

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER – Autumn 2019

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL TEAM

SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORTING

The Church has worked with the Charity Commission to agree bespoke guidance for DBFs, PCCs and Religious Communities on how to identify and report a Serious Incident.

The Charity Commission updated its guidance on 14 June 2019 requiring all individual Serious Incident Reports to be submitted to it using an online form. In addition, all bulk reports must be made using a Charity Commission template form; a bespoke template has been created for DBFs.

The Church of England's bespoke guidance on Serious Incident Reporting has been updated (version: 1 August 2019) and has been approved by the Charity Commission and by the National Safeguarding Steering Group.

You will recall that all PCCs were asked to agree to delegate the responsibility for the reporting of safeguarding serious incidents to the Diocesan Secretary, then to complete, sign, and return a form of delegation. If you have not returned this form could you do so as soon as possible. If you need another copy of the paperwork, it can be found on the safeguarding section of the diocesan website.

The next bulk report from the diocese is due in December 2019.

PAST CASES REVIEW 2 - NSPCC HELPLINE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS: 0800 80 20 20

Protocols and practice guidance for the Church of England's Past Cases Review 2, (PCR2) have been published. Individuals who wish to make representations to the PCR2 process or who need to come forward with information or make any disclosures regarding church related abuse are encouraged to make direct contact with their Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

However, recognising that this may not feel safe for those with a lived experience of abuse from within the church, a dedicated telephone helpline operated by the NSPCC, independently from the church, has been set up: **0800 80 20 20**.

Anyone can use the helpline to provide information or to raise concerns regarding abuse within the Church of England context; whether they are reporting issues relating to children, adults or seeking to whistle blow about poor safeguarding practice. Survivors were not invited to contribute to the 2007-2009 PCR and the Church has wanted to ensure a different, trauma informed approach is taken by PCR2. Listening to survivor voices has helped to shape how this review will be conducted.

In September 2019 Bishop Nick wrote to all incumbents requiring them to check that all safeguarding concerns about the behaviour of any parish officer, employee or volunteer towards children and/or adults, both current and historic, have been notified to the DSAs. A pro-forma was provided to enable such concerns to be recorded and reported – the deadline for the return of this document is **Friday 29 November 2019**.

PARISH INFORMATION

WHAT PARISHES SHOULD DISPLAY

Please note that it has been the House of Bishops' policy since 2017 that parishes must display information about their safeguarding arrangements, specifically that the parish should display:

- A formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church; Promoting a Safer Church Booklet; Safeguarding Policy Statement'. This should be signed on behalf of the PCC;
- Contact details of the PSO, churchwarden and any other local leaders;
- Information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, e.g. local authority contact details, domestic abuse and key helplines, e.g. Child Line (see Appendix 5 for model in 'Safeguarding in Parishes - Who's Who' which can be accessed via this link <http://leeds.anglican.org/safe-diocesan-policy-guidance> (see section what parishes should display)

Additionally, the Parish Safeguarding Handbook published in 2018, states that a parish should also 'ensure that safeguarding arrangements are clearly visible on the front page of the parish website'. It recognises that not all parishes have a web page and, in this situation, the parish may want to put the information attached onto the National Church website A Church Near You. <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>. This has a 'safeguarding' tab on every page which will take the user through to a map highlighting safeguarding details

We would encourage you to comply with these requirements as speedily as possible and to take a fresh look at information on your website. While we realise the Handbook was only finalised at the end of last year, very few parishes have complied with this guidance. It is possible that a failure to comply with the publication requirement on the web page could be a failure to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Guidance and thus lead to disciplinary proceedings against responsible clergy under the Clergy Discipline Measure.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING CHECKLIST **New document for Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) July 2019.**

All the documentation mentioned within the Parish Safeguarding Checklist should be provided for the Archdeacon at the parish visitation. However, we encourage the PSO and Incumbent to use this checklist in preparation for the report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

The measures identified in the checklist will be checked during parish visitations and the documents referred to can be found on the Diocesan website: <https://www.leeds.anglican.org>. If you have questions or need support to complete the steps on the checklist, you can contact the DSA for further support and advice

WHAT TO DO WITH SAFEGUARDING RECORDS IN A VACANCY

If there is going to be a vacancy, the incumbent should ensure that you formally handover all safeguarding files to your Area Dean who will look after the files and oversee the parish safeguarding responsibilities in your absence. This can be for sabbatical, moving parishes or any other reason. The DSA will liaise with the Area Dean regarding any new or existing safeguarding concerns and formally handover to the new incumbent.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Safer recruitment practice is an essential part of the Church of England's approach to safeguarding. This policy and guidance sets out safer recruitment practices for people working or volunteering with children and adults. The guidance addresses two key areas – the recruitment process and criminal record checks (DBS). The guidance outlines who should undertake a criminal record check in accordance with their role with the Church

of England and provides helpful templates for use within parishes, dioceses, cathedrals and other church organisations.

THE CONFIDENTIAL DECLARATION FORM.

At the start of the process, where an individual is going to work or volunteer with vulnerable people, ask him/her to complete a 'Confidential Declaration' which, in broad summary, asks if there is any reason why he/she should not be working with children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. It can also help to identify any issues that might need resolving at an early stage. Please speak to the Safeguarding Team for further information.

PLEASE NOTE that you should not appoint someone prior to the completion of the process.

DBS

A DBS Check is needed for all those working with children or vulnerable adults in certain roles. See guidance for who requires a DBS check <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/safe-dbs>.

All PCC members are required to have DBS checks.

If a governing body is registered as a charity and provided it sponsors and approves, in its own name, children's work or work with adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect then the members of the governing body will be eligible for an enhanced criminal record check without barring information.

For example, A PCC is a charity and provided it sponsors and approves, in its own name, children's work or work with vulnerable adults (e.g. a Youth Club, Sunday school, home visiting scheme for the housebound or a luncheon club for adults with special needs who require assistance with feeding or toileting) then a DBS is required.

BLEMISH DBS WHAT TO DO?

If you are aware that someone has a blemish on his or her DBS then please contact the Safeguarding Team. This person should not be appointed until a risk assessment has been undertaken with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. You may become aware from the person themselves, via a confidential declaration form or from the Safeguarding Team via Thirty-one eight - formerly CCPAS.

TRAINING

BASIC AWARENESS, ON LINE ONLY (previously C0)

The Basic Awareness module was accessed by over 600 people in the Diocese of Leeds in the 12 months from September 2018 to August 2019.

The current practice guidance, issued in July 2019, requires completion of this course on line prior to accessing Foundation or Leadership training. The course is also a prerequisite for other core training modules.

FOUNDATION (previously C1)

This module is now available on line in addition to face-to-face delivery. In the 12 months from September 2018 to August 2019 over 700 people accessed this training online.

In 2020 the DSAs will be focusing on delivering Leadership training, and we therefore would encourage people to undertake Foundation training online. If you are unsure how to do this then please contact your DSA. In exceptional circumstances face-to-face training can be provided by one of the volunteer trainers; we are very fortunate to have four volunteer trainers in the diocese supporting our delivery of training.

LEADERSHIP

Training dates for 2020 have been set and details are available on the safeguarding section of the Diocesan website. We would urge you to book on to requisite training as soon as possible.

REMEMBER

If a child or adult is at *immediate* risk of significant harm, in the first instance you should contact [your local social services team](#) or local police (call 999)
Then inform your DSA.

Complaints and Whistleblowing

If you are not satisfied that a safeguarding issue has been dealt with appropriately and you are unable to resolve the matter with one of our safeguarding advisers then please contact the Diocesan Secretary, Mrs Debbie Child, on 07713 623544, who will listen to and investigate your concerns.

The Diocese of Leeds Complaints Policy and Whistleblowing Policy can both be found on the Safeguarding section of the diocesan website.

YOUR DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISERS



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