records are held electronically as a list which is useful but does not include a tracking system enabling scrutiny of records. Staff are not able to easily extract details of those who have not undertaken or those who have completed training at a specific level. HR administration for record keeping within the Cathedral has been severely limited in recent years and this has clearly made it difficult. The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter has worked hard alongside the DBS Administrator to address gaps and bring in a more systematic approach, but has lacked capacity to bring all HR files up to date.

Despite this, it is not safe that the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter and the DSA hold different information on their files on the same case. A combined system needs to be found to address this shortfall.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the Cathedral further develop recording systems to allow scrutiny and tracking of areas such as training, DBS and recruitment?
- How can the Cathedral and the Diocese develop a combined system for recording etc. on the same case?

5 FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE

A safe organisation needs constant feedback loops about what is going well and where there are difficulties in relation to safeguarding, and this should drive ongoing cycles of learning and improvement. Potential sources of data are numerous, including independent scrutiny. Quality assurance (QA) needs to be strategic and systematic to support accountability and shed light on how well things are working and where there are gaps or concerns.

Description

The auditors identified several QA activities that are in place. Examples include:

- A report by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter to all meetings of Chapter
- An annual report by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter to the Cathedral Council
- Using the opportunity of the SCIE audit to consult with a wide range of people in the Cathedral community about safeguarding
- Oversight by the Safeguarding Administrator of engagement with training, application of Safer Recruitment processes, DBS checks
- Consultation with the DSA regarding casework in some cases. Advice on blemished DBS checks was not seen.
- Attendance (although not regular) by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter on the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel
- Attendance by the DSA on the Cathedral safeguarding management group

Analysis

The responsibility for ensuring that the Hereford Cathedral is a safe place, and that national and local safeguarding-related policies are fully implemented and complied with, lies with the Dean and chapter. This is achieved by receiving regular reports at each Chapter meeting and by taking responsibility personally for safeguarding. Chapter minutes show that safeguarding is a standing agenda item and that Chapter is interested in ensuring safeguarding is robust, but it is reliant on a report from a member of Chapter itself, which proves a conflict. The SLA with the Diocese, which should ensure a QA role, is underdeveloped and so this is lacking.

The Cathedral does not have a specific QA framework in place, but there are many procedures in existence which act as such e.g. checklist for Safer Recruitment, learning from incidents (such as the vulnerable adult who went missing), risk assessments for chorister activities and contact with the school, all of which can be used to provide information about the effectiveness of the safeguarding policy and its impact on safeguarding within the Cathedral.

Auditors did not hear about supervision in relation to safeguarding and felt that staff did not receive regular access to information on their performance as it relates to

safeguarding. Such information is important to ensure that the commitments within the national and local safeguarding policy framework (e.g. related to a safely recruited, appropriately trained workforce) are being translated into purposeful activity and consistently applied procedures. Without such information, there is no evidence that this is the case. This would be particularly useful for the new posts with safeguarding responsibility.

There is also the potential to develop a QA role within the Cathedral safeguarding management group. Currently this is not evident but may become more so with the appointment of an independent chair. See section 5.2 for further information.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the Cathedral develop a comprehensive quality assurance framework and should this be linked into the SLA with the Diocese?
- What roles should the Cathedral Safeguarding Management Group take in overseeing the Cathedral's quality assurance arrangements?
- How might safeguarding be formally included in supervision for staff so that they are clear on their performance as it relates to safeguarding?

5.2 CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

Based on the national guidance in *Roles and Responsibilities* for Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panels, the panel should have a key role in bringing independence and safeguarding expertise to an oversight, scrutiny and challenge role, including contributing to a strategic plan. No specifics are provided in relation to cathedrals, with the apparent assumption being that cathedrals are part of diocesan structures.

Description

Hereford's Cathedral Safeguarding Management Group (SMG) has a terms of reference which covers oversight of tasks such as Safer Recruitment, monitoring of safeguarding arrangements, monitoring provision and advice in relations to safeguarding, ensuring arrangements for the appointment of Cathedral safeguarding staff, arrangements are in place for dealing with issues arising from the work for the Cathedral safeguarding staff, assessing training needs and monitoring of external developments within the world of safeguarding. The group must also ensure that the cathedral is effectively integrated into diocesan and partner safeguarding arrangements

The group is currently chaired by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter (as an acting chair) and reports directly to Chapter a minimum of three times per year, as well as to the DSA, although the DSA sits on the group. Minutes are taken and actions are noted.

The SMG terms of reference state that there should be an independent chair of the group but this has yet to be actioned. Its membership is drawn from a range of roles across the Cathedral and includes the Cathedral school. There are no representatives from statutory bodies.

The Diocese has an SMG. The Cathedral is represented on this by the CSL. She has not attended the last three meetings. Safeguarding in the Cathedral has not been on the agenda for the last three meetings.

Analysis

The SMG has been in place only a short time (since 2018) and it is commendable that it has been established and meets regularly. Its members include the DSA, schools and families learning officer, Hereford Cathedral school, DBS Administrator, chorister tutor, Volunteer Manager and Cathedral Administrator. The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter has acted as chair so far and reports back to Chapter on what has been discussed. Meeting minutes indicate that there is a range of items discussed which are of relevance. Action points are not always recorded and so it is difficult to see whether these are taken forward at the next meeting.

The terms of reference state that the SMG should have an independent chair and auditors agree that whilst there are national specifics for cathedral safeguarding groups², this would be in line with advice for diocesan safeguarding groups and would provide a level of independence which is not currently in place. The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter advised that they have had difficulty in finding someone to chair the group and have approached several people for nominees but without success. Auditors felt that proper recruitment of an independent chair through advertising should be considered.

Auditors felt that the Hereford Cathedral SMG is limited in its effectiveness by a number of factors. The chairing of the group by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter, which although showing admirable dedication and a desire to get things done, compromises the ability of Chapter to undertake responsibilities for oversight that are assigned to Chapter and Dean. Not having external agency or partners as part of the membership also means that challenge to the group and a sense of QA is lacking. Cathedral staff who are key to safeguarding such as the COO and HR/Safeguarding lead would perhaps be useful addition and would assist the SMG to exercise its full responsibilities for the oversight of safeguarding arrangements.

Links to the Diocesan Safeguarding Group appear to be weak and auditors felt that these need to be strengthened.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the role of the SMG be brought in line with the requirements of *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies* (October 2017)?
- Can the Cathedral work with the Diocese to develop the role of the SMG to

² The House of Bishops has issued the practice guidance *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies* containing requirements for DSAPs which includes the requirement for independent lay chair, and a link with the Cathedral via a representative. No specifics are provided in relation to cathedrals, with the apparent assumption being that cathedrals are part of diocesan structures.

ensure that the overall safeguarding governance framework for both Cathedral and Diocese works effectively in line with House of Bishops' guidance?

- How can the Cathedral successfully recruit an independent chair for the SMG and should a review of membership of the group be considered?

5.3 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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 that 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.

5.3.1 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 Dean has been in his post since 2002, and was previously the incumbent at Tewkesbury Abbey. He has not, to date, preached specifically on the subject of safeguarding.

Analysis

The Dean advised that the Cathedral is an inclusive church, welcoming all to worship. The Dean intends in future to preach about Safeguarding. The Dean was clear that integration of safeguarding into all aspects of Cathedral life was important and he showed a clear understanding and commendable commitment to this.

5.3.2 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 his leadership role for safeguarding very seriously and, together with

Chapter, seeks to demonstrate his commitment to pastoral care through his leadership and openness to being directly approached by anyone from the Cathedral community. The Dean and Chapter have been very successful in promoting this sense of collective welcome and auditors were given many examples of how this works in practice.

Safeguarding is a standing item on every Chapter meeting agenda, and the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter chairs the Cathedral SMG. The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter is the lead for vulnerable adults and for safeguarding children but this will soon move to the two new posts, the COO/Safeguarding Lead and the HR/Safeguarding post

Analysis

The auditors felt that while commitment cannot be faulted, there is some confusion regarding accountability for safeguarding. Boundaries between Chapter, the SMG and the Diocese are not as clear as they might be and leadership for safeguarding is currently delegated by the Dean to the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter who is both a serving member of Chapter and also the chair of the SMG. To further complicate accountability, the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter also carries out safeguarding casework and training, meaning that there is a lack of independent oversight and challenge on both these aspects from anyone not directly involved.

Strategic management and oversight of people who may pose a risk to others, including those subject to a Safeguarding Agreement, is unclear. This is because the DSA and Cathedral Safeguarding Lead are not currently working together to deliver casework on behalf of the Cathedral. The Chapter Lead for Safeguarding is more operationally involved than is desirable and despite the new staffing arrangements, there are no timescales yet in place to address this, and the SLA with the DSA is yet to be tested.

The Safeguarding Lead for Chapter intends to remain as a member of Chapter and auditors felt that to continue to include a lay person with safeguarding expertise but with no remit for safeguarding within the Cathedral other than this, would be useful and build in an aspect of quality assurance which is currently lacking. The role would need to be carefully defined within the overall framework of accountability, but would provide valuable support for the Dean and Chapter.

5.3.3 Operational leadership and management

The Dean remains very involved in safeguarding in the Cathedral but some delegation of the role from a clerical perspective goes to the Canon Precentor and the Canon Chancellor. In practice, they clearly operate as a team including the residentiary canons, the Dean and the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter. The Canon Precentor takes the clerical lead for the music department, including the choristers, while the Canon Chancellor retains the clerical lead for the vergers and the bell tower.

Analysis

There was some confusion regarding who people should approach in the first

instance when they had a concern about a child or vulnerable adult. This was not felt by auditors to be because the role had been diluted, but more a genuine confusion because the main contact is seen to be the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter but is not always present in the Cathedral.

The small number of case files seen by the auditors demonstrate a commitment to pastoral care with much less operational engagement in casework by the clergy, which auditors felt was correct. The DSA should (according to *Roles and Responsibilities*) undertake more operational activities, including casework. In practice though, this is done by the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter as discussed above.

Operationally the auditors were confused by the lack of joint working between the Cathedral and the Diocese on safeguarding. This means that operational safeguarding does not have a diocesan oversight and decision-making appears very separate, which could cause operational safeguarding issues to 'fall between two stools'. Auditors were not reassured that this would change with the change of staffing and felt the SLA should be stronger.

In addition to this, and possibly because of it, there also appears to be a lack of engagement with external statutory agencies such as children's social care and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who are not always consulted when required.

5.3.4 Culture

The most critical aspect of safeguarding relates to the culture within the Cathedral and the extent to which priority is placed on safeguarding individuals as opposed to protecting the reputation of the Church. Also integral is the ability of all members of the Church to 'think the unthinkable' about their friends and colleagues.

SCIE's experience of 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 and accompanied by a 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.

An open learning culture starts from the assumption that maintaining adequate vigilance is difficult and proactively seeks feedback on how safeguarding is operating, and encourages people to highlight any concerns about how things are working so they can be addressed.

The auditors were told, in several focus groups, that Hereford Cathedral is a community that is caring and supportive. This is clearly, very positive, but it is also within such cultures that those who wish to harm children and vulnerable adults can easily initiate a grooming process which leads to people being harmed. Awareness of this is needed to allow this caring and supportive culture to exist in a positive sense.

Analysis

The auditors found aspects of a strong culture of safeguarding at Hereford Cathedral. The Dean is committed to working collaboratively and leading by example. Cathedral staff and volunteers advised that he is clearly visible around the Cathedral. The Dean is very committed to an inclusive church and takes this commitment seriously, seeking to involve all within the Cathedral community, supported by Chapter and staff.

The Dean and Chapter's commitment to be open and welcoming to all was articulated by almost all those who spoke with the auditors and examples were provided to demonstrate such commitment.

Many across the Cathedral community expressed their strong commitment to offering welcome and forgiveness to all, including those who had a history of causing harm to others. There was a good awareness amongst staff and volunteers in the Cathedral about those who might be vulnerable and how to recognise and respond to this, but less so for those who might be potential victims and survivors, particularly around domestic abuse.

Communication with the Cathedral congregation is good and information regarding safeguarding in the pew sheets is welcomed. However, those in the congregation did not feel that someone who had come into a service at the Cathedral seeking support would immediately find information about who they could approach, particularly if they were seeking help as a victim of abuse. The congregation felt that an explanation of the roles of those leading on safeguarding e.g. the Dean, Safeguarding Lead, Canon Precentor and Chancellor would be useful on the board in the Cathedral.

Ensuring a culture of safeguarding requires constant reinforcing of information to all so that everybody has some confidence about what they should be worried about and who they should approach. A theological approach to this would assist, but information about wider safeguarding issues such as domestic abuse and its effect on adults and children living in the household, wider knowledge about managing situations and clear guidance about who to pass concerns to in the first instance would help with this.

It is also important for a culture which embraces safeguarding, to keep abreast of changes and developments in the wider world outside the Church. It is difficult to assess how well the Cathedral does this as a whole, but auditors felt that having an independent chair of the Cathedral Safeguarding Management Group, attendance at the Diocesan Safeguarding Working Group and therefore links with external agencies who also attend this group would be helpful.

The attitude to training expressed by some (see section 3.5) also suggests that safeguarding is not yet embedded fully as part of culture and is still seen by some as something additional that might be optional.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the Cathedral continue to improve how it shares positive public messages about the importance of safeguarding and its integral place in Cathedral life?
- How can the Dean and Chapter begin to develop the theology of safeguarding and ensure this assists with safeguarding becoming a more secure part of Cathedral culture?
- How can the Cathedral embed wider issues of safeguarding such as recognition and response to domestic abuse for both adults and children?
- How might the development of the new COO/Safeguarding Lead role assist in clarifying strategic and operational safeguarding responsibilities?

5.3.5 Links with the National Safeguarding Team

Links with the NST are made directly to the Safeguarding Lead for Chapter or via the DSA.

6 CONCLUSIONS

This section provides the headline findings from the audit, drawing out positives and the areas for improvement. The details behind these appraisals are in sections 3–5 above.

Safeguarding at Hereford Cathedral has many areas of strength, lots of which were identified in the self-assessment and which the auditors agreed with:

- Much work gone into safeguarding arrangements, training and the vision and strategy for the Cathedral and the Dean and Safeguarding Lead for Chapter have been the driving force for this.
- Whilst there is a strong desire to improve, there is also an honest recognition that more needs to be done to develop a strong culture of safeguarding and improve current practice.
- The development of the volunteer manager post is clearly welcomed and volunteers can see a structure being put in place with filters of information developing. The volunteer forums have been positively received.
- The communications post is also a welcome addition and the beginning of a media strategy and online advice is good. Proactive press releases already developed and recorded in the case files in case they are required is excellent practice.
- There are an increased number of volunteers who have been trained. The introduction of lanyards for volunteers adds a layer of professionalism and make them more easily identifiable to member of the public.
- The chorister parents handbook is extremely comprehensive and is welcomed by the chorister parents who feel that their children are safe and well cared for. Choristers themselves also feel safe, enjoy being a chorister very much, and feel they know who to go to if they were concerned.
- The visibility of the Dean within the Cathedral community and the fact that he is easily approachable are clear to all.
- Music department safeguarding arrangements are well thought out and the role of the chorister tutor is valued by choristers and their parents.
- Volunteers and day chaplains are clear that they would go to the vergers should they have a concern. The Cathedral community were very appreciative of the verger team who are on site at all times.
- The Safeguarding Management Group is in place and meeting regularly.
- The education and learning centre is exceptional and the provision for children is well thought out. Safeguarding in this area is taken very seriously and sweeps of the public toilets prior to visits is highly organised.
- The congregation feel strongly that the Cathedral is a community and that they feel safe.

The key areas for the Cathedral to address relate to:

- Safeguarding governance is unclear and conflicted at present.
- The links between the Cathedral and the Diocese via the DSA are not clear enough and the SLA itself is slightly vague, with financial arrangements not clearly prescribed.
- The poor links with the Diocese in relation to safeguarding also means that casework is managed by the Cathedral and actions have been missed. There also appears to be a reluctance to contact external agencies such as children's social care and the LADO when required.
- The links between the Cathedral SMG, Diocese Safeguarding Group and Chapter are not clear.
- Vergers, while hugely appreciated and a clearly visible team with a knowledge and understanding of safeguarding adults, are perhaps not as aware of safeguarding children as they might be.
- Training has clearly improved over the last few years, but there remain volunteers who are yet to be trained or whose training is out of date. Roll-out of a training strategy, particularly for refresher training is not yet in place, although under development.
- The culture of safeguarding is developing and has been identified as requiring further work.

6.1 ANYTHING ELSE?

Nationally auditors wondered whether there would be merit in tower captains being registered with the Guild of Church Bell Ringers regardless of whether there are children ringing. This would perhaps add a layer of safeguarding in bell towers across the country, providing a standard which is measurable and can be overseen by the Cathedral.

The Cathedral's self-audit recorded concerns about the safety of the Three Choirs Festival which is noted in the audit. However, no concerns were raised by choristers or their parents who enjoy the festival. Auditors acknowledge the safeguarding lead for chapter had undertaken considerable work in this area and wondered whether there would be merit in the three cathedrals meeting to discuss any safeguarding concerns well in advance of the next festival.

APPENDIX: REVIEW PROCESS

DATA COLLECTION

Information provided to auditors in advance of the audit

- Map of Cathedral and Cloisters
- Pre-audit information for staff, volunteers and congregation
- Cathedral Safeguarding Policy dated July 2019
- Self-assessment from Chapter Members
- House of Bishop's Policy and Guidance
- Church of England Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance dated July 2016
- Hereford Cathedral Volunteer Handbook
- Separated child protocol
- Photo release form for minors
- Safeguarding for visiting choirs
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Safeguarding Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2020
- Safeguarding Report to Chapter 18th March 2019
- Safeguarding Report to Chapter 21st May 2019
- Safeguarding Report to Chapter 22nd July 2019
- Safeguarding matters reported in Chapter Acts 25th February 2019
- Safeguarding reports to Council dated; 3rd July 2017, 2nd July 2018, March 2019 and 29th July 2019
- Cathedral Safeguarding Management Group Terms of Reference January 2019
- Cathedral Safeguarding Management Group minutes dated; 20th November 2018, 2nd April 2019, 11th January 2019.
- Service Level Agreement between the Cathedral and the Diocese
- Cathedral Choir Division of Responsibilities between school and Cathedral
- Cathedral Choir Handbook
- Cathedral Choir Schedule
- Schedule of meetings between the School and the Music Department
- Cathedral/School Liaison Committee minutes dated 13th May 2019
- Risk assessment for Choir Trips
- Architect drawings for new song school toilets.
- Education Schools' Programme
- Educational Visit Booking Form
- Notes from School Visit Safeguarding Meeting 1st May 2019
- Arrangements for checking toilets during school visits
- Accessibility and Safeguarding overview
- Out of the Cloisters Magazine
- Safeguarding Foundation Training slides

- 'Who's Who and Who Do You Tell?' flyer
- Training evaluation form samples
- Record sheet of who has attended training on a specific date.
- SCIE Diocesan Audit report
- Staffing structure
- Cathedral context

Participation of members of the Cathedral

During the audit, a Learning Together session was held at the start and end of the site visit, to discuss Hereford Cathedral's safeguarding self-assessment, and the auditors' initial impressions. The auditors were taken on a tour of relevant parts of the Cathedral and its associated buildings. The auditors also observed Evensong at which the senior choir sang.

Conversations were held with:

- Dean
- Canon Precentor
- Canon Chancellor (during the cathedral tour)
- Head of Education and Learning
- Director of Music
- Safeguarding Lead for Chapter
- Chorister tutor
- Head Verger
- DSA
- Volunteer Manager and DBS Administrator
- Events and Communications Officer
- Chief Operating Officer/Safeguarding Lead and HR/Safeguarding

An email exchange was held with the Tower Captain and also with the Cathedral Chaplain following the audit.

Four focus groups, of between three and seven people, were held with:

- Choristers
- Chorister parents
- Day chaplains
- A volunteers group comprising volunteers from a range of different activity areas
- Members of the congregation and friends of the cathedral

One member of the congregation came forward to provide information on the response received from Cathedral safeguarding.

The audit: what records/files were examined?

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

Three HR files were reviewed for evidence of Safe Recruitment.

Limitations of audit

None noted.