



social care  
institute for excellence

# Cathedral safeguarding audit programme 2019-2022: end of programme learning briefing

7 September 2022

# Cathedral safeguarding audit programme and this learning briefing



- Independent safeguarding audit programme covered 42 cathedrals + 2 palaces, began late 2018
- Audits were paused between March 2020 and January 2021, due to Covid 19
- Midway briefing issued in September 2021
- Final cathedral audit completed in February 2022
- Prime audience for final learning briefing: all cathedrals, and Lead Dean
- Purpose is to share learning in order to support cathedrals with their continued development of safeguarding arrangements
- National church progressing with IICSA responses including development of framework of safeguarding standards (draft)
- This briefing avoids duplicating the forthcoming quality standards. It is not intended to be a comprehensive handbook. It aims instead to be a check-list, highlighting common challenges and key tensions faced by cathedrals as identified through the audit programme. Cross-reference to the draft CoE safeguarding standards is made in the notes.

# Safeguarding progress in cathedrals



- Progress evident on basic building blocks, e.g. only a handful still had no access to a professional safeguarding adviser (rather than a volunteer), and this was in the process of being addressed
- Developing awareness and confidence in safeguarding being integral to the mission of the church
- Policies and procedures in place, with increasing consistency between national and local, and between diocese and cathedral
- Significant impact of Covid lockdowns and restrictions for majority – e.g. financial (reduced income), visitor numbers reduced, volunteers resigned or stayed away –persisting
- Hiatus because of Covid used as an opportunity by several to review safeguarding progress and revise arrangements e.g. for access, volunteer recruitment and training
- Tensions identified in midway briefing persist - these are inherent in the cathedral context, rather than an indicator of lack of progress

# Church of England National Safeguarding Standards (draft)



STANDARD ONE : Prevention

STANDARD TWO: Culture, leadership and capacity

STANDARD THREE: Recognising, assessing and managing risk

STANDARD FOUR: Victims and survivors

STANDARD FIVE: Learning, supervision and support.

*It is essential they reflect specificity of cathedrals as well as dioceses.*

# Recognising unique features of cathedrals relevant to safeguarding



- Buildings and precincts – places to visit
- Size – of premises, clergy/ staff/ volunteers
- Places of learning and pilgrimage, as well as refuge
- High public profile – sometimes national/ international
- Looked to for leadership beyond immediate community
- More dispersed and diverse congregations, including those who feel marginalised and prefer relative anonymity of large place
- Children's choir(s)
- Significant financial demands and opportunities
- Complexity of governance

# Key tensions in safeguarding well in cathedrals



1. Providing an open welcoming environment and managing the risks entailed
2. Dealing with the whole spectrum of safeguarding in a cathedral context
3. Championing social justice for survivors of clergy and Church-related abuse, regardless of whether abuse or re-abuse has been identified locally
4. Striving for musical excellence in cathedral choirs and looking after the welfare of children
5. Recognising the distinctiveness of Cathedral Music Departments and the commonness of teaching-staff being in positions of trust vis-à-vis choristers
6. Benefiting from diocesan safeguarding arrangements and allowing for cathedral distinctiveness
7. Courageous clergy leadership in contested safeguarding context
8. Competent safeguarding leadership and management in context of theological training
9. Holding leaders to account in a context of complex governance



# 1. Providing an open welcoming environment and managing the risks entailed

- Are daily working practices underpinned by agreed procedures to ensure consistency of safety and welcome, promote wellbeing and manage risk, and are these regularly practiced?
- Is there adequate capacity among the workers on the cathedral 'floor' to oversee site security and respond when required throughout opening hours and overnight?
- Have risks associated with examples of lone working in the cathedral been considered and effectively mitigated?
- Has adequate thought been given to options for managing entrances and exits?
- What additional training needs might there be for support staff and volunteers beyond basic safeguarding, including de-escalation processes; mental health awareness and safe working practices?
- How do leaders know that children, visitors, volunteers, staff and clergy feel safe when they are in the cathedral and its precinct?

## 2. Dealing with the whole spectrum of safeguarding in a cathedral context

Incl. organisational recruitment; managing offenders; vulnerable adults; child protection; range of risks

- Is there an understanding of the range of safeguarding challenges inherent in a cathedral setting and are these different aspects of safeguarding adequately differentiated?
- Is there recognition that they sometimes pull against each other?
- Has there been thought about whether a single person can lead on and hold accountability for them all?
- Are there context-specific policies, procedures and guidance in place which support the full range of daily safeguarding work in the cathedral?
- Are newer areas such as online safety and social media recognised as having safeguarding risks?
- Is the interface between pastoral and safeguarding responses clear and widely understood and reflected in training for staff and volunteers?
- Is the available pastoral support adequate to meet need?
- Are there effective links with local statutory and voluntary organisations and partnerships which can offer expertise and practical assistance?



# Dealing with the whole spectrum of safeguarding in a cathedral context (continued)



- Is there clearly understood and appropriate communication concerning individuals who may pose a risk to others?
- Are safer recruitment standards and practice applied consistently for all clergy, staff and volunteers regardless of DSB eligibility?
- Do safeguarding arrangements in the belltower align with those in the cathedral?
- Is there the right balance between maintaining the historic fabric of the cathedral and safeguarding those who work there and visit, given the wide spectrum of potential safeguarding concerns?

### **3. Championing social justice for survivors of clergy and Church-related abuse, regardless of whether abuse or re-abuse has been identified locally**

- How does the cathedral address the reality that there are likely to be victims and survivors of abuse across the cathedral and its community, in all positions? Has thought been given about how to acknowledge the presence and/or participation of abuse survivors whether clergy, lay members of staff, volunteers or congregants in cathedral services and cathedral life, while respecting people's right to anonymity?
- Is there an overt articulation that people who come forward to disclose clergy or Church-related abuse provide a generous service for the whole Church?
- Is the cathedral advocating pro-actively for a just and compassionate response to and redress for victims and survivors of clergy abuse, regardless of where or when they were abused, or whether abuse or re-abuse has been identified locally? Does the cathedral's public messaging reflect its positioning as an ally of victims and survivors?
- How does the cathedral know if there are survivors of abuse related to their cathedral who still seek resolution and/or are needing support to rebuild broken lives?
- Does the Cathedral's safeguarding learning strategy reflect the voices and experiences of survivors and make a tangible impact across clergy, staff, volunteers and congregations?



## 4. Striving for musical excellence in cathedral choirs and looking after the welfare of children

- Is there openness about existing tensions between musical excellence and child welfare?
- Has proficiency in contemporary behaviour management approaches been discussed for music department staff without a teaching qualification?
- Is there clarity about the circumstances that would necessitate stopping the choir singing and escorting children and young people out of the cathedral?
- How consistently are choristers involved in setting expectations about desired culture and behaviour, and asked for feedback about their experience and wellbeing?
- Is the music department fully integrated with wider safeguarding forums across the cathedral and working closely with the cathedral safeguarding adviser?



## 5. Recognising the distinctiveness of Cathedral Music Departments and the commonness of teaching staff being in positions of trust vis-à-vis choristers

- Is the defacto position of trust of the Director of Music / Assistant Directors, choral and organ scholars adequately recognised and embedded?
- Is there clarity about what relationships would be inappropriate for Music Department staff?
- Are people alert to safeguarding risks created by choir social activities, particularly where alcohol is involved?
- Does everyone know what abuse scenarios look like in cathedral choirs from cases in the public domain?
- Does the Director of Music play an active safeguarding leadership role and ensure safeguarding and welfare practice standards are consistently high across all music activities?
- Is everyone clear about the relative safeguarding roles and responsibilities of staff (school and cathedral), parents, lay clerks, and volunteers in relation to the choristers and how are these communicated and reviewed?



## 6. Benefiting from diocesan safeguarding arrangements and allowing for cathedral distinctiveness

- How has relevance and ownership of House of Bishops national practice guidance been fostered for people in different areas of activity of the cathedral?
- Have mechanisms to support the diocesan safeguarding adviser (DSA) to understand the cathedral context and activities been considered?
- Is the role of the DSA for the cathedral well understood across the cathedral community and properly supported professionally as well as managerially?
- Does the Service Level Agreement (or equivalent) with the diocese differentiate between the provision of allegations management and other safeguarding support to be provided?
- Is there a well understood threshold for a concern being responded to by the DSA and how is this monitored for consistency?
- How is work below the threshold for a DSA response carried out, monitored and supervised in the cathedral?
- Has thought been given to the inter-play between cathedral and diocesan case file management and recording systems?
- How do the Dean and Chapter know if the cathedral is receiving a good service from the DSA and diocese, and whether the service is sufficient to meet its needs?



## 7. Courageous clergy leadership in contested safeguarding context

- How do the clergy explicitly promote a confident and alert safeguarding culture which accepts risk and understands that safeguarding is a collective responsibility and integral to the cathedral's mission?
- Does internal and public messaging convey a clear message that the cathedral is a welcoming and safe place for victims, survivors and others who may be vulnerable?
- How confident are leaders that everyone – clergy, staff, volunteers, children – experiences the cathedral as a safe place to work and be?
- Does the cathedral actively promote inclusivity, equality, tolerance, social justice, encourage challenge and reach out to those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged?
- How confident are leaders that safeguarding is understood and consistently owned as 'everybody's business'?
- Are all members of the cathedral community alert and prepared to 'think the unthinkable'?



## 8. Competent safeguarding leadership and management in context of theological training

- Do leadership and management arrangements promote a safer church, with the wellbeing of victims and survivors at its heart?
- Do leaders regularly seek and receive evidence about the scope, quality and impact of cathedral safeguarding arrangements?
- Is there a clear distinction between strategic and operational safeguarding leadership functions?
- Are there clear lines of responsibility and accountability?
- Has there been thinking about the different hats people wear in different forums/roles?
- Are cathedral leaders properly supported by good, independent human resources advice in their role as managers, including where there are safeguarding concerns, and adequately equipped to recognise when HR advice is needed?
- Are leaders confident that resources allocated to safeguarding are sufficient to meet known and anticipated needs?
- Do quality assurance activities and good feedback loops drive continual improvement?



## 9. Holding leaders to account in a context of complex governance

- Where does external scrutiny come from and how does the cathedral know it is effective?
- Has the role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) for the cathedral been adequately articulated and differentiated?
- Is there clarity of roles between the Dean, the Chair and the Bishop?
- What cathedral information does the DSAP need to be provided with and what should the cathedral expect in turn from DSAP?
- Has the DSAP role in scrutinising progress in the Cathedral on their Promoting a Safer Church Action Plan been considered?
- Are leaders and managers held openly to account for their effectiveness?
- What is the role of the Bishop in escalation plans?
- What is the relationship between the Dean and Bishop in such circumstances?
- What opportunities are offered by the Cathedral Measure to strengthen external scrutiny?





# Next steps

- Please discuss these common challenges and tensions in your safeguarding forums. Use them to guide reflections and internal quality assurance.
- Thank you for your continuing work to make your cathedrals and cathedral-related activity safe for all who participate, and to create an open culture where people can be confident to come forward if they have concerns about individuals or unsafe practices.

**The SCIE audit team**