

Safeguarding Annual Report 2015

Introduction

This report covers Diocesan safeguarding activity for the calendar year 2015. It shows the extent of this work in parishes in the Diocese, supported by staff at Diocesan Church House. It does not deal with safeguarding work in church schools though links are maintained with Diocesan Education staff for cases where both parish and church school are involved.

Policy issues

The strengthened national safeguarding team issued several documents as Practice Guidance in June. These covered *Safer Recruitment*, *Risk Assessment*, *Responding to Serious Situations*, *Safeguarding Records* and *Religious Communities*. These are not formally House of Bishops policies but are commended by them to Dioceses and parishes. In the case of religious communities, the guidance applies to those registered with the Advisory Council on the Relations of Bishops & Religious Communities; they are not, however, the direct responsibility of the Diocese, though they are encouraged to consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser on relevant issues. (We considered surveying them for compliance but decided not to when we learned that the national church will be doing so.) We anticipate that a similar approach will be adopted in respect of cathedrals, theological colleges and Royal Peculiars.

An additional piece of Practice Guidance was issued in December: *Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework*. This raises considerable implications which are discussed below.

The national Quality Assurance programme now includes an independent audit of safeguarding practice in all Dioceses, on a rolling programme. This Diocese will be audited in 2017.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, chaired by Hon. Dame Lowell Goddard and known informally as the Goddard Inquiry, began its work in the autumn. The Archbishop of Canterbury made a formal request for the Church of England to be considered early in its proceedings. At the time of writing (March 2016) the Church has appeared once before the Inquiry. In the Diocese we have, following national guidance, set up a working group to consider the implications for our practice. At the moment this has mainly involved checking records. A project to read files for all deceased clergy and clergy out of ministry is in progress and should be completed by mid 2016.

We continue to keep the guidance and resources on the safeguarding pages on the Diocesan website up to date. After considerable discussion at the Board of Mission two guidance documents on making safeguarding records were issued: *Recording Safeguarding Issues* is based on the national guidance set out in a practical form, while the *Model policy on recording pastoral encounters* offers but does not prescribe a good practice model which meets the recommendations of one of the Chichester reports. These have now been tested in training and have been well received. Other guidance notes have been issued or updated as required but none have been as controversial as those on recording.

In the autumn we formally combined our steering groups on safeguarding children and safeguarding vulnerable adults into a Safeguarding Panel with new terms of reference. The agendas of the two groups had merged to the point that separate groups were no longer required. We have also appointed an independent chair, Howard Llewellyn, who took up his role from January 2016. And we have set up a Case Review Group under the Panel. This will meet four times a year and will scrutinize the handling of safeguarding cases in the Diocese.

Compliance of parishes with Diocesan safeguarding policies

Once again we asked parishes to complete a monitoring return on their implementation of Diocesan safeguarding policies. The questionnaire is modified each year so direct comparisons across years are not possible. The results are set out below

	Yes	No
Reviewed policy in last year	227	76
Work with children or vulnerable adults	174	112
Messy church ¹	49	136
Report by Parish Safeguarding officer to PCC in last year	120	58
Safer recruitment	139	32
Employed youth, children's, family or pastoral care worker	47 ²	
Training in safeguarding in last three years ³	107	52
Out of date DBS checks	244 ⁴	
Workers given good practice guide	118	31

Notes

1. Messy church is considered to be work with children even though children will usually be accompanied by their parents as they may do some activities apart from them.
2. This is the number of employing parishes. The number of workers is 71: 67 in some kind of work with children and 4 pastoral care workers with adults.
3. 1645 actual individuals are reported as having been trained in the last three years. We also how asked how the training was given. This is the breakdown of the responses by number of parishes:

Diocesan trainer	32
Diocesan materials locally delivered	34
Statutory sector course	25
Voluntary sector course	40
Other, including on-line	37
Total	168

This total is higher than the total response given above (107 parishes). This discrepancy appears to be because some individuals attended training not organised through the church.

4. This is the total number of out of date checks reported, not the number of parishes reporting them.

This return was discussed at the Safeguarding Panel in February 2011. The main issue was the poor rate of return from parishes. The following recommendations were made for the monitoring return in 2016:

1. The DSA to write to area deans and lay chairs, copies to bishops and archdeacons, to emphasize the importance of this and ask them to put it on their agendas and to encourage compliance in future.
2. Future returns to be sent to incumbents, with a copy to parish secretaries and parish safeguarding officers.
3. The importance of completing this return to be emphasized in safeguarding training for churchwardens, when this is introduced.
4. Churches which provide Messy Church should be advised to appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer if they have not already done so.

DBS checks

We continue to recommend Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS) as our Registered Body for DBS checks. Three parishes use another Registered Body. Figures for 2015 are set out below, with the two previous years for comparison:

	2013	2014	2015
Total no DBS checks processed	1638	1757	1991
Total no blemished DBS checks	15	13	25
Total no in which further safeguarding action was required	2	2	6

Note This figure is made up from (i) clergy and parish volunteers who are handled on our behalf by Churches Agency for Safeguarding; and (ii) applications from parishes which use other Registered Bodies and notify us of their figures. There has been a 13% increase in applications since last year. The applications in respect of four blemished checks were withdrawn when a copy of the DBS certificate was requested.

Churches Agency for Safeguarding have also provided a useful breakdown of the applications they have handled. This is a smaller figure than the total number, so is shown in a separate table:

Paid workers		Volunteers	
Working with Children only	47	Working with Children only	1112
Working with Vulnerable Adults only	6	Working with Vulnerable Adults only	109
Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults	215	Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults	459
Total no. of paid workers	268	Total no. of volunteers	1680

Total no. of applications	1948
No. of blemished Disclosures ¹	17

¹These are blemished Disclosures notified via E-bulk only so lower than the overall total.

Comment

There has been a considerable rise in the overall number of checks requested. Among volunteers the rise has been from 623 to 1112 for work with children and from 52 to 109 for work with vulnerable adults. It is not possible to know whether this reflects an actual increase in work undertaken or better take-up of Safer recruitment guidance. There has also been a slight increase in the proportion of blemished disclosures notified.

Safeguarding activity on individual cases

The following tables are based on the return to the national church, though to facilitate comparisons across years I have retained the same format as in previous years.

Concerns about risks to children (including allegations and cases where risks are not current)

	2013	2014	2015
Total number of concerns received	41	51	47
Number of concerns relating to postholders / employees / official volunteers	10	13	11
Number referred to the Church by external non-statutory body	1	5	5
Number referred to the Church by statutory (child protection) authorities	3	7	4
Number referred to statutory authorities by the Church	22	31	32
Number referred to DBS barring service	2	0	0
Number referred for further church-based action as below, either at local or Diocesan level :	9	2	5
(i) pastoral care only			
(ii) pastoral care and safeguarding action (e.g. assessment; discipline; agreement/contract; referral for counselling)	4	8	17

Comment

A parent reported that his child had been alone with a helper who had offered him a chocolate saying 'it will be our secret'. He considered it was possibly grooming. This had to be reported to the local authority and investigated by them. It turned out to be simply a misjudgement but this shows the dangers of making oneself vulnerable to allegations.

Concerns about risks to adults (including allegations and cases where risks are not current)

	2013	2014	2015
Total number of concerns received	18	18	18
Number of concerns relating to postholders / employees / official volunteers	6	6	2
Number referred to the Church by external non-statutory body	0	1	0
Number referred to the Church by statutory (adult protection) authorities	0	1	0
Number referred to statutory authorities by the Church	5	7	10
Number referred to DBS barring service	0	0	0
Number referred for further church-based action as below, either at local or diocesan level			
(i) pastoral care only	8	9	6
(ii) pastoral care and safeguarding action (e.g. assessment; discipline; agreement/contract; referral for counselling)	2	2	6

Case example

An elderly retired professional appeared to be financially exploited. She was also in the early stages of dementia. Her parish priest contacted the police who went round promptly. This was followed up with a referral to the local authority adult protection service.

Comment

There were a number of cases of known or apparent mental health. Concerns about possible financial exploitation are increasingly being picked up.

Management of those who present a risk

The figures below show the numbers of those known to have convictions of offences against children and who, under national church policy, have signed an agreement governing their involvement in church life. Some others are under similar agreements and are included in these figures.

Agreements	2013	2014	2015
Total number at 1 January 2015	16	21	19
Number of new agreements during 2015	5	2	3
Number of agreements reviewed at any stage during 2015	14	7	11

Comment

Four people left the church or the Diocese during the year. The police are notified when agreements lapse. Five agreements were overdue for renewal at the end of the year. Reminders are sent but sometimes there are delays due to turnover of staff.

Enquiries

Enquiries are logged under this heading if they do not fall into one of the following categories: case referrals or enquiries relating to them; requests for training or training materials; queries about filling in the monitoring return; notifications of parish officers; enquiries from colleagues in DCH; national issues not directly relating to the Diocese; enquiries relating to continuing projects reported separately. 'No name' consultations about cases are included here but are now included in case numbers in the return to the national church.

	2013	2014	2015
Enquiries	163	190	249

Comment

There is a steady increase in the number of enquiries received. Many of these are relatively routine but a serious case be received at any time.

Authorised listeners

Authorised listeners are people who can offer to listen to the concerns of adults survivors of child abuse and help them to consider a way forward. It is not a counselling role and the involvement is relatively brief. It is national church policy that all Dioceses should offer this service. A recruitment campaign for suitable candidates was conducted in Autumn 2015. Shortlisting and training was completed in early 2016 with a view to going live after Easter.

Training

Parochial clergy

Ten sessions were offered in 2015, each with 30 places, making a total of 300 places. These were offered to parochial clergy and also to employed children's, youth and family workers. The venues were distributed around the Diocese. The actual attendance was 257. Recent figures suggest that 278 remain to be trained. Ten sessions, with a total of 300 places, are planned for 2016. This should be enough for all remaining parochial clergy, together with some places for employed youth, children's and family workers and refreshers for those whose training was over three years ago.

LLM training

Two sessions were provided with a total of 60 places, which were all taken up. Around 70 still require training and two sessions will be provided in 2016, which should meet this need.

Ordinands and LLMs in training

One session was provided with 20 places. One session will probably be needed in 2016.

Curates

One session was provided as part of the Hard Skills programme.

SSMs

No specific training has been provided for this group in 2015, 57 have so far attended training. The main group comes to around 111. In 2016 some evening and weekend training is being arranged to meet the need of those who cannot attend on weekdays.

PTOs

There are over 500 clergy with PTO in the Diocese. No specific programme has been offered to them, although one or two have asked to attend the main clergy programme. We are still considering how best to meet this need.

Parishes

Ten training sessions on safeguarding children were provided to parishes by our team of voluntary trainers. We provide model parish training materials and these were revised during 2015. These are used by the volunteer trainers and have also been offered to parishes who have a local trainer. Over the last three years 34 parishes report having used these materials.

Training in the future

New Practice Guidance on *Safeguarding Learning and Development* was agreed by the House of Bishops on 15 December 2015. This follows extensive piloting of training materials in a number of Dioceses, though not this one. It considerably raises the expectations on Dioceses and others:

- All those with the bishop's licence must first have attended safeguarding training.
- All training sessions should have two leaders, one of whom should be a skilled listener (such as an Authorised Listener¹), as some delegates will themselves be survivors.
- There will be a nationally provided suite of materials, though local adaptation is permitted. Trainers should themselves be trained in delivering these.
- A wider range of people need to be trained. This includes all those with the bishop's licence, including PTO clergy, churchwardens and chaplains.
- There is a full curriculum and minimum time requirements. The main programme requires a minimum contact time of 6 hours, i.e. a whole day as opposed to our current half day.
- In addition five specialist modules should be offered: recruitment, pastoral care (including confidentiality and confession), domestic abuse, survivors and offenders. Each should last 2½ hours. Modules can be combined, or, in certain circumstances, reduced.
- Additional resources will be required in Dioceses to deliver this programme.
- Clergy and relevant others will be required under law and canon² to have regard to the guidance.

The existing programme will be run in 2016. During 2016 a scoping exercise will be undertaken to estimate the number of people requiring the new programme and how best to deliver it. We expect to introduce it from the beginning of 2017, or earlier if possible. We do not expect to provide safeguarding training or advice to church schools; we are currently checking the position in relation to chaplains in secular institutions.

Website

The safeguarding pages on the website are usually updated monthly. Hit figures for 2015 are as follows:

¹ Authorised Listeners are specially recruited and trained people who are available to those who as adults disclose sexual abuse when a child. It is national policy that every Diocese should have such a team. This is set out, with relevant background, in *Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused*, House of Bishops 2011. In this Diocese we are currently recruiting a team of Authorized Listeners.

² Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2015, currently completing the parliamentary process, and Amending Canon No.34.

Topic	2015	2014	2013	2012
Home page	4,420	3,432	3,190	1,774
Forms, policies and practice guides	3,419	2,491	2,058	1,116
Safeguarding Handbook	1,607	1,442		
Safeguarding starter pack	1,088	963	795	794
DBS	820	577	245*	343
National church policies	176	168	206	185
Newsletter	171	165		
Government documents	200	210	233	165

*2013 figure is for six months as this site was set up in mid year.

Howard Llewellyn, Independent Chair, Safeguarding Panel

Stephen Barber, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

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