



Welcome to our Monthly Safeguarding Briefing August 2026

Welcome to the third edition of our monthly INEQE newsletter, which is designed to help share information about the upcoming audit.



Over the last month, the Project Team have been travelling around the diocese visiting a number of you. Thank you to all of our wonderful hosts and for the time given in helping us understand parish perspectives on a whole range of safeguarding matters. This information has been useful for both the audit and for the ongoing development of safeguarding processes in the future.

From these visits, we also identified that these newsletters are limited to the Parish Safeguarding Officers due to limitations on how wide we are able to publish through this platform. Therefore, we have included a link to our INEQE project webpage [HERE](#) which includes all of our previous publications. Please help us by making this page known amongst your parishes. Please also pass on this email to anyone involved in your parish who may benefit from this information - thank you!

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, and parish members are working together to ensure that we continually promote safeguarding in everything we do.

🔑 This month's key messages 📢

- Getting ready for the INEQE surveys - what you need to know and how you can help
- Our audit webpage is live and part of wider changes to the diocesan website
- Thanks from the Audit Project Manager
- Do you know how to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer?
- Do you know where to find Parish Support Information?



Message from Keith Philpot (INEQE Project Manager)

"While we recognise the pressures on parishes and everyone involved in the audit, it is important to stress that this is not about every parish being fully compliant, but about showing our commitment to the national standards and our direction of travel."

We are grateful for the data and information that parishes are placing on their Parish Safeguarding dashboard, which is helping us to build a fair and accurate picture of safeguarding across the diocese, and we remain committed to keeping everyone supported and well informed throughout the process".

In early September we will start having regular contact with INEQE. Just as a reminder, INEQE is the organisation who are auditing the diocese and cathedrals

across the country. If you want to look at the reports that they have already completed you can do so [HERE](#).

We would recommend reading the INEQE 2025 Annual Report, found [HERE](#).

The 2025 Annual Report identified much good practice with a safeguarding culture becoming embedded. The words most frequently used to describe these working, volunteering, and worshipping environments were 'respectful', 'welcoming', 'supportive', and 'inclusive'. In several dioceses and cathedrals, safeguarding is increasingly understood as a gospel and theological imperative and a key feature of a healthy church, rather than a mere administrative requirement.

However, challenges remain, and INEQE identified a failure in some quarters to recognise that the Church of today, whilst still on an improvement journey, is not the Church of yesterday. That evolution remains evident, and the report reflects the progress made since 2024, alongside the development and impact of the Church's response to the expectations set out in the CofE National Safeguarding Standards.

INEQE Surveys



Let's Talk Communicating the Audit Survey

As part of the safeguarding audit being carried out, we will be shortly inviting everyone involved in parish life to take part in a short safeguarding survey. This includes all those who contribute to the life of our church community—whether through choir, bell ringing, volunteering, worship, or other roles.

The survey is an opportunity to share your experience and help us understand what is working well where we can improve, how we continue to build a church that is safe, welcoming and supportive for all. Every

perspective helps us learn and grow together.

These surveys will act as a mechanism through which individuals can comment on matters relevant to the audit's focus. Participation in the surveys is optional. The surveys are both anonymous (the audit team are not seeking to identify individuals) and confidential (individuals will not be identified in INEQE's report).

The purpose of the surveys is to enable the National Audit Team to conduct a wider analysis of practice across Church bodies and give individuals the opportunity to contribute to the audit. **No one from the Church of England or other body will be provided with or have access to the survey responses.**

Have your say! It's important for as many voices as possible to be represented, so that the auditors gain a true picture of the safeguarding culture in our diocese

We recently shared a bulletin inviting everyone to a couple of Zoom sessions to talk about the upcoming surveys and some of the challenges we anticipate that this may present. If you missed this circulation, please have a look at this [HERE](#). There is still time to register your interest to attend the session in September, so please follow the instructions to do this via the link above.

We will also be using our newly-implemented project page on the diocesan website to further share videos and other key information about the surveys and how you can take part.

Finally, a big **THANK YOU** from the Project Team for your ongoing commitment to helping us through the audit process and reflecting our diocese safeguarding practices honestly.

-Keith

Audit Readiness Overview

Across the cathedral and diocese, we're busy gathering and collating evidence to show how we're meeting the national safeguarding standards, ready to upload into INEQE's Audit 360 system from September – a big milestone in the project.

- The deadline for collating evidence for INEQE is the **end of October 2026**.

In conjunction with this, work is underway to update and improve the information and resources available to parishes via the diocesan website. Our parish visits have highlighted the complexity of locating all the relevant documents required to support the completion of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard. The Communications and Safeguarding Teams are working together to improve the experience and make navigation across our webpages easier.

Next Month

Over the next month, we will update you on the 'go live' date of the surveys and will be seeking your help to spread this news and encourage engagement with it. In next months' edition we will share data surrounding the levels of engagement with the surveys and will highlight where further input is needed.



How do I report 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 Officers 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.

-The Audit Project Team

[Email the Project Team here](#)



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