

Keeping us Safe



Suzy steps into Safeguarding

The newest member of our Diocesan Safeguarding Team hasn't had far to travel to take on her new role.

Suzy Fitcher, who was the Safeguarding Officer at Sarum Academy and lives near Salisbury, has been appointed as our new Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

She will share the Diocesan Safeguarding portfolio with Team Leader Jem Carter when Heather Bland retires at the end of the year.

Sarum Academy is a Church of England school, so Suzy already has links with the Diocese, particularly as a member of the steering group led by the Board of Education regarding Mental Health and Wellbeing.

A trained counsellor, Suzy has a strong background in safeguarding, counselling and working with children and young people and in her past work has drawn on her skills and experience in these fields, particularly in supporting and advocating for survivors of abuse.

Welcoming his new colleague, Jem said:

"I am delighted to be working with Suzy who brings with her a strong background of safeguarding within the education sector – I have no doubt she will be a tremendous asset to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team."

While Steve Long, Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, said:

"I am really pleased that Suzy has joined the Safeguarding Team. She was the stand out candidate during the interview process. Her safeguarding background and in particular her experience of supporting and working with victims and survivors will further strengthen what is a professional and effective team."

The role of our Diocesan Safeguarding Team has been shared successfully between our present senior DSA Heather - a registered social worker who worked in local authorities for over 33 years and who has been with the Diocese for nearly 7 years working Monday to Wednesday each week - and Jeremy Carter, who was a Detective Superintendent Head of Crime with Wiltshire Police, working Tuesday to Friday.

Suzy will take over from Heather, working Monday to Thursday to ensure that best practice in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is observed throughout the Diocese and the Channel Islands.

Diocesan Secretary David Pain said:

"Heather has been a wonderful leader in our safeguarding work and we will really miss her as she leaves the Diocesan team. Our thanks and prayers go with her as she embarks on the next stage of her life.

"We welcome Suzy and look forward to working with her as she joins the safeguarding team."

Suzy, along with Jem, will be working co-operatively with the police, local authorities and other bodies in cases where it is suspected that a child, young person or adult at risk of abuse has suffered abuse or is at risk of suffering abuse as well as giving advice, information and support to victims or survivors of abuse, ensuring the Diocese responds well to those who have suffered abuse.

Part of the role of our DSAs is to work with Parish Safeguarding Officers to ensure all our Safeguarding policies, procedures and guidelines are continually reviewed, updated, and fully implemented across the Diocese.

Both Jem and Suzy advise and support the Bishop, lay staff, clergy and parishes in safeguarding issues and cases and, in collaboration with the communications team, promote awareness of safeguarding issues with children and vulnerable adults.

Suzy is married with a young daughter. In her spare time she enjoys learning to garden at her allotment.