

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel Quality Assurance Policy and Practice (Agreed at DSAP 09/08/2020)

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel

The purpose of DSAP is to provide strategy, scrutiny, challenge, quality assurance, and monitoring of safeguarding policy and practice. The cathedral acts as a full and equal partner of the group.

1. Introduction

What is Quality Assurance?

Quality assurance is about assessing the quality of the work we undertake to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. It is also about understanding the impact of this work in terms of its effectiveness in helping to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe. Effective quality assurance will contribute to a culture of continuous learning and improvement in safeguarding work within the diocese and cathedral of Peterborough.

The main challenge is to improve the quality of safeguarding practice and safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk. In order to provide reassurance to our church communities, church officers, statutory partners and partner agencies it is also important to communicate learning from the review process.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Quality Assurance processes are to consider:

- What we do and does it support the Church of England safeguarding policies and statutory guidelines?
- How well we do it –are we working well together to respond to safeguarding concerns?
- What difference we have made/is anyone better off?
- Do our safeguarding arrangements improve outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk?

These objectives are underpinned by the following principles:

- **Accountability.** It is important that reviewing process undertaken by the Quality Assurance Reference Group is open and transparent. Where the group identifies any issues that require action to: mitigate risk; report offences to the police; report concerns

to the local authority / another body or provide support to an individual who has previously asked for help or where there is no evidence that support was offered they must inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) immediately. This will be reported to the Chair of DSAP.

- **Empowerment.** Good quality safeguarding arrangements should be person-centred, defined by the individual, outcome-based and making a difference. This is in-line with statutory guidance of **Making Safeguarding Personal** (i.e. to what degree do our safeguarding arrangements in the church deliver what is important to children, young people and adults at risk and the outcomes they want to achieve).
- **Prevention and Protection.** It is better to act before harm occurs and support those in greatest need. Raising awareness through safeguarding training, communication and engagement and following practice guidance will help to achieve this.
- **Proportionality.** Responses should be appropriate to the risk presented and the least restrictive of individuals rights and choices.
- **Partnership.** Ensuring we are working in partnership with our local communities. Taking into account our safeguarding policies and statutory guidelines.

Performance measures

There are three types of performance information/measures:

1. **Quantitative information.** This will help to inform **what we do**. It attempts to answer the question how much/how many?
2. **Qualitative information.** This will tell us more about **how well we do it**. The quality of what was done.
3. **Outcome information.** This tells us **what difference we have made** through our intervention and support. Are children, young people and adults at risk safer in our Diocese and Cathedral.

Different qualitative and quantitative information sources will, over-time, be compared and contrasted to cross-verify the data and validate any conclusions being drawn. This will enable DSAP more confidently to understand whether arrangements are effective and making a difference.

Support learning and improvement

What we do with the information collated is as important as the quality of information we collect. To achieve this the learning from quality assurance reviews will be shared widely and used meaningfully to change practice and improve outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk.

3. Quality Assurance Review Group

The Quality Assurance Review Group is a subgroup of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) established to ensure that the Diocese of Peterborough and Peterborough

Cathedral has effective systems, structures and processes in place to improve outcomes and experience in the context of safeguarding children, young people¹ and adults at risk.²

The Quality Assurance Review Group is also a key tool by which DSAP holds the diocese and cathedral accountable for their safeguarding work, including: communication and engagement; prevention and risk management.

The Quality Assurance Review Group discharges its responsibilities by the reviewing of redacted: casefiles; risk management plans; worship agreements. Dip-sampling of parish safeguarding audits and other review work as requested.

The group will provide an Annual report to DSAP of key themes and improvements which have arisen due to quality assurance activities. The report will form part of the Annual report to Diocesan Synod.

4. Quality Assurance Review Group Members

The Quality Assurance Review group will consist of the following:

- Independent members from DSAP
- Representative from Local Authority area

5. Timescales

The Quality Assurance Review Group will conduct reviews throughout the year and the group will meet with the DSA twice a year on dates to be agreed.

DSAP sits four times a year and the Quality Assurance Review Group will provide an agreed report to DSAP at those meetings.

¹ A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18

² In their policies and procedures, our statutory partners have moved away from the terminology of 'vulnerable adults' towards 'adults at risk of harm', usually shortened to 'adults at risk'.

Diocesan and National Safeguarding Context and Policies

The Church of England is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church and to building a safer church for all. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

It affirms the 'whole Church' approach to safeguarding; that everyone who comes into contact with children, young people and adults, has a role to play.

This work is based on six safeguarding commitments identified in Promoting a Safer Church (*The Church of England Safeguarding policy for children, young people and adults 2017*):

1. Promoting a safer environment and culture
2. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church
3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
4. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
6. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

These policy commitments are guided by the following five foundations:

1. Gospel
2. Human rights and the law
3. Core principles
4. Good safeguarding practice
5. Learning from the past

This document is supported by the following detailed practice guidance and reference documents, designed to ensure church officers and church bodies follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice:

- Parish Safeguarding Handbook (2018)
- Past Cases Review 2 Protocol and Practice Guidance
- Responding to safeguarding concerns or allegations that relate to Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults practice guidance (2018)
- Responding to, assessing and managing concerns or allegations against church officers practice guidance (2017)
- Responding well to domestic abuse practice guidance (2017)
- Responding well to those who have been sexually abused practice guidance (2011)
- Safer Recruitment practice guidance (2016)
- Safer Recruitment – Permission to Officiate practice guidance

- Training and development practice guidance (2019)
- Guidance: Identifying and reporting Safeguarding serious incidents to the Charity Commission (August 2019)
- Key Roles and responsibilities of church office holders and bodies practice guidance (2017)

The Diocese of Peterborough and Peterborough Cathedral have adopted all of the Church of England safeguarding policies and practice guidance.³

All guidance and policy statements are available from:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance>

At all times the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount. Alongside the diocesan safeguarding policies there are also statutory guidelines which must be adhered to. These include:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

These guidelines set the responsibilities for all agencies working with children and young people and includes guidance for the voluntary sector and faith communities which must be adhered to.

The Care Act 2014

The purpose of this document was to set forth the expectations and responsibilities for carers and people being cared for across the United Kingdom.

Included in the Care Act are six principles of safeguarding. These principles are intended to form a core set of standards for anyone who has a responsibility for safeguarding adults at risk.

These principles are reflected in the Church of England's safeguarding practice guidance and form the principles detailed below.

³ Under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, all authorised clergy, bishops, archdeacons, licensed readers and lay workers, church wardens and PCCs must have 'due regard' to safeguarding policy and guidance issued by the House of Bishops.

Appendix 2. Previous External Quality Assurance Reviews

External audit of the Diocese of Peterborough and Peterborough Cathedral safeguarding provisions

The national church has set up a programme of four yearly external audit. The body currently responsible for undertaking these audits is the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). The audit for the Diocese of Peterborough took place in 2016. The audit identified 16 considerations for the Diocese and an action plan was drawn up in response to these and were managed through DSAP. Both the Audit Report and Action Plan are available on the diocesan website.

The audit for Peterborough Cathedral is due to take place in November 2021

Past Cases Reviews

The Diocese has undertaken three reviews of personnel files, which took place in 2008, 2014 and 2019. These are known as Past Case Reviews (PCR)

The 2008 PCR was undertaken by an Independent Reviewer with safeguarding knowledge and experience. A 'Known Case List 1' was completed, which identified 35 cases involving church officers or persons of concern.

In 2014 a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor from another Diocese reviewed all deceased clergy files. Any concerns were raised with the DSA and were progressed.

In 2017, following weaknesses being identified in the PCR's undertaken nationally, a review of the quality of PCR's was commissioned by the national church. This work was undertaken by an Independent Scrutiny Team led by Sir Roger Singleton. The review identified that the Diocese of Peterborough did not need to repeat their 2008 PCR.

In 2019, the national church instructed dioceses to undertake a further review which is known as Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2). The review was to be carried out independently with each Diocese choosing a reviewer or reviewers from an approved list. This diocese had their review completed in 2019 and the Independent Reviewers highlighted to the national church the following: *This was an excellent review with all targets having been achieved. Would recommend Peterborough as an example to other Dioceses of Good Practice.*

Appendix 3. Internal DSA Safeguarding Review Processes

Casefiles

Casework is monitored in a number of ways. Every week the DSA reviews every open case to ensure they are: being progressed expeditiously. Actions are set where necessary.

The DSA teams work falls into three main categories: 1. Casework and provision of information and advice; 2. Safeguarding training and development and 3. Safer church policy and practice guidance. Statistics relating to the workload is submitted to each DSAP meeting.

Since July 2017, closed casefiles are reviewed by independent members of the DSAP and actions set as appropriate. As well as the casefile these reviews can include: Risk Management Plans, worship agreements or Core Group Meetings, dependent on the type of case being reviewed. Any concerns are raised with the DSA. A report is presented to the DSAP panel

Archdeacons' Articles of Enquiry / Safeguarding Annual Report

Every year the archdeacons send a number of written questions to all of the churchwardens in the Diocese.

A set of safeguarding questions have been included. More recently, following the introduction of a Safeguarding Parish Audit, those responding to the Articles of Enquiry have had the option to indicate that their Audit has been returned to the Diocese already. A Dashboard App is currently being progressed and monitored across the Diocese, with the aim being to convert as many from a paper audit to the App. Updates are provided to DSAP.

Annual Report to Diocesan Synod

Diocesan Synod is the policy and strategy making body for the Diocese. The DSA submits an Annual Report to the Diocesan Synod meeting, held in Spring. This report covers progress with the implementation of strategy, along with other major developments during the year, and also provides an overview of safeguarding structure and personnel, casework, implementation in church settings and training.

The DSA normally attends the meeting bi-annually to provide a presentation and address any questions that arise from the report.

Training

Attendance at safeguarding training by church officers is monitored. Those who have a Bishops License do not have their License renewed if they have not attended the training.

Evaluation forms are available at every training event and feedback is read by the DSA. Changes to the training presentations are made where appropriate or fed back to the National Safeguarding Team.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

DBS checks are progressed by Lead Recruiters. Thirtyone:eight complete the checks on behalf of the Diocese and Cathedral.

The DSA conducts weekly checks on the portal to ascertain whether there are any DBS certificates that require viewing. If there are then actions are set and the matter progressed.

Complaints

Complaints received under the diocesan complaints procedure are reported to DSAP on an annual basis.