

SAFEGUARDING AUDIT ACTION PLAN- Diocese Response

Recommendation 1: *The senior management of the diocese in liaison with the DSA and chair of the diocesan safeguarding management group to develop a plan to integrate safeguarding into all aspects of the responsibilities of the diocese.*

Diocese response:

- An overarching strategy which clearly sets out the commitment of the Bishop and the responsibilities of all those with leadership responsibilities has been approved by the Safeguarding Group and Bishop's Council.
- Regular meetings between the DSA and the identified safeguarding lead have been arranged
- All communications need to be clear about what is expected of each member of the Diocese. This recommendation will be monitored through the Communications group.
- The need to change culture within the Diocese is acknowledged and is being actively addressed. The needs of the victim are recognised as being paramount and a number of related policies and procedures are in place or being introduced which will support this.
- One early step towards changing culture is a Diocese-wide Archdeacons' Visitation in the Cathedral which will, unusually, be addressed by the Bishop. One major aim of this is to underscore that robust safeguarding procedures are essential in every parish.
- A safeguarding communication strategy has been agreed at Bishops Council and will be implemented and monitored through the Communications Group.
- The Diocese is in the process of contracting with a national organization which will process and manage online DBS applications.

In addition to the above specific responses, the process described below to manage the receipt, consideration and response to national guidance has been agreed. This will ensure that decisions are appropriately considered, assessed, actioned and communicated.

On receipt of national guidance:

- 1. The DSA will consider the implications for the Diocese*
- 2. The DSA will then meet with the Deputy Diocesan Secretary, the person in Bishop's staff group designated with lead responsibility for safeguarding and the relevant functional head to consider the implications of implementation*
- 3. A decision will be made as to which group or functional head owns the policy and is to be held responsible for implementation, evaluation and subsequent review*
- 4. The Communication Group will consider how the policy can be best communicated across the Diocese*
- 5. The DSMG will be briefed re the policy and arrangements for implementation*

Recommendation 2: *Safeguarding to be on the agenda of each Ministerial Development Review, Archdeacons' Articles of Enquiry and Archdeacons' visitations*

Diocese response:

The Director of Learning, discipleship and Ministry Team and Bishop's staff lead for safeguarding will ensure that necessary consideration is given to this recommendation.

Safeguarding has now been included in Archdeacons' visitations and Articles of Enquiry.

Recommendation 3: *The senior management group to address the needs of children for advocacy so that the means by which this is to be provided is agreed, commissioned and communicated within the diocese*

Diocese response:

If a case arises with a child involved the DSA will refer it to the police and whichever other statutory agencies are necessary. We will then take advice from those agencies as to what the diocese needs do in relation to the child. If for whatever reason the statutory agencies are unable to provide appropriate support and ask us to do it then we will look for a specialist third party agency to meet that need.

Recommendation 4: *The diocese to develop local procedures for both complaints and whistleblowing, which clearly distinguish these processes, but provide clarity around the distinction between a complaint and a safeguarding concern*

Diocese response:

This is in hand. Separate policies are being developed and will shortly be introduced across the diocese

Recommendation 5: *Senior management to give consideration to the amount of administrative support provided to the DSA as well how this is provided, so that the appropriate level of confidentiality is provided. Consideration may wish to be given to looking at alternative ways to provide the DBS functions, so as to free administration support time for the DSA.*

Diocese response:

Three areas of current work are being pursued, which that will help to release admin capacity that can be applied to support safeguarding:

1. The Diocese is about to move to online DBS applications which will remove a significant amount of work from the person whose role it is to support the DSA and this will allow a greater level of day to day support to be offered.
2. The diocese has procured, and is now rolling out, an online course booking system that will reduce the time taken to process safeguarding course bookings.
3. A new post 'Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer' has been created which will add capacity to the safeguarding function overall.

Recommendation 6: Senior management to consider how to effectively communicate the policy prohibiting the appointment of individuals prior to receipt of references and DBS checks and what steps are required to check compliance with this in the future.

Diocese response:

The following action has been taken:

- The PSR workshops in 2016 will be focusing on Safer Recruitment.
- A system of parish audits is being developed to ensure parishes are engaging fully and effectively with safeguarding requirements.
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Recommendation 7: DBS system within the diocese to be simplified so that there is one central route for it to be achieved. It would be learning from elsewhere what works well e.g Blackburn, who have contracted the service out.

Diocese response:

This is now in hand. A contract has been set with a third party provider endorsed by the national church to process all DBS checks within the diocese.

Recommendation 8: Senior management to agree a training strategy which scopes the extent of need over an agreed time (3 years) and sets out plans to meet the need.

Diocese response:

A 3 year training plan which meets the requirements of the recently agreed National Safeguarding Practice Guidance has been developed in accordance with the Learning and Development Practice Guidance issued in Jan 2016. This was approved by DSMG and presented to Bishops Council in May 2016. This is in line with the timeframes provided by the National Safeguarding Team.