



DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**

Press Release from the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Tuesday 17th September 2024

For immediate release:

Safeguarding agency reports ‘significant progress’ in standards

The agency which oversees safeguarding in the Catholic Church as reported “significant progress” in standards in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

An interim review of safeguarding in leadership, governance, ministry and culture, which was published today by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, praised progress achieved since the last review of 2023. It reported that:

- A comprehensive Safeguarding Action Plan is in place and is progressing well;
- There is strong evidence of the developing culture of safeguarding within the Diocese, with better integration of curial departments, leadership and parish committees, and subsidiary charities
- Working relationships within the Diocese are more effective, inclusive, and harmonious, and there is support and resources available to help people discharge their safeguarding duties effectively
- The Diocese was seen to be working in a transparent manner in safeguarding, and striving to welcome, engage with, and listen to those who report having been harmed within the Diocese.

The summary of the report complimented the strong leadership and public commitment to effective safeguarding of Bishop Stephen Wright, saying the diocesan bishop has “empowered others to make their own positive contributions to promoting a safer environment within the Diocese”

The report highlighted that effective leadership support is critical to the integrity of safeguarding practice and an embedding of a culture of safeguarding.

*The Rt Rev. Stephen Wright, the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, said:
“On behalf of our diocesan family, I welcome this very positive Interim
Audit on the Safeguarding Culture in the Diocese of Hexham and
Newcastle.*

*“The audit recognises the work and necessary improvements made since
the last audit report published in the summer of 2023.”*

*The Bishop added: “Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. I and
all leaders are committed to embed best safeguarding practice in all areas
of diocesan life. I thank everybody for their dedication to safeguard the
vulnerable.*

“We look forward to the fuller audit by the CSSA in November.”

For further information

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The full report is available to view or download from the Diocesan website here:
<https://diocesehn.org.uk/>

A statement from the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency can be viewed here: Catholic
Safeguarding Standards Agency: <https://catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

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