



DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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19 January 2023

Dear Fathers, Deacons, Religious and Diocesan Colleagues,

In my role as Apostolic Administrator with the full agreement of the other diocesan trustees, I have invited the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) to review diocesan safeguarding, and this work started on 19 January. The purpose of this review is outlined below, and taken from the CSSA Terms of Reference. You will see that there is also an email address and form for confidential feedback available under the Contact heading, below.

There has been much speculation and heightened interest from the press and others regarding some of the issues here. The Diocese welcomes the CSSA's external scrutiny.

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the Safeguarding Review is to audit and examine the culture, governance, processes and practice of safeguarding in the Dioceses of Hexham & Newcastle.

The review will include all of the elements of a scheduled CSSA safeguarding audit, specifically how the eight National Safeguarding Standards are being met. These elements are published on the CSSA website.

In addition to these usual elements of an audit, and as commissioned by Archbishop McMahon, in the situation of the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle, the Safeguarding Review may include, but not be restricted to:

- Interviews with key stakeholders including clergy former and present / staff former and present / lay volunteers former and present / victims as appropriate.
- Case audits – current and past (including older than 12 months as appropriate)
- A focus on culture and governance arrangements around the safeguarding process
- Surveys and focus groups
- Liaison with other stakeholders carrying out parallel investigations including (not restricted to) other statutory and non-statutory agencies. This will include the Charity Commission.
- Consideration of any supplementary documentation as necessary.

Contact

Please note, CSSA are offering the opportunity for anyone to provide confidential information to the CSSA review team by:

Emailing: HexhamandNewcastleinfo@proton.me or

Making anonymous contact at <https://forms.office.com/e/pHLnT00Zix>.

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In addition, as Metropolitan, I have been asked by the Dicastery for Bishops to prepare an in-depth report into the events leading up to Bishop Byrne's resignation. I have commissioned Carol Lawrence, Chief Operating Officer of the Shrewsbury Diocese, to act on my behalf. Carol will be contacting all the clergy, religious and diocesan colleagues to gather evidence for the report. If you have any questions, please contact me via email at archbishop.liverpool@rcaol.org.uk.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol followed by the name 'Malcolm' in a cursive script.

Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon
Apostolic Administrator, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Archbishop of Liverpool