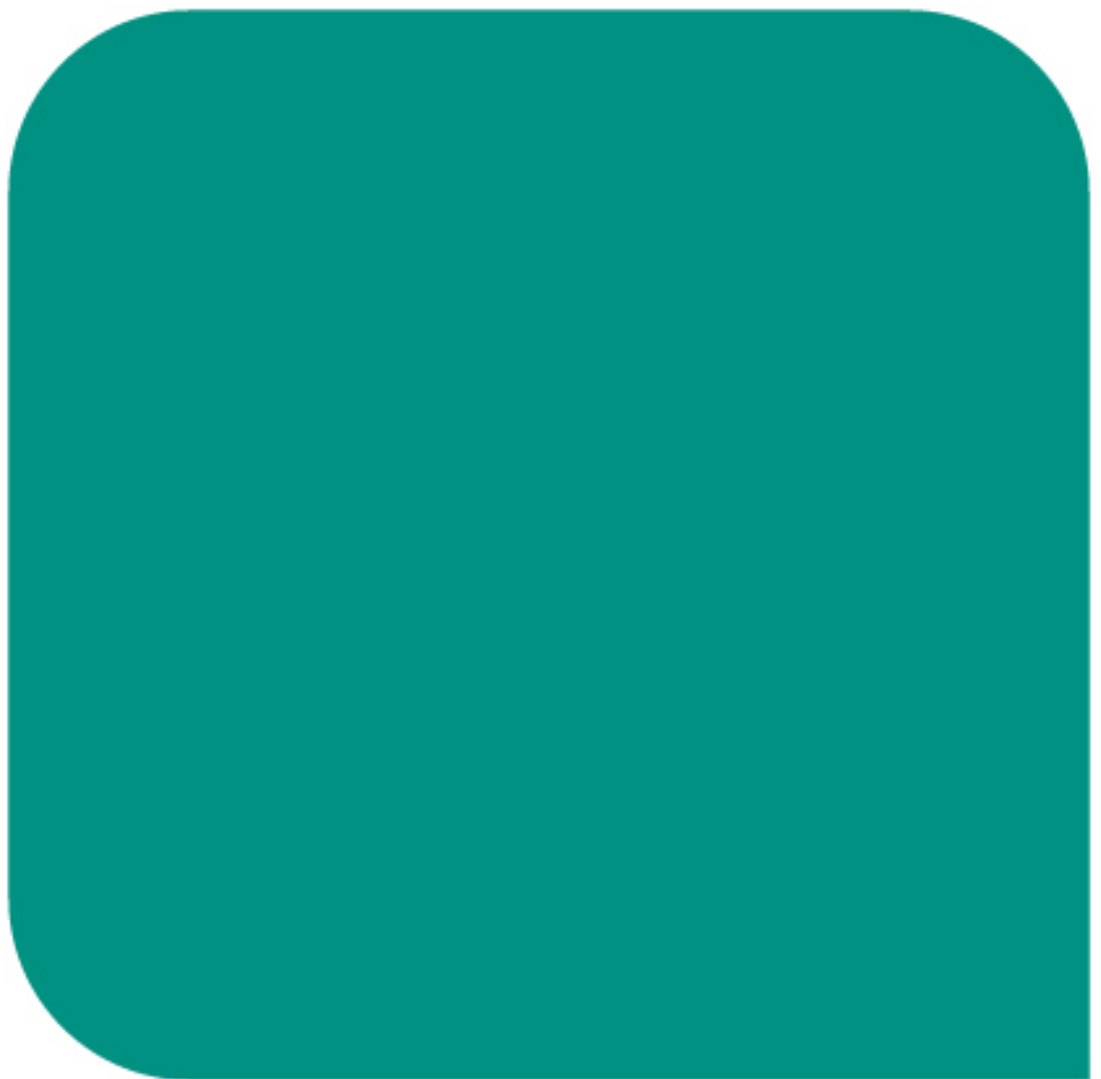




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# **Southwell & Nottingham diocese independent safeguarding audit (June 2016)**



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**Independent auditing of diocesan  
safeguarding arrangements for  
the Church of England**

**Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham**

Audit undertaken 7, 8 and 9 June 2016

**Lucy Erber, Hugh Constant and Edi Carmi**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CONTEXT

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has been commissioned to undertake an audit of the safeguarding arrangements of each diocese of the Church of England. The aim of these audits is to work together to understand the safeguarding journey of each diocese to date and to support the continuing improvements being made. Following pilot audits of four dioceses in 2015, an agreed audit model is being applied nationally during 2016 and 2017.

The audit of the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham was carried out by Lucy Erber (the lead auditor for this diocese) and Hugh Constant on 7, 8 and 9 June 2016. This report was written by Lucy Erber with support from Hugh Constant and quality assurance was provided by Edi Carmi, the overall lead auditor for the project.

## 1.2 THE DIOCESE

The Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham contains a diverse population of one million people, covering urban, semirural and rural areas. Geographically it covers all of the county of Nottinghamshire and part of South Yorkshire. It was founded in 1884 and covers some 847 square miles, includes 307 churches (grouped into nine deaneries), 70 church schools, 183 clergy, and a considerable number of unpaid volunteers. Originally called the Diocese of Southwell, the name of the Diocese was changed to Southwell & Nottingham in 2005 in order that its geographical location could be more easily identified. There are a total of 18,900 members on the electoral rolls of churches, which are supported by area administrators and a mission centre in Southwell called Jubilee House, where advisers, bishops and other staff support the work of the churches and the clergy on the ground.

The current Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham took up his role in May 2015. There are two Archdeacons for the Diocese: The Archdeacon of Newark generally covering the north of the Diocese and the Archdeacon of Nottingham for the city and south.

The Cathedral and Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary – popularly known as Southwell Minster – is in Southwell very close to Jubilee House. A new Dean has recently been appointed and she will take up her appointment later on this year.

The Diocese co-locates with the following local authorities: Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the southernmost end of the former South Yorkshire County Council.

In 2015 the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) dealt with 68 referrals, of which 18 related to vulnerable adults. Six new Safeguarding Children Agreements were put into place, making a total of 18. The DSA is employed by a local charity, Family Care, which has very long, and historic links with Southwell and Nottingham, having originally been the arm of the Diocese which gave support to families in poverty, children born to single mothers etc.

### 1.3 STRUCTURE OF REPORT

This report is divided into:

- Introduction
- An overview of what is working well, what needs to work better and a summary of considerations for the diocese.
- The findings of the auditors: these are linked to the safeguarding requirements for faith groups set out in section 11 of the Children Act.
- Considerations for the Diocese are listed, where relevant, under each finding section.
- An appendix sets out the review process

## 2 OVERVIEW

This section provides the headline findings from the review in terms of what is working well and the areas for improvement. The detail behind these appraisals are in the Findings in section 3.

### 2.1 WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

- There is a clear understanding and buy-in, at the most senior level and led by the Bishop, of safeguarding within the Diocese.
- There is a strong and robust relationship between the Diocese and Family Care.
- Safeguarding work is undertaken in line with national guidance, policy and practice.
- There are close working relationships with those holding roles that are not directly concerned with safeguarding, such as the communications lead, the Diocesan registrar and the Bishop's Chaplain.
- There was a willingness to both consider and use the Clergy Disciplinary Measures (CDM) when members of the clergy had been the subject of safeguarding concerns.
- The need to increase the safeguarding training capacity had recently been identified, and has been acted on promptly with the addition of an extra half post and sessional workers.
- Questions in regard to safeguarding are included in interviews for members of the clergy, and in Ministerial Development Reviews.
- Safeguarding is a standing agenda item on the Bishop's Management Team Meeting.
- Safeguarding training is well organised and delivered, and attracted highly complementary comments from the Parish Focus Group.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) has good working relationships with all relevant partner agencies, evidenced through interviews, case files and feedback from other agencies.
- The DSA has good working relationships with other DSAs through her membership of the DSA regional network, joint work with a DSA on cases and through other DSAs undertaking Type B Risk Assessments on behalf of the Diocese.
- Case files were tidy, well ordered and sub-divided. It was easy to find information on them and find out what the concern was, who was involved, and what had happened.



- Interventions were timely and effective.
- Proactive use of guidance and procedures was clearly demonstrated within the case files.
- Safeguarding Agreements (SAs) were of a very high standard: they were clear, concise and collaborative; the most suitable, rather than nearest church, was sought for a prisoner settling in the diocesan area; reviews were held more regularly if this was required.
- The DSA is in the process of setting up a Focus Group from the parishes, to both promote the service that she delivers, and also to find out what people's experiences are of it.

## **2.2 WHAT NEEDS TO WORK BETTER?**

- The Cathedral needs to be more closely involved, at a strategic level, in safeguarding activity.
- With an ever developing awareness of safeguarding, and greater expectations of the safeguarding service, it will be important that the current service is able to continue to deliver expected requirements.
- There have been many recent changes to members of staff and the Bishop's Management Team, and there will be more changes to come. It will be important that the positive aspects of change are able to prevail over some of the more negative.
- Adult Safeguarding awareness needs further development – whilst acknowledging some good work already being undertaken in this area.
- Stronger links with the safeguarding leads from other major faiths represented in the Diocese need to be developed. It is acknowledged that there is already a good working relationship with the safeguarding lead in the Catholic Church, who shares an office with the DSA.
- Although a complaints procedure and a whistleblowing procedure are in place they need to be more proactively promoted, so that people know when, and how, to use them.
- Although it would seem that the name and contact details of the DSA is well known and accessible, further work could be done to promote the role that she undertakes, such as through a newsletter.
- Although casefiles were maintained to a high standard, a small number did not have a completed front sheet.

## 2.3 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DIOCESE

The term 'considerations' instead of recommendations is used in the SCIE Learning Together methodology. The reason for this is that it is important that each diocese decides exactly how to implement the improvements indicated; this is likely to be different from place to place. Some considerations will be around taking specific types of action, whilst others will be alerting the diocese to develop their safeguarding planning in the future.

These considerations are to be found at the end of each of the sections in the findings, where applicable. They are listed below for ease of reference, but the detail behind each of these is in the findings section.

*Continue to pursue representation from Adult's Social Care or a Local Safeguarding Adults Board on the Safeguarding Commissioning Group (SCG).*

*Invite the Bishop's Chaplain to be a member of the SCG.*

*A representative from Southwell Minster to be recruited onto the SCG.*

*Diocesan Synod to consider the national set of safeguarding policies (2015) and formally adopt them.*

*Keep under continual review the capacity of the safeguarding service to enable it to deliver its responsibilities as efficiently, and to the highest standards, as possible.*

*Keep under review the effects of the many changes in staff and senior clergy to ensure it is managed in the best possible and most positive way in order that it adds further value to the safeguarding service.*

*Consider the need for investment to update IT and databases in order that they can be as efficient as possible.*

*Consider ways that the good practice of the safeguarding service, particularly in regard to record keeping and Safeguarding Agreements, can be shared.*

*Develop a system to cross reference when incumbents have undertaken safeguarding training between the centralised spreadsheet and their blue files.*

*Undertake a bigger review on non-clergy diocesan posts to check if DBS checks are in place, and evidenced on HR files, for roles where they are required*

*Refrain from the use of applicants' friends being used as referees in job applications.*

*Insert front sheets onto the files where they are missing.*

*Consider how best to promote the complaints procedure (including placing it on the diocesan website) so those who become involved with the service know how to complain if they are dissatisfied with their experiences of the service.*

*Initiate annual reporting of complaints regarding the handling of safeguarding issues, and their outcomes, into the SCG.*

*Formulate a plan to promote the maximum publicity for the whistleblowing policy (including placing it on the diocesan website) and, as part of this, make sure people are aware how and when to use it.*

*How to use data/information on safeguarding provided in the Articles of Enquiry to inform future planning of safeguarding services and resources.*

*Consider producing a leaflet to further promote the Authorised Listener service.*

*Consider what further ways could further promote the role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) and the safeguarding service to the parishes.*

*Consider how best to further promote adult safeguarding issues.*

*Develop stronger relationships with safeguarding leads from other major faith groups represented within the Diocese, with a view to developing an information-sharing protocol.*

*To establish whether there will be any national guidance around the development of a quality assurance process, or if this should be further progressed by the Diocese.*

## 3 FINDINGS

### 3.1 SAFEGUARDING MANAGEMENT

Safeguarding is the ultimate responsibility of the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham. The Bishop's Management Team (the Suffragan Bishop of Sherwood, Archdeacons of Nottingham and Newark, Diocesan Chief Executive, Bishop's Chaplain) are collectively responsible for safeguarding within the Diocese. It was very clear from interviews with the auditors that all were very clear about both their individual and diocesan responsibilities in regard to safeguarding. The DSA and her line manager also expressed confidence in the very high priority given to safeguarding by the management team.

The management team meets once per month and has a residential once a year. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item.

*(Reference to part 1 of S.11 audit: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the diocese. Also to part 2; The Bishop appoints a member of his senior staff to be the lead person for safeguarding.)*

### 3.2 SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR ROLES

The majority of the safeguarding service is outsourced to a local charity, Family Care. It employs, on behalf of the Diocese, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. The Diocese directly employs a Children's Ministry Advisor who as part of his role undertakes some safeguarding responsibilities in regard to training. Between the two roles they provide approximately 37 hours per week safeguarding support to the Diocese, divided as follows:

- DSA – 33 hours
- CMA – 4 hours
- Job descriptions and person specifications are in place for both roles.

The DSA is employed by a local charity, with long-standing and historic links to the Diocese, Family Care. She is based in their offices in Nottingham, as are all casefiles, records etc.

Family Care, as it exists today, has grown out of what was once the diocesan charity that supported single/unmarried mothers, those in poverty and destitution etc. Links with the Diocese continue to be very strong with the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham being Honorary President, and with considerable income for Family Care being generated from the parishes. Family Care also provide the safeguarding advisor service for the local Catholic diocese (both safeguarding advisors share the same office), an adoption service, a bereavement service for families and support for families affected by domestic abuse. The overall manager of the service, who directly line manages and supervises the DSA is a Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) registered qualified social worker, who also has a management qualification. He has over 40 years' experience, having spent half his career to date working as both a practitioner and manager in local authorities undertaking statutory social work, and the other half within the children's charitable sector.

The auditors were initially cautious of a model that delivered its main safeguarding responsibilities outside the Diocese. The concern being that safeguarding would be seen as being delivered by Family Care, thereby exonerating the Diocese from its responsibilities, and/or that the delivery of the safeguarding service and the wider responsibilities for safeguarding would be fractured and inconsistent. We found this not to be the case, and felt that this model worked very well for the Diocese, and will be demonstrating this at various points in the report.

### **The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA)**

The DSA is an HCPC-registered qualified social worker. She has experience undertaking statutory children's social work within a local authority setting, as well as being a qualified counsellor. As a qualified counsellor she has been employed in a primary and secondary school offering a counselling service to pupils.

The DSA is employed for 4.5 days per week and receives referrals, undertakes casework and risk assessments, formulates and manages Safeguarding Agreements (SAs) and delivers training.

Her role is covered by her line manager during any periods of absence.

She is directly supervised every month by her line manager, who is the Director of Family Care. During her six-month probationary period she had fortnightly supervision. The DSA told the auditors that she finds her supervision to be of a high standard, and her manager totally approachable between supervision sessions should she have an issue to discuss.

The auditors felt that the DSA delivered her casework responsibilities to a high standard (they also found this to be the case with her predecessor). It was very clear from her recording and communication that she dealt with victims and/or referrers sensitively and professionally. Her record keeping was clear and easy to follow, and she had good contacts with a range of other professionals. There was feedback just before the start of the audit from three probation officers and the Board Manager of the Nottingham Adults Safeguarding Board. All were very complimentary about the contact that they had had with the DSA (one probation officer was commenting on the previous DSA). The safeguarding agreements that she formulated were clear and concise, noting why such an agreement was required. Rather than just negotiating for the individual to attend their nearest church, the DSA also put effort into finding the best church that could accommodate the needs and risks of the individual. The auditors noted that safeguarding agreements were reviewed more regularly at key points, for example, if someone had just left prison, moved.

Several risk assessments were seen by the auditors. All were of a high standard. Most had been undertaken by the previous DSA. Two were Type B risk assessments and had been undertaken by DSA's from neighbouring dioceses. A further two had been done by the current DSA.

The DSA meets with the Bishop twice a year, but was clear if she needed to see him more regularly, or on an urgent matter, that would not be problematic. Bi-monthly meetings with both Archdeacons together are currently in the process of being diarised, at the suggestion of the Bishop. She has very regular contact with the Bishop's Chaplain, who is often the first point of contact for the Bishop.

The DSA was of the view that the Bishop and his team have a very good understanding of safeguarding, and have a very good grasp of their safeguarding responsibilities.

The DSA also attends the quarterly Safeguarding Commissioning Group meetings. She provides a report for each meeting outlining case activity, training, numbers of referral etc.

Although only being in post for one year, and following on from a highly regarded DSA, the current DSA was known, and highly respected, by members of the Focus Group. Her work was described as 'wonderful' and 'brilliant' by two members of the Focus Group, who also said that she responded quickly and efficiently to their referrals. It was clear everyone knew her name and how to make contact with her.

The DSA is also clearly respected by members of the clergy, and those she works with in the Diocese. The Safeguarding Commissioning Group Independent Chair said that the DSA's reports into the meetings were thorough and well presented.

### **The Children's Ministry Advisor (CMA)**

Approximately 0.5 days per week of the CMA's role is dedicated to organising and delivering children and adults safeguarding training, mainly with the DSA. Prior to the DBS process being outsourced to CCPAS, much of the CMA's time was also spent on this activity. He is employed directly by the Diocese, and is located in the diocesan offices in Southwell. The CMA is a trained teacher and also a Justice of the Peace (JP/Magistrate).

The CMA has undertaken his current role for several years, and due to his role in training, and, prior to that with DBS, he appears to be well known, and respected, within the Diocese.

The training that he delivers, alongside the DSA, was highly praised by members of the Focus Group, both in its content and with the fact it was viewed as easily accessible.

### **Future developments**

A 0.5 full-time equivalent post is currently being advertised for a safeguarding training manager, who will be based in Family Care, and will work alongside the CMA and the DSA. This is due to the increased expectations in regard to safeguarding training, and in recognition that the current staff are unable to absorb the extra training requirements.

#### *(Relevant Section 11 requirements:*

*Part 1: Appoint a suitably qualified diocesan safeguarding adviser, and provide appropriate financial, organisational and management support. The adviser must have full access to clergy files and other confidential material (PACG A4.5).'*

*Part 1: Ensure that the diocesan safeguarding adviser is informed of any serious safeguarding situation, including any allegation made against a member of the clergy, or anyone else holding the bishop's licence, concerning misconduct.*

*Part 6: The DSA's role is clear in the JD and person specification.*

*Part 6: The DSA has sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively; including local policy development, casework – including time for complex*

*cases, advice, liaison with statutory authorities, training (coordination and direct delivery), personal and professional development and professional registration. Communication with parishes – (newsletters, website etc.). Also administrative and managerial support arrangements, out of hours / leave cover and access arrangements (planned and unplanned) to the senior staff team (PACG A4.5).*

*Part 8: The DSA should be given access to professional supervision to ensure their practice is reviewed and improves over time.)*

### **3.3 THE SAFEGUARDING COMMISSIONING GROUP (SCG)**

There has been an independent Chair of the SCG since 2012, when the current post holder took over the role. He is well qualified and experienced to be the Chair, being a former solicitor, then circuit Judge with considerable experience in Family Court work. Aside from this role, he also currently sits on the Parole Board and is a trustee for the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) – having also previously being an advocate for this organisation.

The SCG's other members are:

- Members of the clergy: Archdeacon of Nottingham, Archdeacon of Newark
- Chief Executive of the Diocese
- DSA, CMA and Director, Family Care
- Nottinghamshire Police (Management of Sexual and Violent Offenders unit – MOSOVO)
- Child Protection Coordinator and Lead for Child Sexual Exploitation, Nottingham City Council
- The administrator from Family Care provides administration for the Chair and the Group

Thus the SCG's membership is made up of senior members of the clergy, the Chief Executive of the Diocese, staff who undertake a safeguarding role (including the DSA), and representatives of two external key agencies, and is chaired by a former Family Court judge.

Meetings are very well attended (although the Chair did say there was a period when there was a different police officer attending each meeting which meant there was a significant lack of continuity – although this has recently been addressed) with constructive input and discussion by all.

A clear Terms of Reference for the SCG is in place, and there is an annual work plan that is monitored at its meetings. The Chair feels that the role of the SCG is mainly strategic, but remains in touch with safeguarding activity through the reports presented by the DSA, which he found to be informative and helpful.

The Chair also highlighted a fairly recent situation where there were concerns about the falling numbers of members of the clergy undertaking safeguarding training. This was picked up by the SCG (it had also been picked up by the newly arrived Bishop) and was addressed promptly and satisfactorily via the involvement of the Archdeacons and the formulation of a shared monitoring record of who needed to have training and when.

In his meeting with the auditors, the Chair identified that he felt there needed to be representation on the SCG from Adult's Social Care or a Local Adults' Safeguarding Board, as well as from Southwell Minster. The auditors would agree with this, as, although the audit of case files showed that referrals are received by the DSA from the Minster, they need representation on this strategic group. Similarly, the auditors were of the view that the Bishop's Chaplain would be a useful addition to the Group as she has a crucial role in liaising closely with the DSA in safeguarding activity at a senior level.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Continue to pursue representation from Adult's Social Care or a Local Safeguarding Adults Board.*

*Invite the Bishop's Chaplain to be a member of the SCG.*

*A representative from Southwell Minster to be recruited.*

*(Relevant Section 11 requirements*

*Part 1: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the diocese; (PAGC A.4)).*

### **3.4 POLICIES, PRACTICE GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES**

Whilst the Diocese clearly works to the national set of safeguarding policies (2015), they have not been formally adopted by the Diocesan Synod, although they have been agreed by the Bishop's Management Team.

The diocesan website has direct links to the main Church of England safeguarding policies and procedures.

It was evident from recordings, risk assessments and individual interviews, etc. that Protecting all God's Child (2010) is understood and stands at the core of safeguarding work in the Diocese. Indeed, the auditors were particularly impressed by the practice of often quoting relevant sections of the guidance on case files in order to demonstrate why certain action was being taken.

Risk assessments were noted as being undertaken in line with Risk Assessment for individuals who may pose a risk to children or adults (2015).

It is very clear, from having audited case files, that the national Joint Safeguarding Records Practice Guidance (2015) has been implemented in regard to record keeping.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Diocesan Synod to consider the national set of safeguarding policies (2015) and formally adopt them.*

*(Reference to part 1 of the S. 11 audit: Ensure the diocesan synod adopts the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies, together with any additional diocesan procedures and good practice guidelines.)*



### 3.5 RESOURCES OF SAFEGUARDING SERVICE

The Diocese has recognised that with the introduction of new safeguarding training requirements they will need to increase capacity. As a result, an advertisement is currently out for a half-time safeguarding training manager, who will be based at Family Care.

The auditors were assured that the funding of safeguarding was the highest of priorities for the Diocese. This was clearly stated by the Bishop and his senior colleagues and the Chief Executive. The Director of Family Care said there was never resistance if extra funding was needed and felt that their funding for their safeguarding service was more than reasonable.

The Chief Executive told us that one of the reasons for outsourcing the safeguarding service to Family Care was because it was a social work-led organisation, with a management structure that ensures the DSA gets a good standard of professional social work supervision. He said that as this could not be satisfactorily provided from within the Diocese, the next best alternative would be a sessional arrangement, which would still not be as satisfactory as having a full-time social work manager on site.

The DSA, who works 4.5 days per week, said that at times she felt pressurised and struggled to keep her written records up to date. The Director of Family Care said that he had never had a problem when he had to check a case file when the DSA was away from work, and the auditors found files to be up to date. However, there are considerable extra pressures on DSAs at present with the expectations of the Goddard Inquiry, these audits, etc. so we felt that this situation needs to be kept under review.

Applications for DBS are outsourced to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), and this was seen as a very good, as well as helpful, service, and there are no immediate plans to change.

Whilst the auditors felt that the service was adequately resourced, with an open attitude should any further resourcing be required, it was clear that, as with many organisations today, both Family Care and the Diocese are going through many changes. Last year there was a new Bishop and DSA, one of the Archdeacons has been in post for just 18 months, a new Dean for the Cathedral is about to take up her new post, and the Director of Family Care is about to leave (although has offered to continue to supervise the DSA until a replacement is in post). Change is positive and brings new ideas and ways of doing things. However, change can also have a negative affect if not carefully managed – continuity can be lost, as well as a knowledge of the 'history' etc. We felt that this time of change needs to be acknowledged and carefully overseen by both the Diocese, Family Care and the SCG.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Keep under continual review the capacity of the safeguarding service to enable it to deliver its responsibilities as efficiently, and to the highest standards, as possible.*

*Keep under review the effects of the many changes in staff and senior clergy to ensure it is managed in the best possible and most positive way in order that it adds further value to the safeguarding service.*

*(Reference to part 6 of the S.11 audit: The DSA has sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively, including local policy development, case work, advice, liaison with statutory authorities, training, personal and professional development and professional registration.)*

## **3.6 RECORDING SYSTEMS AND IT SOLUTIONS**

Case files are kept on an electronic system, and all notes etc. are also printed off and maintained within a separate paper file. Paper files are kept securely in locked filing cabinets.

The auditors found the case files to be very well maintained, divided into clear sections, with all information easy to find and identify. Files also usually had a front sheet which gives details about the person of concern (i.e. name, address, date of birth, role within the church, etc.), who referred (and their contact details), and basic details about the nature of the referral.

Each file contained all relevant information required: case notes, copies of emails, letters, copies of any risk assessments, minutes of meetings, etc. All this information was also kept in date order.

The auditors were particularly impressed by the fact that relevant sections of the Church's safeguarding procedures were often directly quoted on the case file in order to demonstrate why certain actions were required.

Overall, case files were found to be in line with the guidance contained within Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church (2015).

A record of who has had safeguarding training, who has not, and when updating training is required is recorded in a series of spreadsheets. This was introduced last year when it was identified that there was a drop in the take-up of training, and the auditors were told this was a very helpful system that had also addressed the problem of tracking who needed to have training.

The Director of Family Care did say that he felt that there could be further investment in IT and databases in order to update the systems and increase their speed, but, aside from that, was confident that record keeping was overall of a good standard.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider the need for investment to update IT and databases in order that they can be as efficient as possible.*

*(Reference to part 1 of the S.11 audit: Provide access to the DBS checks for parishes, the Cathedral, the bishop's office and the diocesan office for those beneficed and licensed clergy, paid workers and volunteers who need to obtain disclosures.)*

### **3.7 RISK ASSESSMENTS AND SAFEGUARDING CONTRACTS / AGREEMENTS**

Good-quality risk assessments, undertaken by the DSA, were present on many case files seen by the auditors. Assessments seen were clear and concise, evaluated both current and past risk, and took into account past history and information from other agencies. Where an independent risk assessment was required, a DSA from another diocese had undertaken the assessment. Those audited were also of a good standard.

Overall, risk assessments that were seen by the auditors were undertaken at appropriate times and in line with the practice guidance: Risk Assessment for individuals who may pose a risk to children or adults (2015)

Safeguarding agreements were also of a good standard, and were clearly linked to the findings of any risk assessment undertaken.

The auditors were impressed that each safeguarding agreement seen, stated clearly the reason why such an agreement was required. The agreements were also very clear about expectations and were written in plain English.

From the agreements audited it was clear that regularity of reviews were undertaken as required for the specific situation – for an example, after an agreement had been set up for a recently released prisoner, this was reviewed within three months due to the fact that release from prison can be a stressful time for an ex-prisoner so closer monitoring is usually required.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider ways that the good practice of the safeguarding service, particularly in regard to record keeping and Safeguarding Agreements, can be shared with other dioceses and the national safeguarding team.*

*(Reference to part 1 of S. 11 audit: Provide access to a risk assessment service so the bishop and others can evaluate and manage any risk posed by individuals or activities within the Church.)*

### **3.8 TRAINING**

Training is organised by the CMA, and delivered by him and the DSA in parish settings.

The safeguarding training programme is published annually and is also on the diocesan website. Focus Group members reported that there were regular emails to advertise training, as well as to remind people booked on courses. It was even commented that for people not on email, they received regular letters advertising what training was coming up.

The Chair of the SCG said he has sat in on training and has been very impressed by the way that it has been delivered. This was backed up by members of the Focus

Group who said they found training very interesting, where something was always learnt even by people with experience of safeguarding. It was also commented that, 'there is always something on offer'.

In the middle of 2015, it had been noted that there was a decline in numbers of clergy being trained; this was promptly addressed by direct follow-up by Archdeacons to those concerned and the formulation of a tracking Excel spreadsheet where this can now be monitored.

All training will be delivered in line with the national learning and development framework with effect from September 2016. To support this new training being rolled out, a half-time safeguarding training manager post has been created and is being recruited to.

*(Reference to part 1 of S.11 audit: Select and train those who are to hold the Bishop's Licence in safeguarding matters. Provide training on safeguarding matters to parishes, the Cathedral, other clergy, diocesan organisations, including religious communities and those who hold the Bishop's licence. And to part 8: Those working closely with children, young people and adults experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect ...have safeguarding in their induction and are trained and have their training refreshed every three years.)*

### **3.9 SAFE RECRUITMENT OF CHURCH OFFICERS**

The DBS process is outsourced to CCPAS, which is held in high regard and seen to be helpful and efficient.

The auditors reviewed 11 blue files and spot checked four for lay appointments.

On the whole, the blue files were of an acceptable standard, and key documents could be easily located. Although there is now a centralised record for safeguarding training, nothing is recorded within the blue file to cross reference with the centralised system (in line with 25: Personal Files Relating to the Clergy 2013). All the blue files for clergy whose DSA files had been audited were seen, and all concerns were properly recorded on the blue file and/or noted very clearly where the other file was located, ensuring that there was a clear cross reference.

Once members of the clergy are in post, safeguarding is an area covered in their Ministerial Development Reviews (annual appraisals).

Non-clerical recruitment files were also spot checked. In two cases only two of the three references that were requested were seen on file. No evidence of a DBS was seen on any files (although mention of an application was seen on one), although in two cases they were probably not required.

In several cases references had been provided by friends, rather than previous employers or teachers/principals. The auditors felt this is not in line with safer recruitment and all references need to be from former employers/volunteer managers and/or senior school/college staff, etc.

Of particular note during the audit was a clear willingness to use the CDM on any member of the clergy whose actions or behaviour gave rise to safeguarding concerns. It was noted that this process was always considered, at very least, where there were safeguarding concerns in regard to members of the clergy.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Develop a system to cross reference when incumbents have undertaken safeguarding training between the centralised spreadsheet and their blue files.*

*Undertake a bigger review on non-clerical diocesan posts to check if DBS checks are in place, and evidenced on HR files, for roles where they are required.*

*Refrain from the use of applicants' friends being used as referees in job applications.*

*(Reference to part 7 of S.11 audit: The Diocesan Secretary has implemented arrangements in line with the House of Bishops' policy on Safer Recruitment 2015. And to part 1: Keep a record of clergy and church officers that will enable a prompt response to bona fide enquiries...where there have been safeguarding concerns, these should be clearly indicated on file.)*

## **3.10 RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS**

Eighteen cases were audited, all of which fell within the sampling recommendations laid out within the Briefing Pack to Dioceses. There had been no formal complaints in regard to how a safeguarding matter had been dealt with, so such a case could not be audited.

Initial referral information was briefly recorded on a front sheet, so it was easy to ascertain what the concern was, who had referred it and when, and what their role was.

Response to allegations was prompt, timely and appropriate, in the view of the auditors, and in line with Protecting all God's Child (2010). The timeliness of response by the DSA was also observed by some members of the Focus Group and from the feedback received from other agencies before the audit commenced.

Referral or discussion with a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services, the Police or Probation, when required, was done promptly and was clearly recorded.

The auditors did find in a couple of cases that a front sheet was missing, although finding information and a timeline from the files was not an issue.

### **Considerations for the Diocese (see also 3.11)**

*Insert front sheets onto the files where they are missing.*

## **3.11 QUALITY OF CASEWORK**

The quality of casework was undertaken to a high standard. The auditors identified the following examples within the case files:

- Each file (with the exception of a couple) had a front sheet that contained brief details of the referral, and the date, name, address, date of birth and

position of who had been referred and details of the referrer.

- Recording was clear and concise, and files were divided up between on-going recordings, letters/emails, copies of assessments, etc.
- Risk assessments were initiated when required and were of a good standard and undertaken in line with procedures (Risk Assessment for individuals who may pose a risk to children or adults (2015)).
- The DSA works closely with other relevant professionals, and liaises with the Archdeacons and Bishop's Chaplain whenever this is required. All contact is clearly recorded.
- Safeguarding agreements clearly stated why there was a need for such an agreement, involved the relevant people and were reviewed more regularly than annually, if this was required. They were clearly fit for purpose in that restrictions were reasonable, fair, and, at the same time, kept the safety of children and/or vulnerable adults as their main focus.

There are no considerations for the Diocese in relation to quality of casework

(Relevant Section 11 requirements)

*Part 1: Provide access to a risk assessment service so that the bishop or others can evaluate and manage any risk posed by individuals or activities within the Church.*

*Part 9: The Bishop / Diocesan Secretary / CX, should ensure that the Diocese has a written procedure on how to deal with serious safeguarding situations and allegations against church officers. All allegations are dealt with in line with Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers and Other Individuals Practice Guidance May 2015.*

*Part 10: The Bishop / Diocesan Secretary / CX, should ensure that all allegations are dealt with in line with Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers and Other Individuals Practice Guidance May 2015.*

*Part 11: The Bishop / Diocesan Secretary / CX, in line with should ensure that all who fall into this category are dealt with in line with Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers and Other Individuals Practice Guidance May 2015. The category is: If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children or adults, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.)*

### **3.12 COMPLAINTS**

There was a complaints procedure in place, formulated by Family Care, as the DSA who undertakes casework is employed by them. The procedure is reasonable and fit for purpose.

The auditors did view one case where the mother of a victim was very upset about the overall handling of the investigation. She had initially complained to the Diocese who had passed her on to Family Care. The DSA went to visit the mother and had a long discussion with her about her complaints. Whilst it did seem from the recording that the matter was resolved, the DSA did not mention to the mother that there was a formal procedure that could be used to look into her concerns. Of course, it could be that the mother was happy from having had the discussion with the DSA, but she should have been made aware of the complaints procedure and given the opportunity to use it, if it had been her choice.



When a complaint is made about a service, this is not necessarily a negative event. In the process of investigating complaints, lessons can be learnt, which can further improve practice and even service delivery. Annual reporting of complaints into the SCG would assist with this.

The auditors also noted that in the safeguarding section of the diocesan website there is no mention of a complaints procedure, or a link to it.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider how best to promote the complaints procedure (including placing it on the diocesan website) so those who become involved with the service know how to complain if they are dissatisfied with their experiences of the service.*

*Initiate annual reporting of complaints regarding the handling of safeguarding issues, and their outcomes, into the SCG.*

*(Reference to part 1 of S. 11 audit: Provide a complaints procedure which can be used by those who wish to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues. Also part 4: There is an easily accessible complaints procedure including reference to the Clergy Disciplinary Measures and whistleblowing procedures.)*

### **3.13 WHISTLE BLOWING**

There is a whistleblowing procedure in place, formulated by Family Care.

It is not well publicised and there is no mention of it, or link to it, on the diocesan website.

The procedure needs to be well publicised and known by people down to parish level, so that if they have a concern, but feel worried about discussing it, they can use this procedure

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Formulate a plan to promote the maximum publicity for the whistleblowing policy (including placing it on the diocesan website) and, as part of this, make sure people are aware how and when to use it.*

*(Reference to part 4 of S. 11 audit: Whistleblowing arrangements are in place and addressed in training.)*

### **3.14 MONITORING OF SAFEGUARDING IN PARISHES AS PART OF ARCHDEACON'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

The auditors interviewed both Archdeacons together. Between them they have the responsibility to ensure, on an annual basis, Articles of Enquiry are completed by each parish in the Diocese.

Both Archdeacons were clear about the high priority safeguarding is given within the

Diocese, led by the Bishop and with equal commitment by other members of the senior clerical team.

There are questions in regard to both children and adults safeguarding in their annual Articles of Enquiry form.

Both Archdeacons viewed their safeguarding responsibilities as central in their roles, and as being far wider than their Articles of Enquiry. To this end they are about to commence bi-monthly meetings with the DSA, and were actively involved last year in ensuring a better take-up of safeguarding training by incumbents and church wardens.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*How to use data/information on safeguarding provided in the Articles of Enquiry to inform future planning of safeguarding services and resources.*

*(Reference to part 1 of the S. 11 audit: Include the monitoring of safeguarding in parishes as part of the archdeacons' responsibilities.)*

## **3.15 RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The auditors did not identify any issues in regard to a potential lack of resourcing for services to children and vulnerable adults within the Diocese. Virtually everyone interviewed held the view that if further resources were identified there would not be a difficulty in obtaining them and that safeguarding was of the highest priority for the Diocese.

The diocesan commitment to adult safeguarding is also demonstrated in its day-to-day functioning through the establishment of a dementia-friendly church based in Nottingham, and through the diocesan group Opening Minds (to enable support to people with mental health issues). A recent initiative by this group was the publication, in partnership with Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, of a leaflet giving details of who to contact if there were concerns about finding help for someone experiencing a mental health crisis.

Aside from the specific posts that have direct responsibility for safeguarding, the auditors formed the view that those with more peripheral roles were very proactive (i.e. the Bishop's Chaplain, the diocesan registrar, communications officer). All were noted to respond quickly and appropriately whenever their input was required.

There is an Authorised Listener service in place, but there is hardly any take up of this, even though it is heavily promoted, and its use encouraged, by the DSA and others (this was also evidenced on case files). It may be that this needs further promotion, for example via a leaflet, outlining what the service is and what it can offer.

Although referrals in regard to vulnerable adults made up a fairly high proportion of referrals (approximately 25 per cent), most casework undertaken concerned risks to children. Everyone interviewed acknowledged that activity in adults safeguarding lagged behind that of children's safeguarding, and held the view that more was needed to promote awareness of the issues involved.



Information about safeguarding and the safeguarding service has a high profile on the diocesan website. There is clear information about who to contact in the event of a concern about a child or vulnerable adult. Policies and procedures in regard to children and vulnerable adults are also readily identifiable on the website, as is information about training and how to access it. However, the auditors felt that there could be room for further improvement if, for example, a newsletter was produced, an information pack was put together showing what the service offers, or a photo of the DSA is included on the diocesan website.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider producing a leaflet to further promote the Authorised Listener service.*

*Consider what further ways could further promote the role of the DSA and the safeguarding service to the parishes.*

*Consider how best to further promote adult safeguarding issues.*

*(Reference to part 3 of S.11 audit: There is a structure to hear the views of young people, there are children's and young people's advocates available, there are Authorised Listeners in place.)*

## **3.16 INFORMATION SHARING**

The DSA has strong connections with all relevant local agencies and groups (i.e. Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements – MAPPA) who hold safeguarding responsibilities, and information is shared when required, and appropriately. Aside from being evidenced on case files, this was also backed up by some of the feedback received from other agencies prior to the commencement of the audit.

Referrals were made to the relevant LADO when required, and case files evidenced that there were good working relationships with advice being sought from the LADO, by the DSA, when needed.

From interviews and from case files it is evidenced that there is very good information sharing between the DSA, the Bishop's Chaplain and both Archdeacons, and vice versa. The DSA said that there was never a delay in having access to any of these individuals, and vice versa. In her interview, the DSA had said that initially, she had been a little unclear as to who needed to be alerted first following a referral about a member of the clergy when she started a year ago, but this was soon resolved and did not become a significant issue.

The DSA is a member of the regional DSA network.

In a very small number of cases audited, the person of concern had left the church as a result of the concerns about them being investigated and managed, without giving any further information. The auditors are concerned about the possibility of such individuals then joining another church, or faith, without anyone knowing of the concerns. This was discussed with the DSA, who acknowledged that this was a concern. Her view was that, in some cases, this may be picked up by a probation officer, police officer etc., but felt that forming stronger relationships with other key faiths located within the Diocese may also assist (although the auditors did note that the DSA shares an office with her opposite number from the Catholic Church, who is also employed by Family Care). The auditors felt that this was an issue of national

relevance and may be an area for consideration by the national safeguarding team.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Develop stronger relationships with safeguarding leads from other major faith groups represented within the Diocese, with a view to developing an information-sharing protocol.*

### **3.17 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES**

The Diocese makes an annual self-assessment (based on a Sec. 11 report) to the national safeguarding team. It has submitted theirs for 2015 and this was supplied to the auditors prior to their arrival for the on-site audit.

Data is collected in regard to numbers of referrals, types of referrals and the numbers of safeguarding agreements in place.

As discussed under 3.14, the Archdeacons monitor the parishes safeguarding responsibilities under their annual Articles of Enquiry.

The DSA reports on activity to every meeting of the CSG. She also reports to the Bishop twice a year, and will do so to the Archdeacons bi-monthly. She also attends the Bishop's Staff Team Meeting annually. Aside from her reporting responsibilities to the Archdeacons and the Bishop's Chaplain, the DSA also writes a report for the Bishop on any need to know or potential high-profile cases.

Supervision is provided to the DSA by the Director of Family Care once a month, and he reviews the files of the cases discussed during these meetings.

Positive comments were made by members of the Focus Group in regard to both the DSA and the work that she did, and about the quality of the training provided and its accessibility. Plans are already in place for the DSA to hold regular Focus Groups with parishes in order that they both understand the work that she does, but also feedback their experiences of the service.

With the changing expectations in regard to safeguarding, and its higher profile, there will, inevitably be a greater expectation in regard to quality assurance, and there may well be future expectations of a more formal quality assurance process. It may be assistance to follow-up with the national safeguarding team if they are developing a more formalised quality assurance process.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*To establish whether there will be any national guidance around the development of a quality assurance process, or if this should be further progressed by the Diocese.*

(Relevant Section 11 requirements)

Part 1: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese; (PAGC A.4.)

### **3.18 LINKS WITH NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING TEAM**

The independent Chair of the SCG said that part of his role was to ensure that safeguarding in the Diocese was undertaken in line with guidance/policies/procedures of the national safeguarding team.

The DSA is a member of the regional DSA network, although is relatively new in post.

It was noted by the auditors on several case files that direct contact had been made by the DSA with the national safeguarding team on several occasions to clarify guidance or obtain advice on what needed to be done. Safeguarding activity was undertaken in line with relevant policies and procedures produced by the national safeguarding team, and was often quoted directly within case files.

### **3.19 WHAT NATIONAL SYSTEMIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES HAVE ARISEN?**

The following issues arose in the course of the audit which may have national implications:

- A member of the Focus Group had moved to the Diocese from another diocese a few months ago. She had undertaken safeguarding training in her previous diocese last year, but has been required to undertake it again in Southwell & Nottingham. Is this a reasonable requirement?
- There are examples that some individuals of concern, when investigated/assessed/made subject of a safeguarding agreement, leave the church they attend and give no information about whether or not they are attending another church or have joined another faith; guidance on how best to follow such situations up would be helpful, both on a case-by-case strategic level?

# APPENDIX: REVIEW PROCESS

## DATA COLLECTION

### Information provided to auditors

Information provided to the auditors before or during that audit:

- annual self-assessment (based on a Sec. 11 Report), 2014 and 2015
- various reports to the Bishop on individuals of concern
- report to a local LSCB
- past Cases Review 2008
- further report on Past Cases Review 2009
- complaints procedure
- whistleblowing procedure
- the job descriptions and person specifications
- minutes of the three most recent meetings of SCG (September 2015, January 2016, April 2016)
- training plan
- information on training courses
- database of who requires safeguarding training and when it needs to be updated
- local structures and arrangements
- contract between the Diocese and Family Care
- safeguarding policies and guidelines

### Participation of members of the Diocese

The auditors had face to face conversations with:

- the DSA
- the CMA (by telephone)
- the Director, Family Care
- the Chief Executive
- the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham
- the Archdeacon of Nottingham
- the Archdeacon of Newark
- the Independent Chair of the SCG.

The parish focus group comprised:

- two parish safeguarding officers
- one church warden
- one team leader for youth & children's ministry
- one curate
- one vicar

**The audit: what records / files were examined?**

The auditors examined:

- 18 case files
- 4 HR files for lay diocesan officers
- 11 blue files.

There were no limitations to the audit.