



social care
institute for excellence

Ripon Cathedral

Independent Safeguarding Audit

July 2021





social care
institute for excellence

About SCIE

The Social Care Institute for Excellence improves the lives of people of all ages by co-producing, sharing, and supporting the use of the best available knowledge and evidence about what works in practice. We are a leading improvement support agency and an independent charity working with organisations that support adults, families and children across the UK. We also work closely with related services such as health care and housing.

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

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

Written by Sally Halls and Simon Bayliss

First published in Great Britain in October 2021 by the Social Care Institute for Excellence

©SCIE All rights reserved

Social Care Institute for Excellence
83 Baker Street, London W1U 6AG

www.scie.org.uk

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 The audit programme.....	1
1.2 The audit process.....	1
1.3 Structure of the report	2
2. CONTEXT	3
2.1 Context of the cathedral	3
2.2 Contextual features relevant to safeguarding.....	3
2.3 Description of the safeguarding structure (including links with the diocese)	4
2.4 Who was seen in the audit	5
2.5 Limitations of the audit	5
3. FINDINGS – PRACTICE.....	7
3.1 Safe activities and working practices	7
3.2 Choirs and music	14
3.3 Case work (including information sharing)	19
3.4 Clergy disciplinary measures	22
3.5 Training	22
3.6 Safer recruitment.....	25
4. FINDINGS – ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORTS.....	25
4.1 Policies, procedures and guidance	28
4.2 The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor/Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.....	30
4.3 Recording and IT systems	31
5. FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY	34
5.1 Quality assurance	34
5.2 Complaints about the safeguarding service	36
5.3 Whistleblowing	37
5.4 Safeguarding Advisory Panel.....	37
5.5 Leadership and management	39
5.6 Culture	44
6. CONCLUSIONS.....	46
APPENDICES	48

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE AUDIT PROGRAMME

- 1.1.1** The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is delighted to have been asked to provide an independent audit of the safeguarding arrangements of the cathedrals of the Church of England.
- 1.1.2** This programme of work will see three cathedral audits in 2018, 16 in 2019, four in 2020, 17 in 2021 and a final three early in 2022. There are 43 in total. It represents a significant investment in cathedrals and an important opportunity to support improvement in safeguarding.
- 1.1.3** 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. Cathedral representatives will play a key role in adapting the audit framework to their particular cathedral context. Only in this way will we achieve bespoke audits that are right for each place respectively. Bespoke audits will in turn optimise the usefulness of the audit process and outputs to supporting progress in effective and timely safeguarding practice. We look forward to working with you to this end.

1.2 THE AUDIT PROCESS

SCIE Learning Together and our approach to audit

- 1.2.1** 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 is 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.

Key principles informing the audit

- 1.2.2** 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

Supporting improvements

- 1.2.3** 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.
- 1.2.4** 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.

The process

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

1.3 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

- 2.1.1** As part of the audit process, the leadership was asked to supply a brief description of the cathedral, an edited version of which is below:
- 2.1.2** The towers of Ripon Cathedral are visible for miles around, sitting atop a hill at the centre of Ripon. People have been coming to the site to worship since at least 672 when St Wilfrid, a powerful Northumbrian noble and Bishop of York, built one of the first stone churches in the North of England. The Anglo-Saxon crypt, the oldest built fabric of any English cathedral, is the only surviving remnant of Wilfrid's church. 'The worthy Wilfrid' (as the Venerable Bede called him) was a key figure in introducing and spreading Benedictine Rule in monastic life: Ripon was the first place in England where the Benedictine rule was lived out. Wilfrid also played an important role in the unification of the English Church under Roman traditions, ultimately contributing to the political unification of England in the tenth century. The Cathedral contains a number of irreplaceable features within its walls and collections, including the magnificent medieval oak choir stalls with their 35 misericords. It is a principal destination in Yorkshire for tourists and pilgrims, welcoming 105,166 visitors in 2018 and just over 95,000 in 2019.
- 2.1.3** Ripon Minster became a cathedral in 1836 when Ripon Diocese was the first new diocese to be created within the Church of England following the reformation. In 1888, the Diocese of Wakefield was carved out of it, and in 1919 the Diocese of Bradford. In 2014, these three dioceses were reunited to make the Diocese of Leeds, retaining all three cathedrals – Ripon, Wakefield and Bradford – which now work together to support the Bishop of Leeds and his ministry across the whole Diocese.
- 2.1.4** Ripon Cathedral has its own parish but is not a parish church cathedral. It also has its own benefice, containing four parishes and eight centres of worship, for which the Dean is incumbent. The cathedral parish contains four centres of worship: the Cathedral (the parish church); the daughter church of St Michael and All Angels, Littlethorpe; and the chapels of two hospitals (alms houses held in a totally separate charitable trust, founded originally in the 12th century) – St John's, Bondgate, and St. Mary Magdalen, known as the Leper Chapel. Safeguarding in all three chapels is supported by the Canon Pastor of the Cathedral.

2.2 CONTEXTUAL FEATURES RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING

- 2.2.1** Ripon Cathedral is situated close to the centre of the small town of Ripon, on a triangular site which is bordered by a busy road to the north, a steep slope down to the River Skell in the south, and the large graveyard to the east, beyond which there is housing. It is the oldest of any cathedral building in the UK still in use today, dating back to 672AD. It is a principal destination in Yorkshire for tourists and pilgrims, welcoming 105,166 visitors in 2018 and just over 95,000 in 2019.
- 2.2.2** The building itself is a classic Latin cross shape, with no exterior extensions. Inside, the nave area in front of the quire is open, with good visibility. Beyond the Crossing, the Quire area is less open. The Chapter House houses the sacristy, where the vergers are based, and is accessed from the south side of the Quire. There are several chapels and rooms off the north and south transepts and at either side of the Quire. The library, on the floor above the Chapter House, is reached via wide stairs

from the south transept, and is open to visitors. Below the Chapter House is the Chapel of the Resurrection, (which, pre-COVID, was used for Children's Church) and the Song School.

- 2.2.3** There are three entrances to the Cathedral: the main doors are at the west end, and there are doors in both north and south transepts. As the Cathedral has adapted to the restrictions associated with the pandemic, the latter two entrances have been kept shut, and all visitors enter and leave through the west doors. Access to the bell tower is from inside the west doors.
- 2.2.4** The Cathedral offices, Cathedral Hall, and housing for the Dean, residentiary canons and some lay staff are in different buildings ranged in the area outside the Cathedral, either across the road or down the hill on the banks of the river. These latter are reached via steep steps leading down from the south door, as is the newly developed Education Centre in Thorpe Prebend House.
- 2.2.5** Most of the 30+ lay staff (other than the vergers and education staff) are based in the Cathedral offices. A contractor deals with IT. Clergy work from their home studies. Post-lockdown, the Cathedral has been reviewing and adapting its routines and activities and making adjustments where needed. For example, the Song School has been relocated to the Cathedral Hall, and choir practices other than those which take place immediately before a service take place here. Children's Church now takes place in the library rather than in the Chapel of the Resurrection below the Chapter House, and school visits begin and end at Thorpe Prebend House.
- 2.2.6** There are plans to build more modern facilities in the grounds of the Cathedral but given the extreme sensitivity of the site, negotiations with the national Cathedrals Fabric Commission and other bodies are likely to be protracted.
- 2.2.7** Since the 20th century, Ripon Cathedral has been unique among English cathedrals in having a Parish Church Council (PCC). With the introduction of the 2021 Cathedrals Measure, this will be dissolved. New committees will be needed to represent the Cathedral community and the chapels' congregations to Chapter. Envisioning this new committee structure is work in progress at the time of writing.
- 2.2.8** Further changes proposed by the Church's National Safeguarding Team (NST) also have implications for dioceses and cathedrals which are still in the process of being worked through and understood.

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

- 2.3.1** The House of Bishops' practice guidance *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies* (2017) states that the role of the Dean is to provide leadership concerning safeguarding, and to encourage everyone to *Promote a Safer Church*.
- 2.3.2** The Dean is supported in his leadership role by a number of clergy, staff and others, including:
- The Canon Pastor, who has responsibility for pastoral care and children's activities and is Cathedral Safeguarding Representative (CSR)
 - The Canon Precentor, who has responsibility for music and liturgy including the choirs, servers and the bell tower and also manages the vergers
 - The Canon for Education and Rural Engagement, who oversees the education outreach work

- The Director of Operations, who manages the finance and business functions of the Cathedral (including staff recruitment) and is the Cathedral Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC)
- The independent chair of the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee, who is also a lay canon at the Cathedral
- The Head Verger, who is principally responsible for the safety and security of the Cathedral building and reports to the Canon Precentor
- The (currently interim) Director of Music, who reports to the Canon Precentor and has oversight of the choirs, supported by an Assistant Director of Music, an Assistant Organist/ organ scholar, and three Choir Supervisors, one of whom is also the Music Outreach worker
- The Education Officer, who reports to the Canon for Education and Rural Engagement, and has oversight of a team of education volunteers
- The Ringing Master, who oversees the activities of the band of bell ringers and associated safeguarding procedures
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST), which comprises a Team Leader and two Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors (DSA), one of whom is the link DSA for Ripon, an Assistant DSA and a Training Officer. There is a joint service level agreement in place between the Diocese of Leeds and the three cathedrals in the diocese – Ripon, Bradford and Wakefield.

2.3.3 Chapter is the governing body of the Cathedral and has nine members, including the senior clergy.

2.3.4 The Cathedral is represented at the Diocesan Strategic Safeguarding Committee by the Dean of Wakefield, who attends on behalf of the three diocesan cathedral Deans.

2.4 WHO WAS SEEN IN THE AUDIT

2.4.1 The audit involved reviewing documentation, auditing case files, talking to people at the heart of safeguarding in the Cathedral – such as the Dean, Clergy and lay staff members, safeguarding staff, music leads, and people managing the floor of the Cathedral – and discussing safeguarding with a number of other individuals with a range of roles and responsibilities. The fieldwork aspect of the audit took place over two and a half days.

2.4.2 Further details are provided in the appendix.

2.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE AUDIT

2.5.1 The auditors did undertake a site visit and were able to conduct all but one interview 'live', albeit socially distanced at all times and observing all COVID-related government rules and guidance. However, some limitations remained that make some aspects of the audit necessarily different from those conducted in 2019/20.

2.5.2 No focus groups were held during this audit. They were replaced by an electronic questionnaire which was widely distributed to children with close links to the Cathedral (such as choristers and servers) and adults in a range of roles across the Cathedral community, including staff, volunteers, parents of chorister and members of the congregation. These were analysed by the audit team and findings explored and referenced throughout conversations. The children's survey had only four

respondents, so any findings drawn from this number are limited by the extent to which they can be generalised to the wider chorister and child group. The adult survey had 101 responses, across a broad spectrum of roles, including congregants. Surveys nevertheless limited the depth of knowledge that could be gained from participants and this was further limited by the inability to hold follow-up discussions with respondents.

- 2.5.3** The audit took place after the end of term, which meant that the choirs were not rehearsing or performing. This meant that the auditors were not able to attend evensong or observe the pre- and post-service arrangements for the children's choirs. This was supplemented with a tour of the relevant places and verbal discussion about arrangements with the Head Verger and two of the three choir supervisors, which enabled them to gain a degree of understanding of the arrangements in place to support and safeguard the choristers.
- 2.5.4** During the periods of lockdown during 2020 and early 2021, most Cathedral activities were suspended, and the building remained closed to visitors for some of the time. No live services were held and the choir did not sing through the first lockdown. Services resumed in July until December with music from the adult choir members. During the second lockdown small said services took place. Significant numbers of staff were furloughed and volunteers were not active at all.
- 2.5.5** Services and activities resumed from Easter 2021, with adjustments in order to comply with post-lockdown requirements such as social distancing. This meant, for example, that choir practices were being held in the nave rather than downstairs in the Song School; other activities, such as Children's Church, were taking place in different venues. Volunteers returned to the Cathedral floor from July 2020 and the building remained open from then for limited hours with COVID-secure systems.
- 2.5.6** No survivors associated with Ripon Cathedral responded to the invitation to speak with the auditors, and their specific perspective is therefore absent.
- 2.5.7** The auditors did not visit the premises of the 'daughter church' or the two hospital chapels and did not include their safeguarding arrangements within the scope of the audit, other than to note that the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee has maintained an overview. This is because, given their separate governance arrangements, they are beyond the scope of the cathedral audit. The auditors were aware that this may change in light of the recent Cathedral Measure.

3. FINDINGS – PRACTICE

3.1 SAFE ACTIVITIES AND WORKING PRACTICES

Precincts and buildings

- 3.1.1** There are significant challenges to running a place of worship that welcomes large numbers of worshippers each week, receives tens of thousands visitors a year and is open to the public, some of whom may be vulnerable themselves, or a possible risk to others. A prominent public building like a cathedral is also vulnerable to external threats. The commitment of the Dean and Chapter to make the Cathedral a public space as well as a place of worship means that a consistent balance must always be maintained between being open and welcoming and ensuring safety and security.

Description

- 3.1.2** The building is open to the public from 8.00am – 7.00pm every day; it is open later on special occasions. Entry is free. Much of the interior is relatively open and visibility is good. Areas such as the library and St Wilfrid's Crypt are open at specified times. Public events are gradually resuming. Rooms in the nearby Cathedral Hall and Thorpe Prebend House are used for Cathedral activities. The monthly 'Breakfast Natters' meeting, held in the Cathedral Hall, reaches a wider group of mainly young parents.
- 3.1.3** Pre-COVID, there were three public entrances to the Cathedral, via the main doors at the west end, and doors into the north and south transepts. Since the lockdown, entry and exit has been restricted to the west doors. There are plans to reopen access via the north and south doors when external circumstances permit this.
- 3.1.4** The safety and security of the Cathedral is the responsibility of a team of six vergers, led by a Head Verger. They are recognisable by their uniform of a maroon shirt bearing the Cathedral's logo, and black trousers. They are based in the Chapter House, which functions as the sacristy. All the vergers, including the Head Verger, are part time, with allocated hours totalling 14 half-day shifts per week, with a small bank of two shifts per week in case additional cover is required. This means that there is one verger on duty at any one time, except for a 45-minute overlap at lunchtime between shifts, to allow for the communication of essential information and to complete any jobs that require two vergers to be present. The vergers are responsible for opening up and securing the Cathedral, which they do alone. A team of servers works alongside the vergers to set up and prepare for services on Sunday mornings.
- 3.1.5** A cleaner works through the morning in the Cathedral, starting at the same time as the verger, as the building opens to the public at 8.00am.
- 3.1.6** The Cathedral shop, which is staffed by three paid staff, is open from 10.00am – 5.00pm during summer, and 10.00am – 4.00pm in winter. Staff have a radio which is connected to the local Business Improvement District, and this provides a means of calling for assistance if there is no verger available. Volunteer welcomers and guides are usually present between 10.00am and 4.00pm, when numbers permit. A chaplain is available between 10.00am and 4.00pm on most days to offer a response to those who wish to see a member of the clergy.
- 3.1.7** There is good CCTV coverage across most of the interior of the Cathedral. Cameras are accessible through monitors in the Chapter House, but not remotely. The cameras are not closely monitored as there is nobody available to do this, but recordings are

kept for at least a month and can be reviewed in retrospect if needed. The exterior is not completely covered by CCTV cameras, and nor are the various other premises associated with the Cathedral. All buildings have alarms. Thorpe Prebend House has its own caretaker, who is responsible for its safety and security.

- 3.1.8** Out-of-hours alarms alert one of four people, two of whom live on site. The Head Verger (who does not live on site), will come to check the site – often alone, though with access to clergy and other staff who live on site if needed. Local police provide back-up when requested.
- 3.1.9** There has been an emergency evacuation plan in place since 2009, which has been regularly updated, most recently earlier in 2021. Its procedures have not been tested since its most recent update. This document does not make separate provision for the evacuation of the choir, should circumstances require it.
- 3.1.10** A weekly diary meeting, attended by staff from all departments, allows for the coordination of staffing and events across the site.

Analysis

- 3.1.11** Arrangements for oversight of and security within the Cathedral are well established, but over-reliant on a very small team of vergers. Consideration should be given to whether the current capacity is adequate, and how to mitigate the risks of lone working. This should include reviewing the means which are available for staff and volunteers to communicate and summon assistance.
- 3.1.12** The verger team is well known and respected, and confident in identifying and responding to those who may be particularly vulnerable, or who may cause a risk to others. Vergers 'do a lot with a little', are well recognised and cited as the go-to for a range of supports relevant to safeguarding. Given the small verger team and the spread of their responsibilities, the auditors questioned how, in practice, their time is rostered, and how realistic it is to expect them to be consistently available, as well as responsive to incidents as they arise. The auditors reflected that their responsibilities would regularly take them away from the floor of the Cathedral, and occasionally away from the building itself, thereby leaving those inside the Cathedral without immediate recourse to assistance. The reliance on mobile phones and the shop radio is only effective when there is someone available to respond quickly to a request for assistance. Although there are often day chaplains and volunteers available who are able to provide support, they are not trained to respond to the range of situations which fall within the responsibilities of the vergers, do not cover the same hours in full and are sometimes vulnerable themselves.
- 3.1.13** The Cathedral itself is a relatively open space and risks have been quite well identified and assessed. Good use is made of the various spaces, and this has been reviewed and, in some cases, improved post COVID-19 (e.g. relocating the Song School to the Cathedral hall from its previous location downstairs below the Chapter House). The use of the west doors as the only means of entry and exit has worked well and facilitates oversight. The location of the shop immediately inside the west door is a further source of support to the volunteers who greet visitors. The auditors were not clear why there are plans to reopen the doors in the north and south transepts, given the additional challenge this would bring to keeping track of those entering and leaving the Cathedral.
- 3.1.14** The CCTV coverage is nearly complete inside the Cathedral. Where appropriate, adjustments have been made to enable pastoral conversations to take place privately but in open view, the centre of the nave regularly being used for that purpose. The

CCTV has proved useful in assisting the police when they are investigating potential crimes or anti-social behaviour. It is less useful day to day, as there is no capacity to monitor cameras in real time.

- 3.1.15** The auditors questioned the extent to which certain policies, procedures and risk assessments can be consistently and robustly implemented, given the vergers' restricted capacity and the likelihood that they are pulled away from the Cathedral building. This could mean that volunteers may be in situations where they are managing risk and security without appropriate back-up easily available.
- 3.1.16** Lone working was a concern across many groups, particularly vergers and volunteers (and reflected by many in their responses to the survey). Reliable means of communication are lacking in this context. There is a lone-working policy, but this focuses more on personal safety than mitigations. There is no mention of what mitigations are in place to minimise the need for lone working. The auditors were concerned that, despite informal practices for reducing instances of lone working, it remains a significant risk to many within the Cathedral, including those alone on site early in the morning and late in the evening, and those responding to incidents at the Cathedral out of hours. This was supported by survey results from staff, volunteers and congregants of the Cathedral; 19 per cent (n=19) felt lone working was only moderately avoidable and 13 per cent (n=13) felt it not at all avoidable. One respondent commented as follows: *'It is often difficult to find a member of staff in the Cathedral, particularly when services are over later in the day. Because of this, one feels slightly and oddly uncomfortable, and one wonders that general safety and security is being compromised due to a distinct lack of available staff.'*
- 3.1.17** The current mitigations are not sufficient, in practice, to keep people safe and some review of these procedures would be beneficial. In this context, the good CCTV coverage is important but not a solution in itself, given the lack of monitoring capacity.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What action is needed to ensure to improve safety and security in the Cathedral for staff and volunteers as well as visitors?
- How might the lone worker policy be developed, in conjunction with staff and volunteers, to provide firmer support to those who work alone regularly or occasionally?

Children

This section is about children who come to the Cathedral in various capacities. It does not cover choristers, or children who bell ring, who are referred to in section 3.2.

Description

- 3.1.18** Children engage with Ripon Cathedral in many ways. They attend activities, including Children's Church; they volunteer as servers; they visit with their school, and come with their families.
- 3.1.19** The Canon for Education & Rural Engagement oversees educational activities, in their role as lead for one of the four areas of mission outlined in the Cathedral's strategic plan *Growing God's Kingdom*. Following a decision by Chapter to invest more in this area, a part-time education officer was appointed who took up post in January 2020 and Thorpe Prebend House was developed into an education centre able to accommodate school visits and other educational activities. In the three months

between January and March 2020, before lockdown, 10 school visits took place. Despite the Education Officer being furloughed throughout much of 2020, conversion work was completed on Thorpe Prebend House. On returning to work post-lockdown, the Education Officer has reviewed and refreshed procedures and materials used in the education department, and developed virtual provision to enable and promote continued engagement by schools even when visits are able to resume.

- 3.1.20** The Education Officer has a background in primary education and is supported by a team of 10 education volunteers, the majority of whom are former teachers and head teachers. All the volunteers have DBS clearance, are safely recruited, and undertake basic and foundation safeguarding training; the Education Officer has undertaken C3 and plans to complete safer recruitment training once it becomes available.
- 3.1.21** An Education and All Age Learning Committee comprising current and former head teachers acts as a reference group and will assist in the continued development of the Cathedral's educational offer. The committee is chaired by the Canon for Education & Rural Engagement.
- 3.1.22** School visits are managed safely and there are agreed procedures in place for booking; there is clarity about schools retaining supervisory responsibility. These and other details are set out in the recently refreshed Education Department Safeguarding Procedures and Guidance Document, which also includes information about the various ways in which children visiting the Cathedral with their school are kept safe. Prior to the proposed visit, schools are asked to provide details about the children they are bringing (numbers, ages, any specific needs, etc) and are given the details of the Cathedral's risk assessment and requirements for ratios of adults to children (which in turn are in line with Ofsted requirements). Arrivals and departures take place at Thorpe Prebend House and are always overseen by the Education Officer. A logbook is kept of any incidents. A dedicated education page for the Cathedral's website is under development. This will make the various educational offers, and the safeguarding procedures and guidance, accessible to all with an interest.
- 3.1.23** Family activity days are held in the south transept/ crossing during the school holidays, coordinated by the Education Officer.
- 3.1.24** The Canon Pastor oversees the Children's Church and the work of the Cathedral's first Children and Families Officer, who took up their part-time post in November 2020. The latter has completed relevant safeguarding training, including safer recruitment, and is responsible for the safer recruitment and coordination of the volunteers who support this area of the Cathedral's work, supported by the Canon Pastor's PA, the parish clerk.
- 3.1.25** There is a range of activities and opportunities for worship for children and families, including Messy Cathedral. An established partnership with the local Cathedral Primary School, facilitated by a volunteer who is a retired local primary head teacher, has resulted in an after-school club based in the school. 'Breakfast Natters', a monthly term-time pop-in playgroup with coffee and chat and toddler singing, is held in the Cathedral Hall.
- 3.1.26** The Children's Church takes place during the Sunday morning service. Formerly held downstairs, in the Chapel of the Resurrection, this has been moved (post-COVID) to the library. The arrival and departure of the children is overseen by the leaders. A recent improvement to arrangements was effected by asking parents to sit in a designated area of the Cathedral, close to the library steps, which made reuniting children with their families more straightforward.

- 3.1.27** Relevant procedures and guidance are in place for the majority of these activities, supported by an extensive array of risk assessments for activities and venues. Parents are required to complete a registration form with key information about themselves and their child(ren) before attendance at any of the activities is permitted. Numbers are carefully managed, particularly post-COVID. Important information, including procedures for keeping children safe and reporting concerns, are kept in a locked cabinet close to hand, together with significant information about the children such as medical and allergy details.
- 3.1.28** The Children and Families Officer expressed a wish to offer parents training and information sessions, and gave the example of 'county lines' training, for which she has completed a 'train the trainers' course.
- 3.1.29** In response to the survey, 85 per cent of respondents (n=86) said they were extremely or moderately confident about their own or other people's children's wellbeing, when in the care of the Cathedral, with 2 (2 per cent) saying they were not at all confident.
- 3.1.30** The servers' team was expanded immediately pre-COVID to include four girls from school key stage 2. The auditors were told that arrangements are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the girls, including a separate area for robing (which they do with their parents present).

Analysis

- 3.1.31** The auditors found that the wide variety of outreach activities for children and families undertaken at Ripon Cathedral are safely operated, with a robust understanding of risk and appropriate mitigations in place. Some procedures may need review in light of the limited resources available for their full implementation.
- 3.1.32** Activities for children are well established, led by experienced staff and volunteers. The importance of this area of work to achieving the Cathedral's vision of *Growing God's Kingdom* is clearly evidenced by the recent investment in employing staff to develop it further. Procedures and practice appear well developed and understood. Leaders are trained and alert to safeguarding, although understanding of grooming, and of the impact of domestic abuse on children's wellbeing, is underdeveloped. The auditors wondered whether there is a potential conflict between the written procedures for the safety of children and their practical application, given the limited resources of the verger team.
- 3.1.33** The engagement of the Children and Families Officer and the Education Officer in the weekly diary meetings, and as members of the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee (CSC) and the Education and All Age Learning Committee, are experienced by both as beneficial in keeping them aware of good practice and developments within the Cathedral and more widely.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How confident is the Cathedral that policies and procedures regarding the safety of children and families can be fully implemented at all times, and how might these be strengthened?

Adults

Description

- 3.1.34** Partnership is at the heart of the Cathedral's outreach to the local and regional community and central to the way in which it seeks to further its mission within the Diocese. The Cathedral works in partnership with several organisations in Ripon and the wider district, including Dementia Forward, Ripon City of Sanctuary, the local food bank and organisations further afield who support people who are homeless.
- 3.1.35** Cathedral Community Connections (C3) is made up of members of the Cathedral congregation, working under the direction of the Parochial Church Council, who provide partner organisations with practical help with fund raising, publicity and awareness raising. The Cathedral has hosted special services, exhibitions and events in aid of its partners, and regularly collects food and clothing to donate. C3 members have worked with partners in local schools, at community events, and in local centres.
- 3.1.36** Ripon as a community has a population which is generally older than the national average. The community associated with the Cathedral is on average older still. This means that there are many people throughout the Cathedral community who may have vulnerabilities associated with ageing.
- 3.1.37** Ripon Cathedral's commitment to pastoral care, rooted in its vision *Growing God's Kingdom* is rooted in theology and expressed clearly in its pastoral care policy, which describes 'addressing the needs of those around us in body, mind and spirit to enable fullness of life for all ... [and] ... to work with ... fellow members in searching out the poor and weak, the sick and lonely and those who are oppressed and powerless, reaching into the forgotten corners of the world, that the love of God may be made visible'.
- 3.1.38** The Canon Pastor has oversight of the pastoral care of the Cathedral on behalf of the Dean. She is supported by a team of eight to 10 volunteer pastoral visitors, who visit people in their homes/ care homes (or, during the pandemic, have kept in contact by telephone). Around 20 people are being supported in this way at present. The team members are all safely recruited and have completed online basic awareness safeguarding training. Members meet regularly with the Canon Pastor, who uses the group meetings for continuing training (for example, about lone working), as well as for information sharing, mutual support and supervision. The Pastoral Care Policy is a brief, useful document which sets out clearly the purpose of pastoral care, and the standards that are expected of those that deliver pastoral care on behalf of the Cathedral. These include training, recording, and safe working practices. The policy is explicit in its expectation that workers comply with the safeguarding policy and report safeguarding concerns immediately.
- 3.1.39** The Canon Pastor also oversees a range of activities for vulnerable adults, which are delivered by volunteers. These include a monthly parish lunch for frail elderly held in the Cathedral hall, Dementia Friendly services held in the Cathedral with afternoon tea, and regular afternoon tea at St Peter's House for the frailer elderly, organised by the pastoral group.
- 3.1.40** The first response to people with vulnerabilities who enter the Cathedral itself is usually from the day chaplains, the vergers, the shop workers and the volunteer guides and welcomers working in the Cathedral. The auditors heard examples of how people thought to be vulnerable were supported. On occasions, a safeguarding concern form was completed, and actions agreed with the CSR or CSC. The vergers also keep an incident book in which they record incidents of concern, including where people may pose a risk to others.

- 3.1.41** When volunteers become vulnerable during the course of their work with the Cathedral, they are supported by the clergy and others. In circumstances where an individual is thought to pose a risk, the police and other Cathedral staff are asked to assist.
- 3.1.42** The Cathedral's safeguarding action plan indicates that consideration is being given to putting into place a structure that will provide a voice for vulnerable adults, as part of the planning for the arrangements in response to the Cathedrals Measure, together with training to improve awareness of dementia and domestic abuse.

Analysis

- 3.1.43** There is a good level of awareness of adult vulnerability and risk, enhanced through partnership working with local organisations. There are strong procedures in place for organised activities. A coherent training programme is needed which will help people to respond consistently to individual needs, together with more robust procedures for assessing, managing and communicating risk.
- 3.1.44** The wide access to basic awareness training, together with the Cathedral's partnerships with local organisations, means that there is good awareness across the community of the risks and vulnerabilities which can be experienced by adults. The auditors saw and heard of several examples of kind and compassionate responses to individuals experiencing difficulties. Eighty-one per cent (n=82) respondents to the survey thought that the Cathedral takes on a role in helping people who, due to personal circumstances or crises, need help to keep safe either extremely or moderately. One person commented: *'I feel Ripon Cathedral is taking on board and treating with all seriousness the safeguarding of vulnerable adults as well as children, as visiting groups are meticulously planned for, with all volunteers being briefed accordingly.'*
- 3.1.45** Within the organised activities, such as pastoral care, parish lunches, etc., risk assessments are comprehensive, procedures are clear and responses appear well managed.
- 3.1.46** Vulnerable adults who enter the Cathedral as visitors appear to receive a less organised and confident response. Staff and volunteers have not yet received training in mental health awareness or domestic abuse, nor how to manage and defuse potentially volatile situations. This has been recognised and is being planned for. The limited capacity in the verger team can mean that volunteers are left to manage risk with little support.
- 3.1.47** It was unclear to the auditors how individual risk is assessed and managed, how concerns are communicated around the team of people working on the Cathedral floor, and what the appropriate route for escalation is. Staff described sending out a group text when in need of support, to which 'somebody will respond'. The police are used as an additional source of support. As a response to a potential emergency, this does not appear to be satisfactory.
- 3.1.48** There is a developing awareness of the potential for volunteers themselves to be vulnerable by virtue of a range of factors, and of the need to develop systems that monitor and provide support to enable them to engage with the Cathedral safely as well as to fulfil a pastoral duty to them.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What systems and training are needed, and by whom, to enable adults at risk to be identified and responded to consistently well?
- What is needed to ensure that volunteers and others in the Cathedral community who become vulnerable are identified and receive appropriate and timely support?

3.2 CHOIRS AND MUSIC

3.2.1 All Cathedral choirs raise safeguarding issues, particularly for children. As young children, sometimes away from home, working towards a highly prized goal, firstly, there is the vulnerability of choristers to being groomed by people in positions of trust within the choir context; secondly, the demands of regular public performance, in some contexts to elite standards, can be in tension or conflict with child welfare requirements and expectations.

Description

3.2.2 Music has flourished at Ripon since the seventh century, when Wilfrid brought cantors to Ripon from Canterbury. There are five choirs – a boys' choir (for boys aged y3 – y8), a girls' choir (for girls aged y3 – y8), a youth choir, a junior choir, and the Lay Clerks' choir. The lay clerks and choristers sing at services on four evenings a week, and at two services on a Sunday. The expectations of the boys and girls are identical, in that they both have the same number of practices each week and sing at the same number of services.

3.2.3 Choristers are drawn from a number of local schools, including the Cathedral Primary School. There has been no choir school formally attached to the Cathedral since 2012. Recruitment to the boys' choirs has been low in recent years, with only seven of the 24 places filled at present. By contrast, the girls' choir is oversubscribed and comprises 27 girls. The Junior Choir was established in early 2019 for young children in years 1 – 3 with the aim of giving them an enjoyable foundation in music, and a good grounding for children who can then apply to join the Cathedral choir.

3.2.4 The Youth Choir is made up of students in high school from the Ripon area and was established to fill a gap in local music provisions, with few opportunities for teenagers to sing on completion of their term as a chorister, or outside local schools. There are six lay clerks who are professional singers and provide the alto, tenor and bass parts of the Cathedral Choir. The lay clerks are supplemented by deputies – occasional singers who sing during large services and provide cover. One of the lay clerks provides signing lessons to choristers.

3.2.5 The music department is headed by the Director of Music (DoM), under the overall leadership of the Canon Precentor. The DoM post has been filled since November 2020 by an experienced interim (a retired former DoM from another cathedral), following the abrupt departure of the previous postholder in summer 2020. A new DoM has been recruited and will take up post in January 2022. The DoM is supported by an Assistant (ADoM), who has been in post since September 2014, an Assistant Organist/ Organ Scholar, a part-time music outreach worker, and three paid chorister supervisors. The aim of the department was described to auditors as 'happy excellence', demonstrating an awareness of the need to 'encourage rather than berate'.

- 3.2.6** There are several documents, aimed at different audiences, which set out how the music department works, and the expectations of choristers, staff and parents. These include a Choristers' Handbook, a chorister code of conduct, and departmental safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff in their care of the choristers. There is also a handbook for visiting choirs, and a safeguarding declaration form which visiting choirs are required to complete and return in advance of their proposed visit.
- 3.2.7** Pre-COVID, the choristers rehearsed and robed in the Song School below the Chapter House. There was access from here to a single toilet. During lockdown, choir rehearsals were conducted online. Since the recent return to 'live' rehearsals and services, the choirs have rehearsed either in the Cathedral hall, or in the nave on days when the choir is singing at a service. The hall is a more satisfactory space, having access to kitchen space as well as separate toilets.
- 3.2.8** Chapter has recognised the importance of ensuring chorister wellbeing, seeing the value of paid chorister supervisors and prioritising investment in these posts, most recently adding a post of 'choral outreach'. Although not able to observe a 'live' rehearsal or performance, the auditors noted the extensive experience of the chorister supervisors, and the feedback from children and parents about their confidence in the care they gave to the choristers.
- 3.2.9** The chorister supervisors take care of the general wellbeing of the children and are a first point of contact for both children and parents. They look after individual children when needed, and support music staff in managing behaviour. A 'purple bag' contains water, first aid and other necessary items which might be needed immediately by choristers, and the supervisors keep this with them whilst on duty.
- 3.2.10** The chorister supervisors are present throughout all rehearsals and in services when the choirs are singing. They are responsible for 'signing in' and overseeing the departure of the choristers (some of whom have parental permission to arrive and depart unaccompanied) and following up on unexplained absences. Attendance was tracked electronically for a while on a 'departmental laptop', using a programme devised by the previous DoM. Since the latter's departure, the laptop is no longer available, and records are paper based. The recent introduction of ChurchSuite is expected to enable more effective integration of and access to chorister records, although access to this by chorister supervisors is only by their personal mobile phones at present. A dedicated choir mobile phone is proving unreliable at present.
- 3.2.11** Weekly 'pastoral meetings' are held, attended by the music department staff and the chorister supervisors. Brief notes are kept, which are circulated to the Canon Precentor in addition to participants. The agenda does not appear to be standard. Safeguarding items are raised as required, and individual choristers discussed by exception. When there is a specific concern about a chorister, the Cathedral safeguarding concerns form is completed and sent to the CSR/CSC.
- 3.2.12** The previous DoM had established a chorister forum some years ago, which operated similarly to a student council by providing a formal means of engagement and dialogue between clergy, staff and eight chorister representatives (four each from the boys and girls choirs, who were elected by choir members) separate from rehearsing and performing. Meetings were held regularly – initially at least every half term – with a specified agenda which included chorister items. Minutes were taken and distributed, including to parents. The accompanying pizzas were a welcome feature of meetings! The forum last met in May 2019. The former DoM decided to discontinue the forum in September 2019. Plans are underway to re-start it in September 2021 and choristers have been consulted.

- 3.2.13** The survey was returned by four choristers. All were positive about the choir, felt safe and cared for, and expressed confidence in the adults. Opinions about how good a balance they have between choir rehearsals and services, schoolwork, seeing friends and time for other hobbies were evenly divided between two who thought the balance was excellent and two who thought it only moderately good. Three of the four respondents added additional comments. One said *'I feel happy about being in choir and I enjoy it. I think the staff are great.'* The comments from the other two indicated that the former DoM was greatly missed, and that although the supervisors are well liked, they were left too much on their own looking after the children, which made them feel 'less safe'. There was also a suggestion that interventions from lay clerks had on occasions made the choristers feel criticised for making a mistake. This appeared to be known about in the music department, but it was unclear to auditors whether this had been challenged and addressed.
- 3.2.14** Ten adults who returned the survey identified themselves as parents of choristers. All except one were overwhelmingly positive about the experiences and care of their children. One parent suggested: *'I think it would be useful for the senior clergy to actually be able to know the names of all the choristers and also be able to recognise them by sight when not in choir uniform.... to be able to recognise these children ... would be useful if there was a safeguarding issue.'*

Analysis

- 3.2.15** There is a good balance achieved for the choir between excellence and enjoyment, supported by a framework of good policies and procedures. Through a difficult period, care has been taken to promote stability and consistency, aided by the helpful and experienced chorister supervisors. Leadership, pastoral oversight and coordination needs further thought, and record keeping needs attention. Further work in communicating the desired culture and behaviour of the choir would be beneficial.
- 3.2.16** The auditors noted that much attention has been paid in previous years to putting procedures and practices into place which would enhance the safety and wellbeing of choristers. The music staff appear to be successfully achieving a balance between wellbeing and high standards of performance which is implied by the phrase 'happy excellence'. Choristers feel safe and well looked after, and this is echoed by the majority of parents. The code of conduct sets clear expectations of standards and behaviour, albeit from an adult perspective.
- 3.2.17** The chorister forum was a real attempt to hear the perspective of the choristers and was clearly appreciated by those who engaged with it. Minutes indicate that choristers had influence on day-to-day practices in the department. It is positive that plans are in place to re-start the forum in autumn 2021.
- 3.2.18** The auditors reflected that the code of conduct could usefully be revised in consultation with the whole chorister group, with a view to expressing the desired culture of the choir as well as public standards of expected behaviour. This may be a task that would most appropriately be led by the new DoM. Some attention to the role and expectations of lay clerks would also be beneficial.
- 3.2.19** Pastoral oversight is primarily the responsibility of the chorister supervisors, who take their duties seriously. Matters of concern, however minor, are realised and discussed, and the auditors saw and heard of several examples where these led to a safeguarding concern being raised and formally recorded. It was not always clear whether and how these had been resolved, however. The development of ChurchSuite should assist this process and enable more systematic tracking of outcomes.

- 3.2.20** The weekly pastoral meeting needs further thought. The auditors concluded that it functions more as a departmental staff meeting, where a range of issues, including safeguarding, are raised and discussed. There is clearly value in this kind of meeting but thought needs to be given to how they are recorded: it is not always clear what actions result, who is responsible for carrying things forward, and there is no continuing oversight apparent which ensures that matters have been resolved or completed.
- 3.2.21** It was unclear to the auditors who holds overall responsibility for leadership and oversight in relation to chorister wellbeing. A systematic means of considering the wellbeing of every member of the choir is a gap at present, which the auditors consider should be addressed, together with a system for regular, formal engagement with parents of choristers. Agreement would be needed about how this should be recorded, together with a shared understanding of the threshold for raising a concern with one of the Cathedral's safeguarding officers.
- 3.2.22** Records of attendance, meetings, chorister information, consent forms, concerns and other matters are kept assiduously. The recent adoption of ChurchSuite should assist in maintaining information all in one place, improving coordination and accessibility and enabling systematic monitoring and reporting, and clarifying data-protection requirements. Attention will need to be given to ensuring that all anticipated users, including choir supervisors, are able to use the software easily and securely.
- 3.2.23** The music department has experienced many challenges over the past year. In addition to COVID, which has been difficult for everyone, the sudden resignation of the previous DoM, who was evidently well liked and respected by many, has left questions and anxieties which remain unaddressed. The interim DoM took up post during lockdown, which meant that he was only able to meet and become known to choristers and parents online until comparatively recently. His temporary position means that he does not have a mandate to introduce many changes. The ADoM does not appear to have had a significant role in running the department, despite several years of service, so has not been well placed to maintain continuity.
- 3.2.24** The auditors reflected that the music department appeared to operate separately from other parts of the Cathedral. As well as having good practice to share, the department could learn from arrangements in other parts of the Cathedral, and contribute to the developing safeguarding culture. Once in post, the active involvement of the DoM in key operational meetings such as the CSC could enable the music department to both contribute to and learn from safeguarding practice in other departments.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What actions are needed to promote stability and confidence in the choirs and music department pending the new DoM taking up their post?
- How might the music department best maintain consistent and systematic oversight of the safety and wellbeing of every chorister?
- How can the Cathedral be confident that the identification and addressing of concerns regarding chorister wellbeing are systematic, followed through and clearly recorded?

Bellringing

Description

- 3.2.25** Ripon Cathedral's bell tower has a peal of 13 bells, with the most recent three added in 2007–2008 and the heaviest weighing some 1.25 tons. The bells are rung by a strong and active band of some 26 bell ringers, led by a Ringing Master who has been ringing at the Cathedral since 1995 and in their current post since for the past 10 years. They are supported in this role by a Tower Captain and a Ringing Deputy – all of whom have a DBS check in place and have completed leadership safeguarding training. Members of the band complete a confidential declaration, and most have signed a confirmation that they have read the Cathedral's safeguarding policy. None other than the tower leads have completed safeguarding training.
- 3.2.26** The band rehearses on Wednesdays and, as Ripon supports several individuals interested in learning to ring, teaching takes place on Tuesdays. Such learners currently include four children. Child ringers may be either children of adult ringers in the band, or unrelated, but are always supervised by two other adults, at least one of whom has DBS clearance. All children have parental consent to participate and are dropped off to and collected from an appropriate adult within the tower.
- 3.2.27** The bell tower has been risk assessed, though this was not seen by the auditors. There is no current fire or accident risk assessment in place, though procedures for evacuation are in place and have been drilled. The tower also has a first-aid kit, and by virtue of the experience of members of the band has three individuals able to render first aid in an emergency.
- 3.2.28** All ringers are expected to sign in on arrival to the tower, and the register is taken up the tower during rehearsals or performances. A separate sign-in system is also in use in the form of a sheet at the bottom of the tower steps for the use of those doing maintenance.
- 3.2.29** Historically, the bell tower has adopted the safeguarding policy of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers but has more recently adopted the Cathedral's own policy and procedures for greater alignment. The bell tower houses a folder of information relevant to safeguarding, including procedures and concern forms.
- 3.2.30** Due to the status of the Cathedral, visiting lone ringers and bands are not uncommon at Ripon. The auditors heard how most notify the Cathedral of their intention to attend via the website, though some individuals do arrive unannounced on rehearsal nights. The Ringing Master ensures that ringing credentials of any such attendees are informally assessed through conversation, and that they are supervised by someone from the resident band. For visiting groups, the Ringing Master conducts an informal check of ringing credentials prior to their visit, opens the bell tower on their arrival and supervises for at least a short period.
- 3.2.31** The activity of the bell tower falls under the remit of the Canon Precentor, as Chapter lead for music and liturgy. The Canon Precentor regularly attends the tower either in their capacity as a bell ringer or prior to services each Sunday. They also chair the tower's AGM.

Analysis

- 3.2.32** There are procedures in place for the safeguarding of children and adults within the band at Ripon Cathedral. The tower is benefitting from increasing alignment to the Cathedral, and there is opportunity to develop this further to ensure that appropriate checks on the suitability of visiting ringers are routinely conducted.

- 3.2.33** The auditors reflected that there is much good practice evident within the bell tower. It is a positive move to ensure that the Cathedral's own policies and procedures are being applied and there was evidence that this is well understood. Members of the band (including children) are safeguarded and there are protocols in place for ensuring safe working practices. The auditors did question, however, whether there is sufficiently specific guidance on the application of the Cathedral policy within the bell tower. This might include factors such as the robustness of the sign-in process of the sheet in the tower. Current practice means that those at the bottom of the tower are unable to be sure who is present, and in an emergency, were the list to be inadvertently left behind, there would be no clear way of accounting for all present.
- 3.2.34** Not all of the band are currently safeguarding trained, as would usually be expected for Cathedral volunteers. This is discussed further below in section 3.6.
- 3.2.35** Bell towers, by their nature and times of operation, can risk becoming isolated from the wider Cathedral and so it was positive to see clear lines of communication being established between the Ringing Master and both the Canon Precentor and the CSR. However, the auditors saw opportunity for this engagement to be more formalised, such as by inclusion of the Ringing Master in relevant Cathedral forums such as the diary meeting and the Safeguarding Committee.
- 3.2.36** The auditors reflected that the current processes for the tower assuring itself of the suitability of visiting ringers is not sufficiently developed, and any current checks fulfil more a function of ringing ability than any risk they may pose to others. There is now an opportunity to develop this further and formalise processes that provide for a more predictable approach.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What potential benefits might additional, bell tower-specific safeguarding guidance bring in applying Cathedral-wide procedures and policy to the unique challenges of the setting, including factors such as safe working practices?
- How might coordination between the bell tower and the wider Cathedral be formalised?
- What would a visiting ringer or band process look like, such that suitability to enter the Cathedral community could be assured, and what opportunities exist to learn from the practices adopted in other Cathedral bell towers?

3.3 CASE WORK (INCLUDING INFORMATION SHARING)

- 3.3.1** When safeguarding concerns are reported, a timely response is needed to make sense of the situation, assess risk and decide what action needs to be taken, including whether statutory services need to be informed. In a Cathedral context, this includes helping to distinguish whether there are safeguarding elements to the situations of people receiving pastoral support.
- 3.3.2** Ripon Cathedral, together with the two other cathedrals in the Diocese of Leeds, has a service level agreement (SLA) with the Diocese which sets out the details of the safeguarding service which will be provided. This includes the diocesan safeguarding team (DST) taking the lead when allegations are made about church officers, providing advice and guidance regarding risk assessment and risk management strategies, and assisting with safeguarding concerns about children or vulnerable adults.

- 3.3.3** Within the Cathedral itself, the CSR and CSC are the nominated leads for safeguarding. Documents and flow charts direct anyone with concerns about a child or vulnerable adult to approach the CSR or CSC in the first instance, or, in the case of concerns about a church officer, the Dean. Urgent concerns should be directed to the local authority and/or emergency services. A (hard copy) Cathedral safeguarding referral form has been introduced which is being increasingly widely used. This collects basic information about the subject of concern, the details of what the concerns are, and the person making the referral. These forms, together with an action log, are kept by the CSC.
- 3.3.4** People generally felt comfortable about approaching the CSR and CSC, and sometimes the Cathedral office, to express concern about the wellbeing of themselves or others. A large majority (98 per cent, n=99) of adults responding to the survey knew where to go if they were concerned someone was being hurt in some way, or that someone was behaving inappropriately, and 90 per cent (n=91) expressed confidence that their concerns would be taken seriously. Children expressed similar levels of confidence. Although 90 per cent (n=91) of adults were confident that the Cathedral would respond in a timely and effective manner, 8 per cent (n=8) were not confident at all. Comments reflected this polarisation.
- 3.3.5** Not all concerns are dealt with directly by the CSR or CSC. Responses can be from a range of staff throughout the different departments in the Cathedral. Concerns about choristers are often responded to by members of the music department, for example.
- 3.3.6** Different departments and staff groups log concerns in different ways. The vergers, for example, keep an incident book, as do the music and education departments. The Canon Pastor similarly keeps their own notes about those receiving pastoral care. Each makes a judgement about when any single incident or concern should be recorded formally, using the Cathedral safeguarding referral form, sometimes following consultation with the CSR.
- 3.3.7** The auditors looked at a range of cases, handled at different levels by clergy, staff and volunteers. These included 13 safeguarding concerns which were notified to the CSR/CSC during 2019-21, two of which were referred on to the DSA; two additional cases relating to the Cathedral and led by the DSA were also reviewed. Case work relating to a blue file is discussed in section 3.4 below.
- 3.3.8** Cases seen included a range of issues relating to children, young people and adults and an assessment of an offender who had been convicted of offences against children and wished to worship in the Cathedral pending sentencing. In addition, several cases were discussed as part of conversations and considered as part of any judgement on the effectiveness of case work.
- 3.3.9** The auditors judged that the quality of identification and responses to safeguarding concerns is improving. Next steps needed are to ensure that identification and responses are consistent across the Cathedral, well recorded, and able to be monitored and tracked.

Effectiveness of responses and information sharing practice

- 3.3.10** The threshold for involvement by the DSA appears to be consistent and information sharing between Diocese and Cathedral is good. Responses seen were appropriate. Cathedral files did not always contain details of whether agreed actions had been completed and what was the outcome.
- 3.3.11** Within the Cathedral, auditors saw and heard evidence of a clear process for

recording and passing on concerns which is increasingly well understood and used by a range of people. The vulnerabilities of adults as well as children appear to be well understood. Some prompt, caring and appropriate responses in a range of circumstances were evident, with appropriate follow-up action by clergy on occasions.

- 3.3.12** Information sharing, often for the purpose of seeking advice, is developing well, particularly between the music department and the CSR.
- 3.3.13** The auditors were less confident that information sharing between the Cathedral and statutory agencies is consistently robust. There is an appropriate understanding between Cathedral and Diocese that the latter will contact statutory agencies when appropriate as they have existing relationships. This applies to cases where the DSA is involved. A small number of examples were seen which did not involve the DSA, where departmental staff exercised a judgement on whether they thought a child's welfare was being compromised, on one occasion completing the North Yorkshire vulnerability checklist, which was commendable. However, in the absence of contact with other agencies, such as a child's school, it was unclear to the auditors how a rounded assessment could be made in these circumstances. In one case, it was unclear from the Cathedral file whether key individuals such as the Local Authority Designated Officer had been informed (which the diocesan file indicated that they had), reinforcing the need to ensure that recording is comprehensive and up to date.

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

- 3.3.14** Risk assessments are led by the DSA in all instances when a person is known or thought highly likely to pose a risk to others. No safeguarding agreements were in place at the time of the audit, but one case was seen by the auditors which showed good communication between Diocese and Cathedral and a readiness to proceed with a safeguarding agreement if circumstances warranted it.
- 3.3.15** At a lower level, the vergers are usually the first point of contact when there is concern about an individual visitor to the Cathedral potentially posing a risk. In these circumstances, they exercise judgement and call the police for assistance if they think it necessary. It was unclear to the auditors how information would be shared with others who may need to know, for example, a volunteer or a member of the clergy. In all cases, the CSR and CSC were informed subsequently, however, often by use of the safeguarding referral form.

Quality of recording

- 3.3.16** The safeguarding referral form is a simple and effective way of recording concerns, and is increasingly used across departments by clergy, staff and volunteers. Whilst generally well completed, more attention needs to be paid to ensuring that all relevant information is captured where practicable, and that it is clear who the person is that is completing the form (including their role in the Cathedral).
- 3.3.17** Cathedral files contain a form for logging subsequent actions, which is helpful. Unfortunately, this is rarely completed once the initial response has been made, and it was unclear to auditors how completion would be achieved, as the record is kept centrally. In practice, it would be reliant on those completing any actions to then inform the CSR or CSC, who would then have to bring the recording up to date.
- 3.3.18** Records do not systematically record the outcome of any activity. This means that it is not possible for anyone without any direct knowledge of the concern to be able to track whether agreed actions were completed and what was the result.

- 3.3.19** Details of safeguarding concerns are stored in hard copy using a system of coding and numbering by year and order of occurrence. Each file contains an overview sheet which notes the involvement or notification of CSR, CSC and DSA. The subject of the concern can only be ascertained once the file is opened. The auditors were concerned that this inhibits any possibility of keeping an overview of who has been the subject of a concern, with what outcome, and makes tracking of such concerns impossible. This is exacerbated by the practice of keeping records of incidents and concerns in each department which do not cross reference into the central system.
- 3.3.20** Pending the introduction of a national system of case management, thought is needed about how to maintain a consistent overview of concerns across the Cathedral, not just those that are reported centrally, and who should do this.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What does the Cathedral need to do to be assured that safeguarding concerns are identified, reported and responded to consistently by all departments, and fully recorded?
- How might an overview of referrals be maintained which will enable tracking of any accumulating patterns of concerns?

3.4 CLERGY DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

- 3.4.1** Disciplinary processes in the Church differ significantly from a secular work context, in that they are initiated by someone making a complaint, rather than management assuming responsibility and appointing an investigating officer to investigate what has happened.
- 3.4.2** The auditors reviewed one file as part of this audit. This concerned a matter which had come to light in the context of the work being led in the Diocese on the Past Cases Review (2) but was not previously known to the Cathedral. The historic matters had been dealt with at the time, had involved the complainants, and appeared to have been resolved to their satisfaction. However, the history of these incidents, and subsequent actions, appear not to have been appropriately communicated when the individual's permission to officiate (PTO) was reviewed. This meant that the Cathedral was unaware of their history and had had no opportunity to evaluate their suitability for appointment in the Cathedral benefice. This was clearly unsatisfactory and was being immediately addressed by the Diocese and Cathedral working together.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the Cathedral be confident that all clergy with permission to officiate (PTO) pose no risks to members of its community?

3.5 TRAINING

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

- 3.5.2** Ripon Cathedral has prioritised ensuring that its staff and volunteers have completed core safeguarding training to the level required by their posts, as specified in the national church training and development framework, and has made good progress with this. Auditors were told that Chapter expects all staff and volunteers to have completed the appropriate level of training and that volunteers would not be able to continue without doing this.
- 3.5.3** The Cathedral's safeguarding handbook (following the national model Parish Safeguarding Handbook approved by the House of Bishops) sets out which posts require core safeguarding training at each level, focusing on those which have direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, and those in leadership and trustee positions. The handbook indicates that people in other roles are encouraged to complete it. There is also an invitation, with weblink, for congregation members to undertake basic awareness training. The handbook does not reference safeguarding-related training such as safer recruitment, or any more specialised training beyond the four levels of core safeguarding training.
- 3.5.4** Safeguarding training is delivered to Cathedral staff and volunteers by the DST. Pre-COVID, training was available face to face, often based in Ripon, which was particularly helpful for those who find online training less accessible. All training for licenced clergy and licensed lay ministers is dealt with by the DST. The Diocese also deals with reminders for renewals for the latter. All other reminders are done in-house.
- 3.5.5** The auditors were told that a significant number of older volunteers were not at ease with online courses, and, in response, several face-to-face basic training courses were run in 2018, employing one of the DSAs to deliver the course. Since then, the DO (CSC) and Canon Pastor (CSR) have offered a few sessions of basic awareness training (C0) face to face by using the online course on a screen and talking it through with people. That proved a constructive way forward, as they were able to contextualise the training to their own systems, particularly the mechanisms for reporting safeguarding concerns. An in-house certificate was given to people and records were kept. There are plans to resume this face-to-face training in the summer, as volunteers return to work post-COVID.
- 3.5.6** Training has always featured in the Cathedral's safeguarding action plan, which is monitored by the CSC. The latest iteration of the plan seen by the auditors (June 2021) indicates that there are plans for in-house welcome-back training for welcomers and guides, and in-house safeguarding training for welcomers, guides and chaplains.
- 3.5.7** Clergy and senior leaders will be undertaking the new Leadership Training in November.
- 3.5.8** A spreadsheet has been developed with the aim of integrating the existing recruitment and training records in one place. This is in the process of being populated and checked against documentary records and is kept by the Cathedral Secretary. Training is due for renewal every three years and progress is being made to make up for training missed over the past 18 months due to the pandemic. People whose training is overdue are sent reminders.
- 3.5.9** The auditors were told that training has been welcomed universally, and what little resistance there has been related more to difficulties with online delivery rather than a reluctance to undertake safeguarding training per se.

- 3.5.10** Plans are in progress for domestic abuse training once this is available nationally, and there is recognition of the need for additional areas of more specialised training such as dementia awareness for certain groups of staff and volunteers.
- 3.5.11** Asked in the survey how adequate the safeguarding training received was for their role in the Cathedral, 68 per cent (n=69) said it was moderately or extremely relevant. The remainder said it was either inadequate (3 per cent) or not relevant to their role or experience (29 per cent).

Analysis

- 3.5.12** There has been significant effort to get training right and good progress is evident. Training is generally well received, recording is improving and coordination of renewals seems to be working. There is a need to clarify expectations and address local needs in training for specific groups of staff and volunteers. Consideration of how the impact of training can be evaluated would be beneficial.
- 3.5.13** Auditors could see that priority has been given to training, and that considerable progress has been made in ensuring all specified staff and volunteers have completed core safeguarding training at the appropriate level. Survey results and direct feedback confirm that a majority have found the training to be relevant. Whereas monitoring the training of volunteers had previously been devolved to group leaders, the early recognition of the need to be able to keep track of training completion and renewals and subsequent development of a centrally held spreadsheet is positive. As the Cathedral develops its systems, replacing the spreadsheet with an IT record which integrates recruitment and HR information and is less labour intensive would be beneficial.
- 3.5.14** The sensitivity and responsiveness of the CSR and CSC to the difficulty experienced by some volunteers in undertaking online training, through the provision of face-to-face sessions pre-lockdown, and direct support to others to enable them to complete the online training, was both constructive and effective.
- 3.5.15** In the absence of a training strategy and delivery plan, it was unclear to the auditors what actual messages are being given about safeguarding training requirements. The auditors were told that all volunteers and staff, regardless of role, are expected to undertake at least basic awareness training. This expands the minimum requirements set out in the safeguarding handbook. However, templates for volunteer roles distinguish between those whose role brings them into contact with children and vulnerable adults and those which do not, with safeguarding training being mentioned for the former roles but not the latter. Role profiles for certain roles which require a DBS check, such as day chaplains, do not contain reference to safeguarding training.
- 3.5.16** Auditors heard that some managers had completed safer recruitment training, which they found useful, but noted that not all those responsible for recruitment had had the opportunity to do so. Recognition of the need to address specific more specialised areas of training, some of which (e.g. domestic abuse) will become available nationally in due course, was positive. A training needs analysis may prove beneficial in identifying and prioritising training needs across the Cathedral community.
- 3.5.17** Whilst the Cathedral has been assiduous in monitoring take-up and completion of training, there has been less attention given to assessing its quality and impact.
- 3.5.18** The new House of Bishops' Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework, which was approved by the National Safeguarding Steering Group on 22 April 2021, provides a good opportunity to review what the Cathedral has achieved so far in its

promotion of training. The framework argues that a '*paradigm shift in safeguarding requires a "whole system" approach within which change is achieved by the inter-relatedness of different strands*'. Church bodies are required to plan for full implementation from January 2022. The guidance contains useful information about how training can be evaluated and includes a template for a diocesan training strategy which could be adapted for Cathedral purposes.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What actions are needed to clarify messages regarding safeguarding training requirements across the Cathedral community which reflect the Cathedral's mission and priorities?
- Who is best placed to establish a safeguarding training plan which sets out training requirements for all clergy, staff and volunteers, addresses local needs, and provides a baseline for monitoring, evaluation and reporting?

3.6 SAFER RECRUITMENT

Description

- 3.6.1** The safe recruitment of staff is within the remit of the Director of Operations, who joined the Cathedral in October 2013 from a background in property and staff management for a large heritage charity. They report directly to the Dean and are responsible for the line management of several staff. This includes the Cathedral Secretary, who has been in post since March 2017 and supports the administration of safer recruitment, including DBS checks and verification of identity documents.
- 3.6.2** In support of the Diocese, the Cathedral Secretary also administers DBS applications from those in the Ripon area who are seeking roles within other local parishes. Ripon Cathedral retains the services of Thirtyone:eight for the processing of DBS checks.
- 3.6.3** As was included on the Cathedral's own self-assessment, there has been much attention given to, and progress made in, safe recruitment in recent times. This includes the mapping of eligible roles and levels of DBS and other checks (laid-out in their 'Safer Recruitment Summary of Documents' guide), and the creation of a 'single central record' in the form of a spreadsheet which captures all relevant checks carried out on staff and volunteers.
- 3.6.4** All staff vacancies are advertised with an expectation included around upholding the Cathedral's safeguarding policy, accompanied by a job description and person specification. Application forms are required, including details of referees, together with a confidential declaration. Safeguarding attitudinal and experience questions are included in the interviews of relevant roles and all recruitment checks are required to be completed prior to the individual taking up the position.
- 3.6.5** Upon successful appointment, new staff are taken through an induction process which includes completion of safeguarding training and signed confirmation that Cathedral safeguarding policy and procedure has been read. This is followed by a probation process, including periodic reviews of progress, the records of which are retained on personnel files.
- 3.6.6** Ripon Cathedral does not currently have a volunteer coordinator; the functions of volunteer recruitment are devolved to operational leaders of the Cathedral's departments. However, the Director of Operations and Cathedral Secretary both play a de facto role in the oversight of this process, as they do for staff.

- 3.6.7** Volunteer roles are guided by a role profile which make clear the Cathedral's commitment to safeguarding. Prospective volunteers are expected to complete, where identified as relevant for role: an application form; an informal conversation about their suitability; references; a confidential declaration (repeated annually once in post) and a confirmation that they have read the Cathedral safeguarding policy.
- 3.6.8** Ripon Cathedral has both a staff and a volunteer handbook in place. Both handbooks are useful and clearly arranged reference documents that contain information relevant to working at the Cathedral (including relevant policies and procedures). They also signpost other policies and procedures and detail where these may be accessed. All those working within the Cathedral are also provided with a copy of the policy Promoting a Safer Church and they sign to confirm they have read it and will abide by it. Copies of the Cathedral's safeguarding handbook are available throughout the Cathedral's premises and officers have their own copy. A list of handbooks is kept so that they can be updated, until there is a national online version available.
- 3.6.9** At the time of the audit, safer recruitment training under the new training framework of the national church had not been rolled out, though several key leaders of the Cathedral had undertaken previous iterations, including the Director of Operations.

Analysis

- 3.6.10** The auditors agreed that the Cathedral has made much positive progress in safer recruitment. However, these systems remain in early implementation and there is further opportunity to ensure a consistent approach is taken across staff and volunteers and recorded clearly and coherently.
- 3.6.11** As part of the audit, a sample of six staff and six volunteer personnel files were reviewed. These files reflected much good practice, including a recruitment checklist on staff files, volunteer agreements, confidential declarations and probation records. However, consistency across files was not high, with several aspects missing from each file. For example, volunteer files contained no checklist of completion, interview records contained in only a small number and variability in whether references, confidential declarations and medical questionnaires were included.
- 3.6.12** The auditors reflected that the single central record is a significant step forwards in enabling the tracking of monitoring of recruitment, and in the ability of key people to seek assurances of the effectiveness of its operationalisation. However, cross-checking of personnel files with this record revealed a mixed picture, with several elements (such as application form, references and training) being recorded as completed on the record with no foundation of evidence in personnel files.
- 3.6.13** The auditors understood that some key documents, for example confidential declarations and medical questionnaires, are kept securely and separate from the main file, but this only contributes to the confused picture of recruitment, and the rationale for this being due to data-protection issues was not a coherent one.
- 3.6.14** Further, the auditors reflected that the single central record itself, whilst comprehensive, is itself confusing in that various different codings are used for an incomplete or unrequired check. This again complicates the picture of being able to clearly delineate those for which a safe recruitment process was followed and those for which there is outstanding work. This was reflected in one conversation, where it was stated that this document has now become cumbersome and difficult to recognise, and so rectify, gaps.
- 3.6.15** Despite improved processes for staff recruitment, the auditors saw a more confused

picture of oversight and accountability for volunteer recruitment and wider coordination of the volunteer body, with assumed ways of working being spoken of by several key operational leaders across the Cathedral. The auditors heard how informal interviews may be conducted to variable standards and by those who have not completed safer-recruitment training.

3.6.16 This is also, perhaps, not helped by the 'Safer Recruitment Summary of Documents' guide which, in the auditors' opinion, sometimes erroneously identified certain roles as not requiring key checks and activities: for example, members of the bell tower band not requiring role description, application form or references; Chapter members not requiring an application form or references, which the auditors considered inappropriate given their role as tantamount to (if not soon to be in fact) charity trustees.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What are the perceived and actual barriers to including evidence of all relevant recruitment checks on an individual's personnel file?
- How might the current single central record for staff and volunteers better and more clearly serve its function for monitoring and the seeking of assurances about safe recruitment?
- What would an improved system for accountability and oversight of volunteer recruitment look like at Ripon Cathedral, and what can be learned from other cathedrals that have tackled this challenge?

4. FINDINGS – ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORTS

4.1 POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

- 4.1.1** 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.
- 4.1.2** This has been supplemented by more recent practice guidance *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies* (2017), which sets out more explicitly than before the safeguarding expectations for cathedrals.
- 4.1.3** Both these documents, together with other national guidance, provide a broad framework for cathedrals to work within, but do not provide sufficient detail to enable them to be implemented fully at a local level. Each area therefore needs to review the national guidance and supplement it with local procedures and practice guidance.

Description

- 4.1.4** Ripon Cathedral has a safeguarding policy statement which was adopted by Chapter on 14 March 2019, and reviewed annually (most recently, in May 2021). According to the Cathedral website, the policy 'embodies the principles enshrined in the Church of England's House of Bishops' Policy Statements'.
- 4.1.5** The Cathedral safeguarding handbook is a useful collation of relevant information including how to respond to safeguarding concerns or allegations, safer working practices, safer recruitment, training and use of social media. It is supplemented by locally developed policies and procedures of relevance to safeguarding, such as the emergency evacuation plan, policies on data protection and electronic media, health and safety procedure, lone working and guidance on responding to a lone or lost child or vulnerable adult.
- 4.1.6** Handbooks and policies aimed at different audiences are useful in collating safeguarding information relevant to the different activities and departments. These include:
- Choristers' handbook
 - Visiting choir handbook
 - Pastoral care policy
 - Chaplains' handbook
 - Education safeguarding guidance
- 4.1.7** A one-page flowchart, What to do if there is a safeguarding issue at Ripon Cathedral, is a useful and simple tool to guide those who wish to report a concern.
- 4.1.8** The safeguarding page on the Cathedral website gives details of how to report a concern and, separately, how to make a complaint about a response to a safeguarding concern. There is a link to the Cathedral's complaints policy for this purpose. The Cathedral has its own whistleblowing policy. The policies on complaints and whistleblowing are discussed further in sections 5.2 and 5.3 respectively.
- 4.1.9** Chapter signs off and reviews policies and procedures annually; the documents

usually contain the latest date of approval but not the version history. Most of the policies and procedures relevant to safeguarding were signed off or reviewed during the last 12 to 18 months (which coincided with the period affected by COVID and lockdowns).

- 4.1.10** Auditors did not see an information-sharing protocol but were told that the Cathedral has adopted the NCI's Information Sharing Framework.
- 4.1.11** At a diocesan level, the Strategic Safeguarding Committee (DSSC) is responsible for the oversight of policy, procedures, training, and guidance on safeguarding matters across the Diocese. Locally, the terms of reference of the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee (CSC) include having 'oversight of the implementation of the safeguarding policy, procedures and practices'
- 4.1.12** Current policies are stored on the Cathedral's own computer system, and so only accessible to those with IT access. This does not include volunteers. There are numerous policies and procedures kept in hard copy by leaders of different activities and areas of work in order to be locally accessible. The auditors were not told of any means of ensuring that these are the most up-to-date version.

Analysis

- 4.1.13** There is a range of local policies, procedures and guidance which complement the national framework. There is a need further to contextualise procedures to the Cathedral and ensure that they are accessible to and workable by all who may have need to use them.
- 4.1.14** The safeguarding policy detailed on the safeguarding page of the Cathedral website references the Church of England's House of Bishops' Policy Statements and links to *Promoting a Safer Church*. The Cathedral safeguarding handbook is the main source of guidance and is reasonably comprehensive in its coverage of safeguarding information. As a national document, it is necessarily generic, and reference early in the document to it being a parish handbook may cause confusion without more work being done to contextualise it to Ripon Cathedral and Leeds Diocese. It also refers to complementary materials such as a pocket safeguarding guide, a contact safeguarding card and a parish safeguarding resource pack, which do not appear to be available in Ripon. An introduction by the Archbishop of Canterbury rather than the Dean of Ripon Cathedral is a lost opportunity to demonstrate visible local leadership of safeguarding.
- 4.1.15** There is a good range of supplementary policies and procedures which together are reasonably comprehensive. The handbooks for staff, volunteers and day chaplains noted above are useful in bringing many of these together for different audiences. The lack of access by volunteers to the Cathedral server, where many documents are stored, means that they have to request access to hard copies of documents or use one of the copies held on the premises. The Cathedral website is as yet under-developed in relation to safeguarding, and does not contain a search function, which is a limitation.
- 4.1.16** Although policy and procedures appear to be reviewed regularly, the auditors did not see evidence of a systematic approach to assuring that staff and volunteers understand the procedures, know where to access the latest version, and are confident to use them. Due to the limitations of the methodology, the auditors were not able to check this out as part of the audit. The CSC could usefully monitor this, at the same time as ensuring that policies and procedures are workable in practice (see, for example, the discussion about the lone working policy in section 3.1) and having the desired impact.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What action is needed to ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures fully reflect the Ripon Cathedral context?
- How might the Cathedral ensure that policies and procedures relevant to safeguarding are easily available to all who may need to use them?
- Who is best placed to ensure that policies and procedures are understood across the Cathedral community, consistently implemented, and having the desired impact?

4.2 THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR/ CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Description

- 4.2.1** Ripon Cathedral's Canon Pastor holds the role of Safeguarding Representative to Chapter (and so is de facto Cathedral Safeguarding Officer). They have been at the Cathedral for four years and bring relevant experience from their previous career as a solicitor. They are supported in their role by the Director of Operations, who holds the dual role of Safeguarding Coordinator. The team is further supplemented by the Cathedral Secretary, who supports wider safeguarding administration (and particularly safer recruitment – as discussed further in section 3.6).
- 4.2.2** The auditors heard how neither of the two lead posts is detailed in any comprehensive and commonly understood role profile. In practice, both roles share responsibility for receiving safeguarding concerns within the Cathedral, with the Canon Pastor generally seen as the first port of call.
- 4.2.3** The Safeguarding Representative is line managed by the Dean, as is the Safeguarding Coordinator, and both are members of the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee (CSC). The Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for the administration of the meeting and takes the minutes. See section 5.4 for further detail about the CSC.
- 4.2.4** Ripon Cathedral has a close link with the Diocese of Leeds, and the Diocesan safeguarding team (DST). This relationship is formalised through a joint SLA, revised, co-signed and adopted by the Deans of Bradford, Wakefield and Ripon in March 2021. This details the DST's role in supporting the Cathedral with policy implementation, management of allegations against church officers, risk assessment and wider advice on safeguarding concerns arising within the Cathedral.
- 4.2.5** The Diocese of Leeds is led by a full-time DST Leader, who is the nominal link for Bradford Cathedral, and is supported by two additional DSAs who are nominally the links for Ripon and Wakefield Cathedrals, an assistant DSA, a safeguarding trainer and an administrator.
- 4.2.6** The auditors heard how Cathedral link DSAs have been largely removed in favour of a shared 'duty' system whereby the wider team share support for cathedrals but have been retained for the purpose of the SCIE audits to ensure ongoing support in readiness. The link DSA for Ripon Cathedral has been in post since 2015, from a background of child protection work within the police. They attend the CSC in order to bring a national and diocesan perspective to its work, together with a professional perspective on safeguarding.

Analysis

- 4.2.7** The auditors judged that safeguarding leadership at the Cathedral is strong, enabling much positive change in recent years, and this is supported by evident strong links between the Cathedral and the Diocese. There is now an opportunity to further clarify the Cathedral's leadership roles to ensure that roles and remits are clear to all, and in all forums, supported by a more collective approach to safeguarding across the Cathedral.
- 4.2.8** The auditors reflected that Ripon Cathedral has a strong relationship with the Diocese of Leeds that long pre-dated the implementation of the SLA, although was certainly formalised by it. Many seen as part of the audit spoke of the value, trust and recognition of the wider DSA team as integral to the safeguarding system. This, and the clear and open lines of communication between key individuals, was underlined by the evidence seen in the case files of both the Cathedral and Diocese.
- 4.2.9** It is also positive that this involvement by the DST is extended to the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee, an arrangement that was felt to be of value to the Cathedral in receiving a steer and expert input as to wider church policy, and to the Diocese in developing the understanding of the Cathedral context.
- 4.2.10** Both the Safeguarding Representative and Safeguarding Coordinator are well recognised and regarded by all within the Cathedral community, cited as approachable, available and effecting much positive change in terms of both recruitment practice and wider strategic, operational and cultural developments.
- 4.2.11** However, the auditors recognised the comments of some as to the current lack of formalised clarity between the roles and remits of each, particularly in the absence of role descriptors that establish this. In practice, this means that both roles may be seen as interchangeable in some key aspects; for example, with respect to the role (and title) of the Safeguarding Representative and the extent to which this is different to the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- 4.2.12** Whilst the auditors were assured by evidence seen of the close communication and working between both, irrespective of role, there are instances where this issue does play out.
- 4.2.13** Further, the auditors noted that safeguarding is widely regarded as the responsibility of these two individuals, rather than a collective effort led by the Dean and Chapter. This view was well expressed by several respondents to the survey and is discussed in section 5 below.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How does the Cathedral currently see the relative roles of the Safeguarding Representative and Safeguarding Coordinator, and what opportunities are there to more formally agree, communicate and implement this across the Cathedral and its relevant structures?

4.3 RECORDING AND IT SYSTEMS

Description

- 4.3.1** 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.

4.3.2 Ripon Cathedral employs a range of recording systems in the administration and oversight of safeguarding, some centrally held, and some maintained within departments and by activity leaders:

- Concerns are detailed by staff, volunteers and others within the Cathedral using the (paper) safeguarding referral form. These are collated centrally and held securely by the CSR and CSC. This is increasingly being used as the preferred method for sharing of instances of safeguarding risk to individuals, although telephone calls and emails are also used, with a referral form being filled in subsequently. The use of this form is discussed further in section 3.3.
- The information management system ChurchSuite has recently been introduced in Ripon and has potential to be used for communication, planning and recording, including storing details of key individuals involved with the Cathedral. It is increasingly being used within the music department, for recording chorister information.
- Parish Dashboard is being rolled out across Leeds Diocese, to enable individual churches to self-audit their safeguarding compliance against three levels of safeguarding (safer foundations, safer activities and safer practice). Safer foundations (level 1) has been completed, and level 2 – safer activities – is being worked through.
- Activity leaders (such as the children and families worker, the Children's Church leaders and Ringing Master) keep their own records in a variety of formats, as do departmental staff such as the vergers, the Education Officer and the Canon Pastor (about those receiving pastoral care).
- The music department holds essential information about choristers, including contact and details and relevant medical information. These are kept within the department and are accessible only to specified departmental staff, residentiary clergy and the Director of Operations.
- Records relating to clergy are held in the relevant Bishops' offices across the Diocese. The DSA's case work files are also kept within the diocesan office, where the DSA is based. Access to all the various files is restricted to specific, named people.

4.3.3 Several additional tools and systems are maintained for recording and tracking safer recruitment, DBS completion and safeguarding training. These are discussed further in sections 3.5 and 3.6, with relevant considerations for practice given.

4.3.4 Records of meetings such as the CSC, the weekly pastoral meeting within the music department, and the regular pastoral care meetings, are kept securely in the departmental or Cathedral office.

Analysis

4.3.5 Much positive work has taken place to develop systems for recording and reporting that are helping to coordinate and develop safeguarding practice. The integration of these systems remains a work in progress. Departmental practices and records need reviewing with a view to ensuring that consistent, GDPR-compliant standards are applied, and information is integrated where possible.

4.3.6 The auditors reflected that the introduction of the safeguarding referral form is a useful development and is helping to ensure that all potential safeguarding incidents are overseen by the CSR and CSC. The introduction of a dedicated email address may

assist in the central oversight and collation of all such concerns. The IT system in use in the Cathedral office permits different levels of security and access, which is beneficial in relation to personal and safeguarding information. Thought needs to be given to how personal data is indexed and identified, in order to permit case tracking and monitoring of concerns (see section 3.3). ChurchSuite should assist with this

- 4.3.7** The Parish Dashboard appears to be a supportive tool for safeguarding within the Cathedral, which is enabling a developing understanding of what good safeguarding looks like. Whilst in itself the dashboard does not assure that the day-to-day operationalisation of safeguarding is sound, it is a useful reminder of the wide scope of safeguarding and how it needs integrating into every aspect of Cathedral activity.
- 4.3.8** The auditors found there to be a good level of awareness of the need to keep personal data securely, but a less secure understanding of when this applies and how this should be done in a way that is compliant with GDPR. The widespread use of initials or anonymity in minutes of meetings, for example, can inhibit the ability to track and follow through concerns and could, at worst, make risk more difficult to assess. The auditors saw no evidence in any Cathedral records of consent having been sought or granted for personal information to be collected, stored, and shared, although there is a reference in the chorister's handbook to the need to do this.
- 4.3.9** As noted previously, different records, including personal information, are kept by a range of people for a range of purposes. Some of these records potentially overlap, for example, when children and adults in the same family participate in different activities. Integration and oversight relies, at present, on individual knowledge and memory.
- 4.3.10** As safeguarding activity increases, and more information is expected for monitoring and quality assurance purposes, the current recording systems are likely to prove increasingly unwieldy and demanding of administrative time. As commented elsewhere, any replacement system will need to be easily completed, overseen and monitored, facilitating the ability to share important information, spot patterns of concerns and respond appropriately. In the meantime, mapping what records are kept, where and by whom will be of benefit in establishing a common understanding of what information should be collected and retained, who it should be shared with, and how it should be stored.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the Cathedral satisfy itself that its safeguarding records are fully compliant with GDPR requirements?
- How might the current system of locally held records and incident books be combined to enable oversight of low-level concerns?

5. FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 5.1.1** 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. Robust quality assurance enables an organisation to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Potential sources of data are numerous, including independent scrutiny. Quality assurance 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

- 5.1.2** The safeguarding action plan provides the basis for monitoring and scrutinising progress. This was originally developed as part of the preparations for the audit, with a small team, led by the Dean and the Canon Pastor, coordinating and driving forward activity. It will be updated in the light of the audit findings.
- 5.1.3** Chapter maintains oversight of safeguarding arrangements across the Cathedral and has safeguarding as a standing agenda item at every meeting. The Canon Pastor (CSR) provides a short-written report, which includes reference to the safeguarding action plan and highlights specific areas of progress and challenge. The Director of Operations (DO), who is CSC, also attends Chapter. Brief notes of the main points of discussion are kept in the meeting minutes.
- 5.1.4** This year, for the first time, Chapter provided a written report on safeguarding to the Bishop of Leeds. This provided a brief update on key areas of activity and included the latest iteration of the safeguarding action plan.
- 5.1.5** The terms of reference of the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee (CSC) include 'effective scrutiny of and management of safeguarding on behalf of the Chapter'. The committee maintains oversight of the safeguarding action plan, and includes regular consideration of case management, safer recruitment and training. Reports to the CSC are generally verbal.
- 5.1.6** Efforts have been put into developing systems to enable monitoring and reporting, such as the spreadsheets which collate information on safer recruitment and training. Departments also maintain their own records of activity and incidents. Overall, however, data is not yet used systematically to demonstrate progress or focus activity. The CSC does not oversee the parish dashboard.
- 5.1.7** At diocesan level, the Strategic Safeguarding Committee (DSSC) is attended by the Dean of Wakefield Cathedral on behalf of the three cathedrals. Its current terms of reference do not include scrutiny in general, but the independent chair is keen to develop this aspect of the committee's work.
- 5.1.8** There is no formal mechanism in place for systematically gathering feedback from those who are engaged with the Cathedral, in whatever capacity, or who receive a safeguarding service. The chorister forum was a much-appreciated forum for dialogue between choristers, music department staff and clergy, but has been in abeyance for two years. The good response from across the Cathedral community to the audit questionnaire (105 respondents in total) is an indication that there may be a general willingness to provide feedback if asked.

Analysis

- 5.1.9** There are good foundations in place for building an effective framework for quality assurance. These need developing to include more effective systems for monitoring and reporting, and for gathering feedback from those engaged with the Cathedral.
- 5.1.10** The auditors found that elements of a framework for scrutinising and evaluating performance and impact are in place, comprising Chapter, the CSC, the DSSC, and annual reporting to the Bishop.
- 5.1.11** The safeguarding action plan has provided a consistent basis for action and review over the past year. Basic databases exist in relation to important aspects of safeguarding such as safer recruitment, training and DBS and are being brought together into a form which will enable forward planning (e.g. for when DBS or training needs to be renewed) as well as ease of reporting for monitoring purposes. The parish dashboard is providing increasingly useful information. Additional activities, such as self audits, benchmarking against other cathedrals, 'customer' and staff/volunteer feedback, could usefully be developed to provide additional sources of information. The 'lessons learned' reviews, conducted by the DSSC, are likely to have relevance locally.
- 5.1.12** The focus to date has been on promoting a culture of care across the Cathedral, where (in the words of Chapter's self-assessment) '*safeguarding processes are accepted as part of life*'. This has been supported by a focus on training and record keeping. Effort has been put into reviewing and rectifying gaps in policies and procedures and embedding safer-recruitment practice. Understandably, there has also been much activity and attention devoted to responding to the changed circumstances arising from the pandemic and accompanying lockdowns. This has meant that many of the more recently developed policies and procedures have not been tested and evidence of understanding, compliance and impact is absent.
- 5.1.13** The auditors reflected the potential for confusion between the leadership and oversight role of Chapter and the wide-ranging terms of reference of the CSC. This is examined more fully in section 5.4. As the Cathedral develops its systems and processes, this could helpfully be clarified.
- 5.1.14** There is now an opportunity to build on the foundations of the safeguarding action plan and develop a coherent and consistent framework which will provide a strong basis for assuring the development, quality and impact of safeguarding arrangements. To be most effective, this would require clarity over strategic direction, operational priorities and desired outcomes, supported by improved arrangements for collating and reporting on data and 'soft' information, such as complaints.
- 5.1.15** Ripon Cathedral has already stated its explicit commitment to the Church of England safeguarding policy statement *Promoting a Safer Church*, with its six overarching policy commitments. This could provide the basis for the planned review of the safeguarding action plan, and in turn for reporting to Chapter, DSSC and the Bishop.
- 5.1.16** Building a quality-assurance framework with supporting systems that will give feedback on progress against the plan, coupled with proportionate, written reporting at all levels, will enable Chapter to monitor how well it is fulfilling its commitment to promoting a safer church for all.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What would a framework for quality assurance look like, that is able to evidence progress in creating a strong safeguarding culture and compliance with the expectations of *Promoting a Safer Church*?
- How might the Cathedral seek regular feedback from a range of children and adults, including survivors of abuse, as part of its vision of *Growing God's Kingdom*?

5.2 COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE SAFEGUARDING SERVICE

- 5.2.1** A good complaints policy enables people to raise concerns, and to have timely and appropriate consideration of any problems. A strong policy is clear about who complaints should be made to, and how they can be escalated if necessary. Positive features include an independent element, and clarity that *raising a safeguarding concern*, and *making a complaint about a safeguarding service*, are two distinct things.
- 5.2.2** Ripon Cathedral has its own complaints policy and procedure, which was most recently reviewed in June 2021. The safeguarding page of the Cathedral website refers specifically to complaints about the safeguarding service, in the context of promoting a safer culture, and makes clear the distinction between making a complaint about the service and reporting a concern about a child or vulnerable adult. A link to the complaints procedure is included, as are directions about reporting a concern. The procedure is available for anyone to use, other than staff, who are directed to the grievance procedure.
- 5.2.3** The policy is positive about complaints providing an opportunity to learn and improve, as well as to put things right for the person or the organisation that has made the complaint. This is consistent with the themes set out in *Growing God's Kingdom* regarding the culture and ethos of Ripon Cathedral.
- 5.2.4** The procedure provides for a two-stage internal process, with the first stage being overseen by the Director of Operations and the second stage by Chapter. There is no provision for independent investigation, 'unless the Chapter decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution'.
- 5.2.5** The Cathedral complaints procedure emphasises the need for complaints to be 'formal' and in writing, or they are not able to proceed. Guidance is given about handling verbal complaints. The safeguarding action plan indicates that recent efforts have been made to ensure that staff know how to handle complaints in line with the procedure.
- 5.2.6** The Diocese of Leeds has its own complaints procedure, accessible via its website, which includes explicit provision for complaints about the safeguarding service. This comprises a three-stage process, with the final stage being involvement of the Charity Commission. Complaints about the safeguarding service are effectively differentiated from reporting concerns about a child or vulnerable adult.
- 5.2.7** The auditors were not informed of any complaints made about the safeguarding service within the Cathedral or to the Diocese in relation to safeguarding in the Cathedral. The Cathedral policy provides for complaints to be reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action, but the auditors have not seen an indication that this has been done recently.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- There were no considerations under this heading

5.3 WHISTLEBLOWING

- 5.3.1** Effective whistleblowing procedures enable workers to raise concerns about a range of issues (sexual abuse, bullying, fraud, etc.) without the fear that their disclosures will lead to any harassment or negative impact on their personal work role/environment.
- 5.3.2** Ripon Cathedral has its own whistleblowing policy which was reviewed and approved by Chapter in June 2021. It is set explicitly within the context of *Growing God's Kingdom* and encourages staff to raise concerns rather than keep quiet through a sense of misplaced loyalty to colleagues and/or the Cathedral.
- 5.3.3** The policy makes a clear distinction between whistleblowing and referring concerns about a child. It is available for use by both staff and volunteers. It sets out the process which will be followed in investigating a concern, which could be internal or independent, and refers to relevant external bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive, the Financial Services Authority or the National Safeguarding Team. Whilst encouraging staff and volunteers to raise concerns without fear of reprisals, the policy does not contain details of external organisations such as Protect, which offer support to whistleblowers.
- 5.3.4** The Diocese of Leeds has a separate whistleblowing policy and procedure which is accessible via its website.
- 5.3.5** The Cathedral's safeguarding action plan identified that the whistleblowing policy and procedure needed reviewing and promoting, and efforts were needed to ensure that staff and volunteers were familiar with it. Meetings were planned in the summer with both staff and volunteers to achieve this, but it is not known by the auditors whether these have yet taken place.
- 5.3.6** The handbooks for both staff and volunteers draw attention to the Cathedral whistleblowing policy and where it may be accessed. For staff, this is via the 'm' drive on the Cathedral server. Volunteers have to request a copy, which may present a barrier for some who wish to use it.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might the Cathedral promote the importance of whistleblowing and improve awareness and use of the whistleblowing procedure?

5.4 CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE/ DIOCESAN STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

- 5.4.1** Based on the national guidance for diocesan safeguarding panels set out in *Roles and Responsibilities*, 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

- 5.4.2** Ripon Cathedral has its own version of a diocesan safeguarding panel, the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee (CSC). Originally comprising staff only, its terms of reference were revised in early 2020 to include external members. The committee's function is to 'lead on strategic and operational safeguarding matters for Ripon Cathedral reporting directly to Chapter'. Terms of reference set out its responsibilities, which include undertaking 'the effective scrutiny of and management of safeguarding on behalf of the Chapter'. It is independently chaired by a lay Canon who is a former secondary school headteacher, and members include the Canon Pastor (CSR), Director of Operations (CSC), Canon Precentor, the Education Officer, two cathedral volunteers and an independent member who is a chorister parent and former police officer. Once in post, the Director Of Music is expected to attend. The DSA attends and contributes national and diocesan perspectives and information.
- 5.4.3** The CSC has met four times since June 2020 and focused initially on understanding its brief and context and agreeing its operational protocols. Oversight of cases, training and safer recruitment are standing items on each agenda. Preparation for the audit has been a major item of discussion in meetings this year. Administration and minutes are the responsibility of the Director of Operations.
- 5.4.4** The Diocesan Strategic Safeguarding Committee (DSSC) is independently chaired by an experienced and qualified professional who has been in the role since January 2020. The terms of reference which set out the purpose and responsibilities of the DSSC are dated April 2017. The group is described as 'responsible for the oversight of policy, procedures, training and guidance to the directors, diocesan officers and parishes on safeguarding matters'. The terms of reference do not mention cathedrals. One Dean attends on behalf of the three cathedrals in the Diocese of Leeds, and minutes are distributed to all three Deans. Input from the cathedrals to date has been verbal, although the auditors understand that written reports may be requested in future.
- 5.4.5** The DSSC is supported by the Operational Safeguarding Working Group (OSWG), which is described as 'responsible for ensuring consistency of approach across Episcopal Areas and the provision of practical support and guidance, where required, to parishes and diocesan officers on a range of safeguarding topics'. The OSWG is expected to provide regular reports, advice and guidance to the DSSC. It is attended by archdeacons from each episcopal area together with diocesan staff. The cathedrals do not contribute to this group.
- 5.4.6** There is no operational leadership team in the Cathedral; a clergy/ staff meeting does take place every two months, chaired by the Dean.

Analysis

- 5.4.7** Oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding sits in a number of different places. Building on and developing existing structures within and external to the Cathedral will clarify and strengthen safeguarding arrangements and improve scrutiny.
- 5.4.8** The establishing of the CSC reflects a desire on the part of Chapter to ensure that its safeguarding arrangements are comprehensive and effective. The attention paid to securing a suitably experienced independent chair and a range of lay expertise is further demonstration of this. However, the CSC does not have ownership or oversight of either the safeguarding action plan or parish dashboard, which are two key tools for demonstrating progress and areas for development.

- 5.4.9** The auditors questioned whether the CSC can be expected to fulfil strategic, operational and scrutiny functions, as specified in its terms of reference, and did wonder what role that leaves for Chapter itself. Its membership does not comprise all relevant operational and strategic leaders. The absence of a group which has operational responsibility for day-to-day implementation of the Cathedral's safeguarding arrangements means that there is no clear ownership of the safeguarding action plan, and a small number of individuals are left with overall responsibility for what should be a coordinated, organisation-wide activity. The relationship of the CSC with Chapter was described by a member of the group as 'uncertain', and reporting is done via the Canon Pastor rather than the independent chair.
- 5.4.10** The DSSC has terms of reference which pre-date the *Key Roles and Responsibilities* practice guidance (issued in October 2017). Unlike the national guidance, the DSSC has no scrutiny function specified in its terms of reference, and no structure of reporting at present which would enable this in relation to the cathedrals. The auditors reflected that revision of the terms of reference of the DSSC to align more closely with national guidance could help formalise and strengthen external scrutiny for the Cathedral. Closer coordination between the three cathedrals about how they might best contribute to and benefit from the DSSC would be desirable, in order to develop the relationship beyond that of information sharing. A strengthened role for DCCS in relation to the cathedrals could in turn provide additional assurance for the Dean and Chapter about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements within the Cathedral.
- 5.4.11** Corresponding revision of the terms of reference of the CSC to clarify its role and remit in relation to Chapter and DSSC would be beneficial.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might current structures be developed to provide systematic oversight and evidenced assurance to the Dean and Chapter of the quality and effectiveness of Cathedral safeguarding arrangements?

5.5 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.5.1** Safeguarding leadership takes various forms – strategic, operational and theological – with different people taking different roles. How these roles are understood, and how they fit together, will determine how well led the safeguarding function is.

Theological leadership

Description

- 5.5.2** The remit for theological leadership in relation to safeguarding is clearly always with the clergy and especially with the Dean. Their leadership 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.
- 5.5.3** The present Dean has been at Ripon since 2014, following the death of the previous Dean. He had previously spent some years working in parishes in the north east of England, and as an Area Dean.
- 5.5.4** As the expression of Ripon Cathedral's vision, *Growing God's Kingdom* is a key

opportunity to demonstrate how safeguarding is integral in promoting fullness in life. At present, this is implicit rather than explicit. The Dean, who has a strong commitment to safeguarding as an integral aspect of Christian values and behaviour, acknowledges that this will need to be addressed when the document is reviewed and refreshed later in the year.

Analysis

- 5.5.5** The theological aspects of safeguarding could be more explicit. A focus on the Cathedral as a safe and welcoming space for survivors is desirable.
- 5.5.6** Members of the clergy each gave examples of how they have spoken about aspects of safeguarding, both implicitly and explicitly, as part of sermons.
- 5.5.7** The survey asked questions about the priority given to safeguarding in the Cathedral, how active is the Dean in communicating the importance of safeguarding within the church and to what extent does safeguarding, and the safety and wellbeing of others, form part of the message of sermons. Responses varied considerably. Whilst a majority (92 per cent, n=93) said that safeguarding was an obvious priority either 'extremely' (77 per cent) or 'moderately' (15 per cent), slightly fewer (84 per cent, n=85) said the same about the Dean's communication of the importance of safeguarding, and 7 per cent (n=7) said he did not communicate its importance at all.
- 5.5.8** In response to being asked to what extent does safeguarding, and the safety and wellbeing of others, form part of the message of sermons, 10 per cent replied 'not at all' (n=10) or 'not relevant to my role and experience' (25 per cent, n=25). Given that a number of these identified themselves variously as volunteers, congregants, members of staff and Chapter, the auditors found this latter response surprising. A number of comments identified the Canon Pastor as having primary responsibility for safeguarding. One member of the congregation expressed that they 'do not wish to see safeguarding encroaching any more into the Cathedral's overall mission – the worship of Almighty God', indicating that more work is needed to assist all members of the community to understand safeguarding as integral to the theology of the church.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What more might the Dean and clergy do to promote understanding of the importance of safeguarding and its integral place in church life, and how might the forthcoming review of *Growing God's Kingdom* assist?

Strategic leadership

- 5.5.9** 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. The plan should be reviewed regularly.

Description

- 5.5.10** Chapter is the governing body of Ripon Cathedral, supported by a range of other committees, including the CSC. Uniquely amongst English cathedrals, Ripon also has a PCC. With the introduction of the 2021 Cathedrals Measure, this will be dissolved. New committees will therefore be needed to represent the Cathedral community and

the chapels' congregations to the Chapter. The new structure is in the progress of being agreed.

- 5.5.11** The auditors were told that safeguarding is a standing agenda item at all meetings of Chapter and its committees. With pastoral care, safeguarding is always discussed at the regular confidential Dean and Canons meeting. The Dean describes Chapter as seeking 'always to have a positive and constructive approach to safeguarding, health and safety, and sustaining a culture in which respect is shown to all; we strive to be a caring and inclusive community. We expect this of all clergy, staff and volunteers'.
- 5.5.12** Following agreement of the *Growing God's Kingdom* vision and strategy in 2016, the Dean reorganised leadership and management arrangements across the Cathedral, allocating strategic responsibility for each of the four areas of mission to a member of Chapter, together with the corresponding operational management responsibilities.
- 5.5.13** The Dean himself is Chapter lead for communications, and manages staff leading the development, marketing and communication functions. He also manages the DO, who leads the finance and administrative functions of the Cathedral, including oversight of safer recruitment and DBS. The Canon Precentor oversees worship and music, and directly manages the DoM and the Head Verger. The Canon Pastor oversees pastoral care and manages the children and families worker. The Canon for Education and Rural Engagement manages the Education Officer. Each strategic leader has responsibility for overseeing the recruitment, supervision and care of the volunteers working in the corresponding areas of activity. Safeguarding elements are directly or indirectly present across all these areas.
- 5.5.14** The Canon Pastor is the Cathedral safeguarding representative (CSR), but the role is not yet defined. As well as providing visible leadership for safeguarding within the Cathedral itself, the Canon Pastor also supports safeguarding in all three of the additional chapels within the Cathedral parish. The CSR provides a written report on safeguarding to each Chapter meeting and is the link between Chapter and the Safeguarding Committee (CSC).
- 5.5.15** The CSC was reviewed in early 2020, with the Dean wanting it to operate less as an operational group and more like 'in-house auditors,' providing challenge to the Cathedral. This shift in function informed the Dean's decision to appoint an independent chair and another lay member to the CSC, who have education and policing experience respectively. There is no social work expertise available to Chapter or the CSC.
- 5.5.16** In addition to the regular consideration by Chapter, the Dean meets several times each year with the CSR and CSC to be informed on progress with developments (the action plan) and to discuss concerns and opportunities for improvement in procedures.
- 5.5.17** The Chapter has consistently made decisions to invest in roles that would strengthen leadership and safeguarding arrangements in key areas such as the music department, education, and work with children and families.

Analysis

- 5.5.18** Chapter has demonstrated its collective commitment to safeguarding through its decision-making about resource allocation. This provides a firm basis for the next phase in the development of safeguarding at Ripon Cathedral, which will need firm, collective leadership by the Dean and Chapter, accompanied by the development of a clear strategic plan which sits explicitly within *Growing God's Kingdom*.

- 5.5.19** Chapter is systematic in its consideration of safeguarding and has consistently allocated resources to strengthen arrangements in key areas. This has enabled good progress to be made. Chapter's continue commitment to investing in these roles despite the challenging financial environment is very positive.
- 5.5.20** The allocation of strategic and operational responsibilities to different members of Chapter should ensure that responsibilities for safeguarding are evenly shared. In the absence of a clear role description, however, the Canon Pastor (CSR) in practice takes lead strategic and operational responsibility for an extensive range of activity, and together with the CSC, has assumed responsibility for the safeguarding action plan. The allocation of strategic leadership responsibilities to the safeguarding committee risks further dilution of Chapter's collective responsibility.
- 5.5.21** Comments by staff who responded to the survey suggested safeguarding was regarded by some as 'being the domain of a solitary Canon ... and occasionally mentioned elsewhere'. This suggests that more effort is needed to establish Chapter as the collective strategic leaders of safeguarding in the Cathedral. The development of a *Promoting a Safer Church* action plan that sits alongside *Growing God's Kingdom* and sets out, in line with national and local priorities, how the safeguarding policy is being put into action, may assist.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What adjustments to the structures and systems within the Cathedral are needed to ensure that the relative responsibilities for strategic and operational safeguarding leadership are clear and that there is proper accountability for activities and progress in delivering the *Promoting A Safer Church* policy?
- What benefits might there be in developing a strategy for *Promoting a Safer Church* with an accompanying delivery plan, and how could this be achieved?

Operational leadership

Description

- 5.5.22** As noted above in paragraphs 5.5.12 and 5.5.13, members of Chapter have both strategic and operational responsibilities. In addition, the Cathedral benefits from a number of skilled and knowledgeable operational managers such as the Director of Music, the Education Officer, children and families officer, and the head verger, who ensure that safeguarding is high up on the agenda within their departments and delivered to a good standard.
- 5.5.23** The management and coordination of the 200+ people who volunteer for the Cathedral sits with different individuals (group leaders), some of whom are themselves volunteers.
- 5.5.24** The SLA with the Diocese is helpful in formalising access to the services of the DST.
- 5.5.25** There are many forums in which some or all of these leaders and managers may discuss or be made aware of safeguarding, on a regular basis and include:
- quarterly meetings of the Safeguarding Committee
 - six to eight weekly meetings between clergy and staff, chaired by the Dean
 - weekly diary meetings

- departmental meetings.

The auditors were told that operational managers used to meet together with the Director of Operations, but that this was discontinued. They also heard of less formal opportunities created by individuals to compare and improve safeguarding practice.

5.5.26 Whilst the auditors heard of several informal provisions for the seeking of expert HR advice and supports, there is not yet a formal arrangement with the Diocese, (such as an SLA) to support the DO and wider Cathedral in managing matters that require such input. Currently, such support is accessed from either the Diocese of Leeds, Chapter members with relevant experience or lawyers with HR specialism.

5.5.27 The safeguarding committee has terms of reference which state its purpose as being to 'lead on strategic and operational safeguarding matters'.

Analysis

5.5.28 The commitment of individual leaders to safeguarding is good. There is a need to review how individual efforts are supported and coordinated in order to promote collective operational leadership.

5.5.29 The auditors reflected that the combined strategic and executive responsibilities of Chapter members are not yet supported by a meetings structure that reflects these. The only forum that the auditors heard about that combined clergy and staff was a bi-monthly meeting, chaired by the Dean. The auditors did not see terms of reference for this meeting but heard that it provided a valuable forum for communication and information exchange.

5.5.30 Operational managers – currently a mix of clergy and lay staff – do not meet collectively. This means that there is no forum which assumes collective ownership for developing and operationalising the safeguarding action plan, and enables the sharing of good practice. Instead, this tends to be seen as the responsibility of the two named safeguarding leads.

5.5.31 The auditors concluded that a forum which brought together operational leaders and assumed collective responsibility for leading and coordinating the delivery of the Cathedral's safeguarding action plan would strengthen the current arrangements and reduce reliance on a small number of key individuals.

5.5.32 The coordination of volunteers is highly dispersed, which, in the view of the auditors, can make consistency challenging. This is discussed further in section 3.6. Some respondents to the survey suggested that departmental practices and standards are indeed variable.

5.5.33 The auditors were concerned at the lack of any formal arrangements for accessing HR expertise. They heard of different scenarios where HR advice was sought from a number of different sources and considered it a risk that support was not formalised. In the case of advice sought from a lay member of Chapter, there is potentially a conflict of interest. In a safeguarding context, where safeguarding concerns are often indicative of wider difficulties, a robust, HR-led response is important in ensuring a fair and safe outcome for all.

5.5.34 The SLA with the Diocese is a useful document which is primarily focused on access to the DST. In the absence of clear arrangements for access by the Cathedral to HR support, the auditors wonder whether there is an opportunity to extend the scope of the memorandum of understanding to include this.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might the operational leadership of safeguarding be coordinated to ensure consistency and ownership across all departments?
- Are the current arrangements for accessing expert HR support sufficiently formalised and, if not, what opportunities exist for this picture to be improved?

5.6 CULTURE

- 5.6.1** The most critical aspect of safeguarding relates to the culture within any organisation. In a Church of England context, that can mean, for example, the extent to which priority is placed on safeguarding individuals as opposed to the reputation of the Church, or the ability of all members of the Church to ‘think the unthinkable’ about friends and colleagues. SCIE’s experience auditing safeguarding in faith contexts more broadly, suggests that in areas where there is experience among 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.
- 5.6.2** Any cathedral should strive for an open, learning culture where safeguarding is a shared responsibility, albeit supported by experts, and which encourages people to raise concerns about how things are working in order that they can be addressed. 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.

Description

- 5.6.3** *Growing God’s Kingdom* sets out the vision and strategy for Ripon Cathedral, providing a context of deep spirituality and care. Chapter’s own self-assessment for the audit describes confidence in the ‘general culture of taking care of each other’ and an acceptance that safeguarding is part of life. As normal life begins to resume post-COVID, Chapter has recognised the importance of re-establishing a strong culture, primarily through the provision of updated training.
- 5.6.4** The auditors heard of many examples of how the Cathedral engages with local community organisations, exercises leadership and promotes its vision. Staff and volunteers alike described a knowledge of and confidence in the safeguarding arrangements, and particularly of the leadership that the Canon Pastor has given to this area of work.
- 5.6.5** More than 92 per cent of adults who completed the survey thought it obvious that safeguarding is a priority in the Cathedral. Information about how to report a concern was visible throughout the building and there is a dedicated safeguarding page on the Cathedral website.
- 5.6.6** Attention to safeguarding was visible throughout the range of activities undertaken by the Cathedral, including its approach to hire agreements, and visitors such as choirs and bell ringers, and reinforced by investment in specific posts such as chorister supervisors and the children and families worker.
- 5.6.7** Survey responses to questions about culture were variable. The majority (86 per cent, n = 87) were positive, but comments suggested a spread of opinion, with a staff

member referring to a 'culture of overwork' where mental health was not taken as seriously as physical health.

Analysis

- 5.6.8** Safeguarding is becoming increasingly embedded into the culture of Ripon Cathedral and across the groups that work or worship within it. More can be done to embed safeguarding as 'everybody's business'.
- 5.6.9** The recent focus on addressing gaps and shortcomings in safeguarding arrangements has been good. Although not explicit within the Cathedral's statement of mission and ministry, the auditors judged that safeguarding is a commonly understood priority. Chapter has made decisions, such as the appointment of chorister supervisors, which underline the priority they are increasingly giving to safeguarding.
- 5.6.10** The invitation in the safeguarding handbook for members of the congregation to complete basic safeguarding awareness training is positive. Feedback via questionnaires indicates that there has been significant success in promoting safeguarding awareness. Less evident is how the Cathedral gives the message that it is a safe space for those who have experienced abuse and learns from the experiences of survivors and others who have received a safeguarding response.
- 5.6.11** The auditors found there still to be a tendency to regard safeguarding as the responsibility of a small number of individuals rather than 'everybody's business'. Together with a tendency to think that safeguarding problems occurred elsewhere rather than in Ripon suggests that there is still work to be done to build a strong safeguarding culture which accepts the potential for children and vulnerable adults to be as much at risk in Ripon as anywhere else.

Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What are the next steps in building and embedding a culture across the Cathedral which puts the experiences of victims and survivors at its heart and where safeguarding is owned as 'everybody's business'?

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1** Arrangements for oversight of and security within the Cathedral are well established, but over-reliant on a very small team of vergers. Consideration should be given to whether the current capacity is adequate, and how to mitigate the risks of lone working. This should include reviewing the means which are available for staff and volunteers to communicate and summon assistance.
- 6.1.2** The wide variety of outreach activities for children and families undertaken at Ripon Cathedral are safely operated, with a robust understanding of risk and appropriate mitigations in place. Some procedures may need review in light of the limited resources available for their full implementation.
- 6.1.3** There is a good level of awareness of adult vulnerability and risk, enhanced through partnership working with local organisations. There are strong procedures in place for organised activities. A coherent training programme is needed which will help people to respond consistently to individual needs, together with more robust procedures for assessing, managing and communicating risk.
- 6.1.4** There is a good balance achieved for the choir between excellence and enjoyment, supported by a framework of good policies and procedures. Through a difficult period, care has been taken to promote stability and consistency, aided by the helpful and experienced chorister supervisors. Leadership, pastoral oversight and coordination needs further thought, and record keeping needs attention. Further work in communicating the desired culture and behaviour of the choir would be beneficial.
- 6.1.5** There are procedures in place for the safeguarding of children and adults within the band at Ripon Cathedral. The tower is benefitting from increasing alignment to the Cathedral, and there is opportunity to develop this further to ensure that appropriate checks on the suitability of visiting ringers are routinely conducted.
- 6.1.6** The quality of identification and responses to safeguarding concerns is improving. Next steps needed are to ensure that identification and responses are consistent across the Cathedral, well recorded, and able to be monitored and tracked. The threshold for involvement by the DSA appears to be consistent and information sharing between Diocese and Cathedral is good. Responses seen were appropriate. Cathedral files did not always contain details of whether agreed actions had been completed and what was the outcome.
- 6.1.7** There has been significant effort to get training right and good progress is evident. Training is generally well received, recording is improving and coordination of renewals seems to be working. There is a need to clarify expectations and address local needs in training for specific groups of staff and volunteers. Consideration of how the impact of training can be evaluated would be beneficial.
- 6.1.8** The Cathedral has made much positive progress in safer recruitment. However, these systems remain in early implementation and there is further opportunity to ensure a consistent approach is taken across staff and volunteers and recorded clearly and coherently.
- 6.1.9** There is a range of local policies, procedures and guidance which complement the national framework. There is a need further to contextualise procedures to the Cathedral and ensure that they are accessible to and workable by all who may have need to use them.

- 6.1.10** Safeguarding leadership at the Cathedral is strong, enabling much positive change in recent years, and this is supported by evident strong links between the Cathedral and the Diocese. There is now an opportunity to further clarify the Cathedral's leadership roles to ensure that roles and remits are clear to all, and in all forums, supported by a more collective approach to safeguarding across the Cathedral.
- 6.1.11** Much positive work has taken place to develop systems for recording and reporting that are helping to coordinate and develop safeguarding practice. The integration of these systems remains a work in progress. Departmental practices and records need reviewing with a view to ensuring that consistent, GDPR-compliant standards are applied, and information is integrated where possible.
- 6.1.12** There are good foundations in place for building an effective framework for quality assurance. These need developing to include more effective systems for monitoring and reporting, and for gathering feedback from those engaged with the Cathedral.
- 6.1.13** Oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding sits in a number of different places. Building on and developing existing structures within and external to the Cathedral will clarify and strengthen safeguarding arrangements and improve scrutiny.
- 6.1.14** The theological aspects of safeguarding could be made more explicit by leaders. A focus on the Cathedral as a safe and welcoming space for survivors is desirable.
- 6.1.15** Chapter has demonstrated its collective commitment to safeguarding through its decision-making about resource allocation. This provides a firm basis for the next phase in the development of safeguarding at Ripon Cathedral, which will need firm, collective leadership by the Dean and Chapter, accompanied by the development of a clear strategic plan which sits explicitly within *Growing God's Kingdom*.
- 6.1.16** The commitment of individual leaders to safeguarding is good. There is a need to review how individual efforts are supported and coordinated in order to promote collective operational leadership.
- 6.1.17** Safeguarding is becoming increasingly embedded into the culture of Ripon Cathedral and across the groups that work or worship within it. More can be done to embed safeguarding as 'everybody's business'.

APPENDICES

Information provided to auditors

In advance of and during the audit, the cathedral provided:

- Safeguarding self-audit summary for SCIE – 2021
- Organisational chart – 2021
- An Introduction to Ripon Cathedral – June 2021
- Extract from talk given by Dean John Palm Sunday – 2019
- Newsletter – June 2021
- Growing God's Kingdom
- Annual reports – 2018–19, 2019, 2020
- Map of precinct
- Ripon Cathedral labelled plan
- Letter to Goddard Enquiry – 4 April 2016

Chapter

- Safeguarding reports to Chapter – 12 March 2021, 9 April 2021, 12 May 2021
- Chapter minutes – 18 March 2021, 15 April 2021, 20 May 2021
- Report on Safeguarding from the Chapter of Ripon Cathedral to the Bishop of Leeds – 17 June 2021

Cathedral Safeguarding Committee

- Ripon Cathedral Safeguarding Committee
- Draft terms of reference – April 2020
- Safeguarding Committee Meeting minutes – 24/6/20, 15/10/20, 14/1/21, 7/5/21
- Cathedral safeguarding advisor and team and their supervision and management

Diocese

- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser job description (Diocese of W Yorkshire and the Dales)
- Service level agreement – March 2021
- Diocesan Strategic Safeguarding Committee terms of reference – April 2017
- Minutes – 9 July 2020, 4 November 2020, 16 March 2021
- Diocesan Operational Safeguarding Working Group terms of reference – May 2017

Policies, procedures and guidance

- Safeguarding Handbook – October 2020
- Staff Handbook for contracted lay employees of the Chapter of Ripon Cathedral (undated)
- Ripon Cathedral Volunteers Handbook – June 2019
- Cathedral Chaplains' Handbook: Policy & Practice – May 2021
- Code for safer working practice
- Security information
- What to do in case of an incident – October 2015
- Emergency evacuation plan – 2021
- What to do if there is a safeguarding issue at Ripon Cathedral
- Whistleblowing Policy – June 2021
- Complaints Policy and Procedure – June 2021
- Data Protection Policy v2 – 2019
- Use of Electronic Media – July 2020
- Health and Safety Policy – June 2019
- Lone Working Policy – June 2019
- Lone or Lost Child or Vulnerable Adult Procedure – May 2021
- Pastoral Care Policy – May 2021
- Health and safety risk assessments for different activities and venues
- Cathedral Hall documents

Music department

- Choristers' Code of Conduct – undated
- Choristers' Handbook
- Information for choristers and parents – March 2020
- Safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff in their care of the choristers – Revised January 2021
- Music Department – Online Guidelines
- Visiting Choirs Singing Services at Ripon Cathedral
- Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Harm Form
- Useful Information for visiting choirs – Updated May 2021
- Pastoral meetings – notes from weekly meetings – January–June 2021

- Chorister Forum – notes of meetings – 2017–19

Staffing and training

- Overview of Safeguarding Training
- Training Policy: Staff and Volunteers – March 2020
- Safer recruitment forms and information

Safeguarding practice

- Safeguarding action plan v3 – 28 April 2021
- Safeguarding action plan v4 – 8 June 2021
- Safeguarding action plan v5 – 22 June 2021
- Education safeguarding guidance – April 2021
- Children's Church file 1
- Children's Church file 2

Participation of organisation staff

The auditors had conversations with:

- Dean
- Canon Pastor/Cathedral Safeguarding Representative
- Canon Precentor
- Chair of the Cathedral Safeguarding Committee
- Director of Operations/Cathedral Safeguarding Coordinator
- Cathedral Secretary
- Interim Director of Music
- Assistant Director of Music
- Chorister Supervisors (2)
- Head Verger
- Ringing Master
- Education Officer
- Children and Families Officer
- Children's Church leader

- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- Chair of the Diocesan Strategic Safeguarding Committee

What Records/ Files Were Examined?

The auditors reviewed:

- Thirteen safeguarding concerns reported in years 2019, 2020, 2021
- Four safeguarding case files (with corresponding diocesan case file if there was one)
- Twelve recruitment and selection files, 6 each for staff and volunteers
- One clergy blue file

Limitations of Audit

No survivors responded to the invitation to speak directly with the auditors.



social care
institute for excellence

Social Care Institute for Excellence
83 Baker Street, London W1U 6AG



www.scie.org.uk