



Welcome to our Monthly Safeguarding Briefing

As you may know, the Diocese of Norwich and Norwich Cathedral are currently preparing for a Safeguarding Audit being carried out by INEQE Safeguarding Group, an independent organisation commissioned by the National Church of England.



Our audit is scheduled for 6–18 January 2027 and will take a close look at the safeguarding practices and culture across our Diocese including the Cathedral and parishes— as part of a national review happening in every diocese across the country. But **our preparations start now!**

By preparing for this audit, it's also a great opportunity for us to reflect on what's working well and identify where we can strengthen safeguarding within our churches.

These monthly briefings will take place throughout the rest of 2026 so that all members of the Diocese, Cathedral, Parish members and all our volunteers are working together to ensure that we continually promote safeguarding in everything we do.

This month's key messages

- Keeping the names and contact points of all members and volunteers within your Parish up to date and accurate within the Diocese
- Keeping your Parish dashboard up to date
- How to talk about 'Safeguarding' as a standard agenda item at your Council Meetings
- How to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
- Where to find Parish Support Information

Why does the INEQE audit matter?

The audit is not just about compliance; it's about our shared responsibility to ensure every church is a place of safety, compassion, and trust, and allows for the sharing of good practice across the Diocese. Demonstrating commitment to transparency and improvement helps rebuild trust among parishioners and the wider public.

The INEQE audit is part of the Church of England's national response to the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). It's a chance for us to shine a light on what's working, spot any gaps, and strengthen how we safeguard everyone across the diocese and cathedral communities.

Think of it as a safeguarding health check—with a big dose of collaboration and reflection! The INEQE audit to date has found the following areas that may also apply elsewhere:

- Gaps or failings in current safeguarding systems, enabling targeted improvements.
- A shift towards a more open, responsive, and survivor-centred approach within the Church.
- Changes in safeguarding policies, leadership accountability, and better training for clergy and staff.
- Effectiveness of current safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and how well we respond to concerns.
- Areas of good practice and where improvements can be made.

The way in which INEQE do this is to measure our performance against the national safeguarding standards.

We will talk more about the national safeguarding standards next month.

Project Update: What have we done so far

- **Keith Philpot** has been appointed as the INEQE Project Manager. Keith brings extensive experience from audit processes within the public sector, education and finance sectors. He will be working with **Katy Tuttle** who is helping manage and collate the 250 documents required in advance of the audit. Keith will be the Diocese Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for INEQE for the diocese and will work closely with Susan Bullpitt who is performing this role for the cathedral.
- The **Parish People Dashboard** is a vital part of the INEQE Safeguarding Audit, helping to build an accurate picture of clergy, staff, and volunteers across the diocese. This sets the context against which INEQE will measure our safeguarding arrangements in relation to accuracy and compliance with national standards. The project team also request Parish teams review their data to ensure that their data is accurate and up to date. Dani, is able to assist any Parish members who may be experiencing difficulties with their People Dashboard. Dani can be contacted on 01603 880853 or **via email**.
- We have reviewed **progress on historical audits and compared current practice against the National Safeguarding self-assessment**. We are using this to identify further areas of work we still need to do. We will be talking more about this assessment next month.
- We are preparing for the **launch of the INEQE questionnaires**. Questionnaires will **become available during September** but in advance we will be hosting events for Parish, Cathedral and Diocese staff so that we have an open dialogue around any potential challenges with this survey and how to encourage as much participation as possible.

- We are holding **regular meetings** with senior Diocese members, Trustees, Cathedral and Clergy to ensure everyone is aware of our preparations and findings in the months ahead.

How can you help us?

Parish Safeguarding Dashboard

We are encouraging those parishes who have not yet engaged in the dashboard to do so as this is what INEQE will look at to ensure our parishes are compliant with the national standards. For support with getting the dashboard up to date or completed please contact the Safeguarding Team on **01603 882345** or via email on safeguarding@dioceseofnorwich.org

This is also a good opportunity for everyone to ensure that their Parish Dashboard is up to date and put into action any areas that require updating. Thank you!

Take a walkthrough of your website and spaces

We're currently taking some time to **refresh and improve the Diocese webpages**, making sure they're easy to navigate and that all content is clear, relevant, and up to date. As part of this, we'd really encourage our parishes to take a moment to **review their own websites** too.

It's especially important that safeguarding information is easy to find, particularly clear guidance on how to report a concern. This helps everyone feel confident about where to turn if they need support.

You might also want to check that any documents for those hiring or using your church space, such as risk assessments, include references to safeguarding where appropriate.

Finally, a simple walk around your church and shared spaces can make a big difference. Make sure safeguarding posters and key information are clearly visible and up to date, so that anyone who visits knows that your church is a safe and welcoming place for all.

Start talking about the Audit to those within your community

As we begin the INEQE Safeguarding Audit, we invite every member of our church community to **play an active role in strengthening a culture of safety**, openness, and accountability. This is an important opportunity to reflect honestly on our current safeguarding practices, celebrate what is working well, and identify areas for improvement.

We encourage PCCs and church leaders to create space for open and constructive discussion about safeguarding, ensuring it is a standing item on meeting agendas and that key conversations, decisions, and actions are clearly recorded in PCC minutes. By embedding safeguarding into the heart of our governance and daily life together, we demonstrate our shared commitment to protecting all who meet our church and to continually learn and improve as a community.

These conversations could start with sharing news of the INEQE questionnaires

being circulated in September and the opportunity for visitors, communities and volunteers having an opportunity to have their say, confidentially, through this survey.

Reporting a concern

If you have a safeguarding concern, allegation or suspicions of abuse about a child or vulnerable adult, please immediately contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer [here](#). If you have any difficulties, please contact **01603 882345** and a member of the Safeguarding team can help you. Your **Parish Safeguarding Officer** is also a local first point of contact for reporting safeguarding concerns.

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, it is important that you quickly get the right help – call the police on 999.

Both of our Safeguarding Officer can be contacted on:
safeguarding@dioceseofnorwich.org or **01603 882345**

Please note: this is not an emergency service, the Advisers operate within working hours. Please leave a voicemail and someone will get back to you.

If you wish to directly contact one of the advisers in particular, their contact details are:

- Sue Brice, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
07958 377079 or sue.brice@dioceseofnorwich.org
- Peter Sayer, Diocesan Assistant Safeguarding Officer
07342 999386 or peter.sayer@dioceseofnorwich.org

Thank you

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported the INEQE Safeguarding Project so far. Whether you've contributed to surveys, attended training, helped coordinate information, taken part in the self-assessment, or simply shared your time and insights—your involvement has been invaluable. This is a collective effort, and your commitment is helping us build a stronger, safer culture across the Diocese and Cathedral.

Most of all, thank you for your safeguarding efforts that go unseen, week in, week out, that makes your church a safer place for all.



Diocese of Norwich The Norwich Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd | 109 Dereham Road | Norwich, NR9 5ES GB

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