

Diocesan Training Strategy 2022-2025

Introduction

The House of Bishops policies and practice guidance requires all dioceses to offer consistent training in safeguarding for all church officers. Although there is no statutory requirement for this training, there is an expectation in Government Guidance that all staff, volunteers and officeholders know how to respond and what to do should safeguarding situations arise. There may also be issues of insurance and vicarious liability should training opportunities have not been made available at all levels.

The Church of England House of Bishops Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training & Development Framework April 2021, provides the framework for safeguarding learning and development across all Church of England communities.

Effective safeguarding learning is one of the key means by which we will become a safer and healthier Church, and the learning pathways in this framework aim to achieve this.

After the coronavirus pandemic, both nationally and locally there have had to be changes in the way that safeguarding training is offered. The National Safeguarding Team have updated some of the training modules, and this work is ongoing for all learning pathway levels. For example, C0 and C1 are now 'Safeguarding Basic Awareness' and 'Safeguarding Foundations' respectively, and both modules will continue to be accessed through online training via the National Safeguarding Team training portal, or through the Diocese Safeguarding Team via Zoom, for the Leadership and PtO Pathways. However, a limited number of PtO Pathways may be facilitated in person, and since January 2022, the PSO Induction has been facilitated in person also.

Parish life is at the heart of the Diocese, and a healthy Christian community should be one which ensures and nurtures the wellbeing of all. Safeguarding therefore, needs to be embedded in all aspects of the life and ministry of the Church in order to ensure that the culture of safeguarding is integral throughout all of our church communities. The facilitation and delivery of safeguarding training and development within the Diocese of Norwich is seen in this context. It is essential therefore, that churches and church officers understand safeguarding as a theological imperative, rooted in the nature and love of God, outworking in basic commitments to giving equal worth to all, practising reciprocal pastoral care, and treating those who are most vulnerable with respect and dignity.

Content

Training will be focused on building healthy communities with a demonstrable culture of safety, in which the wellbeing of all is ensured and nurtured. Training modules reflect the national requirements across all dioceses for ensuring healthy safeguarding practice, responding well to victims and survivors of abuse in the church, and church community context. They emphasise the need to work in co-operation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and with statutory agencies in all safeguarding matters. Training for all church roles is to heighten and raise safeguarding awareness, to include safer working practices which emphasise the importance of maintaining appropriate and proper boundaries, as well as exercising a culture of "respectful uncertainty".

Although in the past, "safeguarding" was considered very much in the light of "Child Protection" it is now generally regarded as having a much broader remit, addressing the needs not only of children and young people, but also of adults. In the church context, adult vulnerability may be identified through specific conditions, such as disability or ill health, or because of specific situations, for example because of the power imbalance between a priest and people for whom he or she has a duty of care. Within the Church, all are welcomed, including those who pose risk; and in most situations, church officers will be unaware of any risks posed. The Church is therefore uniquely challenged to provide a safe environment for all who attend, especially children and all those who are vulnerable.

Training Arrangements

Safeguarding training is to be led and delivered by appropriately trained, experienced and skilled trainers who understand the statutory requirements of safeguarding children and adults, and how these are carried out within the church context.

The Safeguarding Training & Development Framework provides the framework for safeguarding learning and development across all Church of England communities. It also sets out the core safeguarding learning pathway training modules which are a mandatory requirement determined for clergy, for those holding licence to officiate as well as for specific church roles and responsibilities.

It is recognised that participants need the opportunity to reflect and explore with the trainer as well as with one another, some of the particular and complex challenges which they face in their work with children and adults who may be vulnerable. Participants may also have vulnerabilities due to having experienced abuse in the past, and trainers will need to be both aware and sensitive in taking this into consideration, whilst making provision for any attendee who may become distressed.

Those participating in training are also likely to need some opportunity to reflect on the relationship between safeguarding issues and their beliefs as articulated in theological language if safeguarding learning is to become thoroughly integrated with their behaviour, relationships, and culture within the life of the church.

Planning

In the planning of the Diocesan Training Strategy and Plan 2022-2025, current available data was in July 2021 cross referenced with existing Diocesan Training reports. However, data relating to licensed Clergy, LLMs, Clergy with PtO and LLMs with PtO only relates to those who have a training record. Therefore, data was cross referenced with the list of roles on the Diocesan database, which demonstrated that there were those with no current up to date training recorded. This was also noted when cross referencing Parish Safeguarding Officer training.

Subsequent quarterly reviews of training progress have been maintained, and significant input given to the support and enablement of all to access the required training specific to role, and in a facilitative method suited to individuals.

The Training Plan is drafted annually in August, and includes the Leadership Pathway, PtO Pathway as PSO Induction sessions, and new in 2022, PSO quarterly Networking sessions. The number of sessions planned is based on the data analysis aforementioned but is regularly reviewed, and amended to meet any further training needs identified. Attendance on training courses must be booked in advance, and certification is only upon completion of all training requirements specific to the module undertaken.

The Training Plan for succeeding years will be devised and based upon evaluation of the training delivered throughout the year, as well as the ongoing need throughout the Diocese, as well as any changes made by NST.

Training Delivery

Training sessions should include two people in a leadership role: either two trainers, or one trainer and one experienced and skilled co-worker, in order that the needs of participants can be fully addressed. Two trainers are generally required to ensure there is a change of voice, pace and approach, since both the delivery and receipt of safeguarding training may be experienced as emotionally draining within the leadership and specialist courses dealing with aspects of abuse. Therefore a 'listener role' may on occasion be needed, usually one of the trainers, or in larger groups, alongside trainers.

Minimal requirements

The Bishop of Norwich through acceptance of House of Bishops Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training & Development Framework, has set minimum requirements for safeguarding training for ordained, licensed and other church officers. A "church officer" is anyone appointed by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

Those requiring core training include:

- All those who hold the Bishop's licence, commission or permission to officiate (this includes Deacons, as part of IME; new incumbents/stipendiary clergy new to the Diocese, as part of CMD; non-Stipendiary Ministers; Readers; Commissioned Lay Pastoral Assistants, as part of training and post licensing/commissioning; those applying for Bishop's Permission to Officiate)
- All Diocesan and Cathedral staff/volunteers
- Children and youth workers employed or volunteering within the Diocese or in parishes
- Parish Safeguarding Officers
- Churchwardens
- Anyone else who has significant contact through their role in the Church with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation, or who needs a DBS check in order to carry out their role for the Diocese or a parish.

A Bishop may not license or authorise a reader or lay worker unless they are satisfied that the candidate has undergone suitable and appropriate training relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within the church and church community context. The Bishop of Norwich supports this, and continues to work in conjunction with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in the promotion of a safer church. In addition, the government guidance on how organisations address child protection issues, 'Working Together, 2018, sets out that *"All staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare"*.

Current courses

The annual training programme is set by the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group and the Bishop of Norwich. Training is delivered by the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer, and Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

Summary of courses:

Leadership Module

The Leadership safeguarding module explores and reflects upon the roles in implementing parish safeguarding procedures as well as responding to serious situations. This module is for Licensed Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers, and the aim is to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to embed healthy parish safeguarding practices. Safeguarding Basic Awareness and Safeguarding Foundations modules must be completed by participants in advance of attending the first Leadership session.

'Permission to Officiate' Module

It has been recognised that the exercise of Permission to Officiate (PtO) for both retired clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs) or Readers, may vary considerably within the diocese. The Safeguarding Leadership Pathway is intended for those who are regularly involved in a high level of work and play a lead role within the Church body concerned. Therefore, those who fall into this category should undertake the full Safeguarding Leadership Pathway. However, all others of those with PtO (i.e. both Licensed Clergy with PtO and Licensed Lay Ministers with PtO) whose role does not fit the Leadership Pathway criterion, or do not undertake a high level of activity should undertake the 'Permission to Officiate' Module.

Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction

Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction sessions for those new to taking on the role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) was introduced in 2022. The focus of the induction is an introduction to the role of the PSO, equip participants with an understanding of their role, and induct them in key working practices and relationships.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction will involve interactive participation in a three-hour inclusive session. Pre-reading material will be sent two weeks prior to the session, and there will be an evaluation task to complete, using materials shared within the induction session. We hope to be able to deliver this training in person, and it will be held in a central location. Everyone who attends this course must have completed the Safeguarding Basic Awareness and Safeguarding Foundations modules in advance of attending the training.

Safer Recruitment & People Management Training

Safeguarding learning is mandatory for all posts that fall within the scope of the guidance on Safer Recruitment & People Management.

Learning requirements will vary according to the role and responsibility as set out in the Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework. However, all those involved in the recruitment, appointment and management/supervision of roles that fall within the scope of this guidance must undertake the training on Safer Recruitment and People Management. The aim of this training is to equip participants with an understanding of safer recruitment, as well as the skills and practices necessary to promote positive safeguarding behaviour, (and detect safeguarding risk) once a person is in role.

The online learning module for Safer Recruitment and People Management is now live on the safeguarding training portal.

Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse

This module explores the typologies of domestic abuse and equips participants to engage thoughtfully and proactively with the issue of domestic abuse, as well as those affected by domestic abuse. It also looks at identifying safeguarding actions to protect victims or those at risk and effectively recognise and respond to possible domestic abuse.

This course is required by anyone who holds a role of responsibility within the Church. This will include all Clergy, those with Permission to Officiate, Licensed lay Ministers, Parish Safeguarding Officers, Churchwardens and PCC members. In addition, any individual who has safeguarding responsibilities or has contact in their church role with children, young people and/or adults who may be vulnerable.

Modern Slavery Module

This course, from the Clewer Initiative, aims to provide a general understanding of modern slavery and human trafficking, how concerns relating to it may be recognised and responded to. As yet this module is not mandated as a requirement to be completed, but is recommended for Church Community Leaders.

Evaluation and review

All courses will be based on those set as Core and Specialist Modules as part of the Safeguarding Training and Development Framework. A record of attendance will be kept by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, and it is expected that parishes will also keep a record of those in key roles who have completed the requisite training for their role. The responsibility for ensuring that the requisite training is undertaken, and updated at the appropriate interval, lies with the appointing individual or body, together with the postholder of the role/position held.

References:

The Church of England's Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training & Development Framework April 2021:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/SafeguardingLearningAndDevelopmentFramework2021.pdf>

Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal: <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org>

Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance: [churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance](https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance)