

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Safeguarding Action Plan

Response to CSSA audit report

Recommendations for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

1. The diocese should acknowledge the impact of this review on those within the diocese and make clear its renewed commitment to safeguarding those who come in to contact with the Church. This commitment should be made by the Archbishop and senior leadership team.
2. The diocese should develop a clear pathway for engaging with survivors, making clear the role of diocesan personnel, pastoral provision and access to specialist independent agencies. Those coming in contact with survivors should be trained and adequately equipped to provide necessary support.
3. Governance arrangements should be reviewed to ensure that there is sufficient lay safeguarding expertise and that all safeguarding matters are reviewed by those who have the required knowledge, understanding and training. Safeguarding professionals should be viewed as experts and their opinions duly considered. Disagreements and escalation should be clearly recorded and a written process for resolution considered for occasions when disagreements occur.
4. A more robust process should be developed for the use of overseas priests within the diocese, ensuring the engagement of the safeguarding team at the earliest opportunity.
5. Steps should be taken to ensure that the backlog of DBS re-checks is eliminated and mechanisms should be in place to ensure that this does not re-occur.
6. A safeguarding communication plan should be created and implemented, setting out a public commitment to safeguarding. Key people, including survivors, should be included in developing this plan.
7. A safeguarding implementation plan should be developed, outlining the safeguarding priorities of the diocese and stating what will be achieved and by when in developing and maintaining a safe environment.
8. The diocese should consider ways in which to seek assurances on the effectiveness of practice, for example through the undertaking of internal case audits.
9. Arrangements for on-going contact with respondents should be clarified and applied in practice. This should include the provision of appropriate accommodation and support. Respondents should be informed of sources of support available to them.
10. Practice around volunteers should be strengthened through introducing policies to cover safe recruitment, role expectations, and removal from role.
11. The diocesan whistleblowing policy should be reviewed to ensure that there are safe routes for all employees, clergy and volunteers to raise a concern.
12. Links between the education department of the diocese and the safeguarding team should be strengthened with a formal information sharing agreement. This should be applied before any appointments are made to prominent roles such as trustees or governors. Mandatory reporting by individuals of any prior concerns relating to their suitability to work in such roles should be considered.

National recommendations

1. The Bishops' Conference should provide guidance as to expected escalation process when decisions of the Diocesan Trustee Safeguarding Committee, or a case advisory panel, are not implemented by the Bishop or his representative.
2. The Bishops' Conference should set out expectations as to how dioceses manage complaints about their Bishop.
3. Specialist training should be provided to Bishops on how to provide appropriate support for those accused or convicted of serious criminal offences.
4. Where canonical investigations have commenced, consideration should be given to any safeguarding matters arising. Any risk should be communicated to the safeguarding team and managed in line with national safeguarding standards.
5. Safeguarding officers should be in receipt of reflective case supervision from a suitably qualified source.
6. Standards for recording of safeguarding matters should be set nationally.
7. The diocese should consider ways in which to seek assurances on the effectiveness of practice, for example through the undertaking of internal case audits.
8. The National Tribunal Service should consider the development of a whistleblowing policy specifically for members of the clergy.
9. Clergy and leadership training should include content describing the damage caused by considering reputational risk above the safety of children and adults at risk. There should be further content examining when and in what forum reputational risk should be considered and an understanding that it cannot damage the integrity of safeguarding process.

Standard 1: Safeguarding is embedded in the Church's leadership, governance, ministry and culture

1.1	[CSSA 1.4]	Provision of clear safeguarding leadership and communications by the Bishop and clergy hierarchy.				
	How we will improve		Responsible	Timescale	Completion date	Red/Amber/Green Rating Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
1.1.1	The Bishop (personal commitment) will participate in a short video message re-affirming the importance of Safeguarding in all aspects of diocesan life. It is recommended that this be re-visited at regular intervals, ideally 6 monthly.		Bishop, Trustees, Senior Clergy, Parish Priests (the latter responsible for knowing about commitment to safeguarding of whole Diocese and ensuring this is delivered with Safeguarding Department at local level in their Parish).	Bishop Stephen video by mid-December.	Ongoing every 6 months with updated video message.	Green when plan approved in December 2023.
1.1.2	Bishop/ Safeguarding Coordinator will continue to engage with LOUDfence, including exploring how we move forward with them, e.g. hosting an event at the Cathedral. Bishop to officiate at a Survivors’ Mass at the Cathedral on Tuesday 30 th April 2024. In addition, Bishop will consult with Bishop David Oakley about his practice of other Masses specifically for victim/survivors to see if they could be offered in H&N Diocese. These would be restricted in attendance. These may or may not address a pastoral need. Diocese to publish installation Mass via YouTube. Explore usage of the Angel Prayer Cards with Bishop Helen-Ann. Liaise with Northampton Diocese to explore their best practice.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Committee.	Survivors’ Mass - 30 th of April 2024.	Ongoing – yearly Survivors’ Mass.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in June 2024.

1.1.3	Clarification regarding mandatory safeguarding training bespoke to the role undertaken – what is to be delivered to whom and by when - including refresher updates (part of safeguarding leadership).	Update at December Safeguarding Committee.	Draft Training Plan to be reviewed by December Board 2023.	Ongoing and reviewed annually by Safeguarding Committee and Board of Trustees. Clarification has been sought from the CSSA in relation to future clergy safeguarding training and who will be facilitating. This is subject to ongoing discussions and this action will be encompassed in the Safeguarding Improvement Plan.	Amber when plan approved in December 2023.
1.1.4	Communications: A Safeguarding Communications Plan forms part of the Safeguarding Improvement Plan (three-year strategic plan). To agree how this is to be communicated: by whom and to whom and when. The message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility is to be re-enforced regularly.	Safeguarding Coordinator, COO and Communications.	Draft Safeguarding Communications Plan to be finalised Spring 2024. To consider feedback from Diocesan Listening Exercises.	Ongoing and to be reviewed annually at Spring Safeguarding Committee and onto the following meeting of the Diocesan Board.	Moved to green when reviewed in June 2024.
1.2	[CSSA 1.5]	Ensure that a culture of safeguarding and inclusion of a safeguarding team perspective is evident in all areas of diocesan activity.			

	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
1.2.1	Ensure that there is a standing agenda item at Diocesan meetings where safeguarding matters are appropriately discussed for that context. Already in place for Board. Governance Review in consultation with Safeguarding Committee to suggest at which meetings this should be incorporated e.g.: College of Consultors/Chapter of Canons; Council of Priests, Parish Council meetings; Board Committees and Groups: Bishop's Council where safeguarding matters must be appropriate to the forum and should not confuse proper process.	Governance Review Group/Safeguarding Committee/Bishop/Board of Trustees.	Interim list of meetings agreed and implemented by 31 December 2023.	Interim list by 31 December 2023 with permanent list to be agreed from Governance Review recommendations then revised yearly.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in June 2024.
1.2.2	Create a Safeguarding Network with representation from the Clergy, Curia and laity to promote safeguarding and embed it in the Diocesan culture.	Safeguarding Committee to identify members. To include PSRs. Coordinator to chair meetings.	Work to commence immediately on creating Network and to be in place by Spring 2024.	On-going and then revised yearly by the Safeguarding Committee and Board of Trustees.	Carried over to safeguarding Improvement Plan.
	Annual Mass at which the Bishop presides and with social event afterwards for Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSRs).			Ongoing.	
1.2.3	Board to agree messaging and communication that any activity/event planned and undertaken which involves children or vulnerable adults must have consideration of Safeguarding in the planning phase with specific reference to CSSA practice guidance 'Creating a Safer Environment' and 'Planning and Organising Parish Events and Groups'.	Safeguarding Committee to make recommendation to Board regarding the message, audiences and how this is to be communicated. See 1.1.4 above.	Safeguarding Committee recommendations to Board Spring 2024	Winter 2024.	Moved to amber when plan reviewed in March 2024. Carried over to safeguarding Improvement Plan and captured in communications strategy.

1.2.4	Register of volunteers to be created and cross referenced with volunteer roles. Level of training (i.e. level 1,2,3) to be determined and captured in a training plan. Volunteer Policy (Building upon "In Humble Service") to be further developed. Explore with CAFOD their Volunteer Policy.		Safeguarding and H.R. to create volunteer register and update quarterly.	Resource requirement to be scoped and submitted to Board of Trustees for approval. Work commenced July 2024 to develop project plan.	Register and plan to be in place by Spring 2025 and updated quarterly.	Moved to amber when plan reviewed in March 2024. Volunteer census completed and training roll out will be captured in training plan, linked into Safeguarding Improvement Plan.
1.3	[CSSA 1.6]	Ensure an appropriate balance of lay and clergy trustees, in accordance with the recently amended Articles of Association, (which should then be reflected on the Diocesan Trustee Safeguarding Committee).				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	The Articles of Association of the Diocese were amended in March 2023. The role of Episcopal Vicar was separated from that of Trustee. Updated Articles allow for up to 6 Clergy and 6 Lay Trustees. Currently 8 Trustees have been appointed and 4 vacancies remain allowing flexibility for the Bishop to make further amendments to the board makeup.		Bishop.	Spring 2024.	Spring 2024.	Moved to green from amber when plan reviewed in September 2024.
1.4	[CSSA 1.7]	Return to lay chairing of the Diocesan Trustee Safeguarding Committee.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	This will be discussed with Bishop Stephen and form part of the Governance Review where Terms of Reference for all Board Committees will be revisited.		Bishop and Trustees.	Spring 2024.	Nomination of Chair to be confirmed Spring 2024. See 1.3 above.	Moved to green from red when plan reviewed in March 2024.
1.5	[CSSA 1.8]	Ensure that all safeguarding matters are routed through proper governance channels.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

1.5.1	Board of Trustees to ensure (via Safeguarding Committee) that Safeguarding matters are to be discussed as at action 1.2 and any issues passed to the Safeguarding Department for operational action or the Safeguarding Committee if a strategic response is required. As part of Governance Review, explanatory flow charts to be developed to underpin Policies and Procedures.		Governance Review Group and Bishop. Policy owners.	Ongoing.	Ongoing. Reviewed at each Committee meeting.	Moved to green In Sept 2024- this work is ongoing and all policies are reviewed regularly at SG Committee and Board of Trustees.
1.5.2	A document has been created for the submission of Safeguarding Committee recommendations to the Bishop. Bishop's response and rationale to be documented and shared with Trustees, along with a note of the Safeguarding Committee discussions and recommendations. All to be recorded on CASE records.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Chair of Committee.	September 2023 Board meeting.	September 2023.	Green when plan approved in December 2023.
1.5.3	Following every Safeguarding Committee meeting, a briefing will be provided for the Bishop and he will attend as an observer (at least) one meeting of the Committee per year.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Bishop.	September 2023.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
1.6	[CSSA 1.9]	Consider whether case oversight might be provided by a Case Management Overview Panel.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	A mechanism for case oversight to be considered at the next meeting of the Safeguarding Committee. Should members determine that a Case Management Overview Panel is required, then a proposal to be developed for the Board's consideration. If not, rationale for decision to be included as part of this Action Plan and the response to the CSSA.		Safeguarding Committee.	September 2023 meeting of Safeguarding Committee.	Autumn 2023.	Green when plan approved in December 2023.
1.7	[CSSA 1.10]	Agreement of an action plan to support the delivery of the safeguarding standards.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

	The Safeguarding Oversight Group has been established by Archbishop McMahon and is actively working to deliver this Action Plan to the Safeguarding Committee and to the September 2023 meeting of the Board. Draft to the CSSA after 2023 Board meeting.	Safeguarding Oversight Group. Safeguarding Committee. Diocesan Board.		September 2023	Green when plan approved in December 2023.
1.8	[CSSA 1.11]	Ensure that all areas of diocesan activity receive proper safeguarding team input and information sharing.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	For Clergy, Trustee, staff and relevant volunteer appointments, including those that sit with the Bishop, recorded checks to be made with Safeguarding Department. This will form part of the Governance Review. See also response to Standard 1.1 and 1.2. Protocol developed and in place between Education and Safeguarding in July 2023. Develop protocols for other appointments as above. Cross reference with Training Plan.	Trustees. Safeguarding Committee. Staffing and Remuneration Committee. Human Resources. Data Protection.	Autumn 2024.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed March 2025.

Standard 2: Communicating the Church's safeguarding message.

2.1	[CSSA 2.3]	The inclusion of stakeholders within the development of the safeguarding communications plan.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	Red/Amber/Green Rating
					Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
	Identify stakeholders and communication channels. Draft Communications Plan to be reviewed by Safeguarding Committee. Consultation with Council of Priests, College of Consultors, PSRs External consultation with organisations that support victims and survivors e.g. LOUDFence. Updated Articles allow for up to 6 Clergy and 6 Lay Trustees. Currently 8 Trustees have been appointed and 4 vacancies remain allowing flexibility for Bishop to make further amendments to the board makeup.	Safeguarding Committee. Board of Trustees.	Spring 2024.	Six monthly review of the Communications Plan.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
2.2	[CSSA 2.4]	The development of tailored safeguarding messages for all within the diocese.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	Messages, audiences and channels (what, who and how) to be captured in Safeguarding Communications Plan. Communications Implementation Plan with timescales to be agreed.	Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Committee.	Communications Plan to be finalised Spring 2024. See above 1.1.4	Ongoing with a review annually.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
2.3	[CSSA 2.5]	Provision of visible public safeguarding leadership by the Bishop and senior clergy.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

2.3.1	Bishop Stephen's video as per 1.1a. Build upon leadership provided at Installation Mass. Continuation of annual Survivors' Mass. New foreword on Safeguarding pages on website and new foreword on the Diocesan Commitment to Survivors - from Bishop.	Bishop. Trustees. Senior Clergy, Parish Priests (the latter responsible for knowing about commitment to safeguarding of whole Diocese and ensuring this is delivered with Safeguarding Department at local level in their Parish).	December 2023 for Bishop's video and forewords.	Ongoing with 6 monthly reviews.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
2.3.2	Bishop to give direction to Priests on how visible public safeguarding leadership is to be provided by the Clergy.	Bishop.	Winter 23/24.	Ongoing with 12 monthly reviews.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in June 2024.
2.4	[CSSA 2.6]	Review decision making processes for situations in which the reputation of the charity is a consideration, ensuring always that effective safeguarding procedure prevails.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	'Lessons learned' exercise being undertaken.	Board of Trustees.	Autumn 2024.	Ongoing.	Moved to green from amber when plan reviewed in September 2024.

Standard 3: Engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed.

3.1	[CSSA 3.3]	Ensure that a clear pathway for engaging with survivors is in place, both in terms of the responsibilities of diocesan personnel and access to a range of specialist services.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	Red/Amber/Green Rating Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
3.1.1	Diocesan Commitment to Survivors outlines a clear pathway which was agreed by Board in December 2022.		Safeguarding Committee. Board of Trustees.	Ongoing.	Annual review by Survivor Panel and Safeguarding Committee.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
3.1.2	Safeguarding Department will further develop links with survivor support groups and providers of counselling services and update links on the Diocesan website so that victims can approach those groups and access the services directly without having to come via the Diocese if that is preferred.		Safeguarding Coordinator.	Ongoing.	Ongoing commitment. Access to services information to be reviewed in December 2024 and thereafter, annually.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
3.1.3	All Clergy in active ministry to undertake the CSSA's training module "Listening to Victim and Survivor Perspectives". The roll out of CSSA Learning Modular System is to be road mapped at Autumn 2023 National Coordinators meeting and further updates will be incorporated for other relevant staff and volunteers following CSSA guidance.		CSSA will facilitate training. Safeguarding Coordinator will arrange training.	Spring 2024.	Spring 2024	Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
3.2	[CSSA 3.4]	Ensure that survivors receive a consistent pastoral response from the clergy.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

	Develop further training and materials to assist Clergy. See 3.1 above.	CSSA working with Diocesan Safeguarding Department.	Spring 2024.	Spring 2024 then as CSSA rolls out further training. As at Autumn 2024 moving to CaTEW	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
3.3	[CSSA 3.5]	Balancing the need for legal advice and representation with the pastoral response.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	Board of Trustees to continue to authorise the seeking of any legal advice, to confirm and record the rationale on PAMIS if required. To be captured as part of the governance review. Ensure that responses to individuals directly from solicitors are a last resort and that the impact has been considered, assessed and steps taken to mitigate.	Trustees.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.	Moved to green as this action is ongoing, when the plan was reviewed in March 2025.
3.4	[CSSA 3.6]	Ensuring that survivors can easily arrange meeting with the Bishop.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	The Safeguarding Department to publish the Bishop's contact details on the website should survivors wish to make direct contact. A number of victims/survivors from across the UK have already made contact with Bishop Stephen as a consequence of the Installation Mass.	Safeguarding Department.	November 2023.	Ongoing but updated as required.	Green when plan approved in December 2023.

3.5	[CSSA 3.7]	Provision of specialist training for all involved in meetings with survivors.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
3.5.1	See 3.1.3 above for Clergy.	Safeguarding Committee and Trustees.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
3.5.2	Specialist training (to be developed by CSSA) to be delivered to all who may be potentially involved e.g. Bishop, Vicar General, Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Safeguarding Advisor, COO, PSRs.	The CSSA, Safeguarding Committee and Trustees.	Ongoing.	Ongoing. Training will be moving to CaTEW awaiting clarification.	Amber when plan approved in December 2023. Training available and will be rolled out in line with Training Plan.
3.6	[CSSA 3.8]	Embedding of mechanisms to systematically learn from the experiences of survivors.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
3.6.1	Continue to ask for and capture survivor feedback, develop further work with survivor support groups and counselling services to ensure that all communications with survivors and relevant training provided for Clergy, staff and volunteers engaging with survivors accords with current best practice.	Safeguarding Coordinator and Chair of Safeguarding Committee.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when Plan reviewed in March 2025.
3.6.2	Add consideration of survivor interest and experience to all Safeguarding Committee and Board Meetings and all other relevant meetings.	Safeguarding Coordinator and COO.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.	Amber when plan approved in December 2023.
3.6.3	To achieve this, a Survivor Reference Panel to be created, which will be a group of survivors, who will examine policies & procedures and feedback their thoughts and opinions to Committee meetings as a standing agenda item. *March 2025* Update-all National policies and procedures are being reviewed and re-written by SCIE who are seeking survivor input from National survivor panel. These will be finalized by June 2025	Safeguarding Coordinator.	June 2025.	Ongoing with progress reviews to safeguarding committee.	Moved to amber when plan reviewed in March 2024. To be progressed in Safeguarding Improvement Plan.

Standard 4: Effective management of allegations.

4.1	[CSSA]	Agreement of local policies and procedures to ensure that local arrangements in respect of national policies are clear.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
					Red/Amber/Green Rating
					Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
	Review Diocesan Policies and Procedures against CSSA Policies and Procedures and amend these as required to reflect local practice. Publish on website.		CSSA, Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Committee.	Spring 2025 Review case management policies/procedures when CSSA notifies of practice development via the Safeguarding Committee.	Ongoing at each Safeguarding Committee Meeting after any CSSA notification of practice developments.
					Amber when plan approved in December 2023. CSSA policy review by SCIE-completion date is 2025. To be incorporated into Safeguarding Improvement Plan.
4.2	[CSSA]	Agreement of expected standards for case recording to ensure that developments in recent practice are embedded and maintained.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
	Develop Diocesan CASE recording standards and embed the timely creation and population of PAMIS CASE records with all relevant information and contacts, to include evidence of regular supervisory oversight in the form of reviews.		Safeguarding Coordinator/Advisor and Safeguarding Committee.	Autumn/ Winter 2023 Then as above at 4.1.	As above at 4.1.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in June 2024.

4.3	[CSSA]	The introduction of arrangements for individual case supervision.				
		<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
		Safeguarding Advisor to undertake management of individual cases. Safeguarding Coordinator to undertake and record monthly oversight and case supervision and any action required by Safeguarding Advisor or other people. From September 2023 a more comprehensive report with initial actions and case circumstances is to be presented to the Safeguarding Committee and Board of Trustees. This will allow rationale and recommendations to be recorded, whilst maintaining necessary anonymization for confidentiality and GDPR requirements.	Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Advisor.	Autumn/ Winter 2023.	Report to Spring 2024 Safeguarding Committee if any issues arise as new process beds in around individual case supervision which may require review.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
.4	[CSSA]	Recording of case supervision and committee discussion on individual case records.				
		<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
		Develop template to confirm there has been consideration of essential elements, points agreed and implemented. Agreed Safeguarding Committee recommendations to be placed on individuals PAMIS record, along with any relevant note of Bishop's response see 1.5.2. above.	Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Committee.	Autumn/ Winter 2023.	Ongoing with regular reviews.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024-ongoing.
4.5	[CSSA]	Ensuring that the Diocesan Trustee Safeguarding Committee uses case discussions to learn from the management of allegations and apply this to future practice.				
		<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

	All live cases to be discussed at Safeguarding Committee every six months from opening to consider if further action is needed; any learning from the management of allegations to be captured and applied to future practice; also to confirm when Plans are concluded and active monitoring is stopped. Learning Log to be created for Safeguarding Team and Committee on which learning points identified by Safeguarding Coordinator, Safeguarding Committee and Board of Trustees are recorded along with action taken to embed in management of future cases.	Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Committee.	Autumn/ Winter 2023.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024-ongoing.
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Standard 5: Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns.

5.1	[CSSA]	Introduction of quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that all Risk Information Frameworks (RIFs) provide robust assessments that are updated at routine intervals and following significant changes.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
					Red/Amber/Green Rating Red = to be completed
					Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
	Any significant change in circumstances to trigger an immediate re-examination of the Risk Information Framework (RIF) by Safeguarding Advisor and Safeguarding Coordinator. Otherwise, Safeguarding Coordinator to undertake annual reviews of RIFs.		Safeguarding Advisor and Coordinator.	Already in place.	Ongoing.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
5.2	[CSSA]	Consider the suitability of accommodation arrangements for clergy subject to allegations.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
	When a request to step down from public ministry is made, it will be highlighted within the documentation provided to the member of Clergy/Religious Life Groups(RLG) that there will always be accommodation offered which can be arranged by the Diocese or a reasonable allowance to recompense clergy who wish to reside in suitable accommodation of their own choosing.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Committee.	Leaflets and verbal explanation re: housing options for clergy who have agreed to a request to withdraw from public ministry already available.	Ongoing.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
5.3	[CSSA]	Establish a pool of suitably trained support people for subjects of safeguarding plans.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
5.3.1	Develop role descriptor for the position of support person with clear guidelines in relation to the pastoral/safeguarding responsibilities and information sharing.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Episcopal Vicar for Care of the Clergy.	Autumn 2024.	Ongoing.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2025.

5.3.2	Train a pool of Clergy to act as a suitable support. Training to be provided by an external provider.	Safeguarding Committee, Safeguarding Coordinator and Episcopal Vicar for Care of the Clergy.	Autumn 2025.	Ongoing, with review after each case where this is utilised. Awaiting decision re national training.	Mover to amber when plan reviewed in September 2024. This is beyond diocesan control and will be addressed and progressed at a national level.
5.4	[CSSA]	Embed mechanisms for ensuring that risk information frameworks and safeguarding plans are reviewed at agreed intervals.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
	Electronic reminder from PAMIS to “bring forward” RIFs and Safeguarding Plan reviews has already been implemented.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Chair of Safeguarding Committee.	In place.	Ongoing.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024-ongoing.
5.5	[CSSA]	Ensure that regular contact is maintained with all subjects of safeguarding plans.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
	Already in place. All individuals subject to Safeguarding Plans contacted as a minimum every six months although can be more frequent if support and further monitoring is required.		Safeguarding Coordinator and Parish Priest.	In place.	Ongoing.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2024.
5.6	[CSSA]	Ensure that links between safeguarding and canonical processes are referenced in case records.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
	Link between safeguarding and canonical processes will be on case updates which are presented to Safeguarding Committee and are reviewed at each meeting.		Bishop, Safeguarding Coordinator and Chancellor.	In place.	Ongoing.
					Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024. This form part of the paperwork presented to Safeguarding Committee at each meeting.

Standard 6: Implementation of robust human resource management.

6.1	[CSSA 6.3]	Ensure that the current DBS backlog is eliminated and ensure that measures to prevent a recurrence of this issue are effective.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	Red/Amber/Green Rating Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
	Continue ongoing work to eliminate backlog and provide Board of Trustees with information on any additional resource necessary to achieve all outstanding checks by Spring 2024. Draw up timetable of staggered checks to cover to commence prior to 3 year renewal periods in relation to all categories of individuals requiring DBS.		Safeguarding Coordinator, Safeguarding Committee, Board of Trustees.	Spring 2024 for update of all outstanding DBS.	Ongoing with annual review by Board of Trustees.	Green when plan approved in December 2023.
6.2	[CSSA 6.4]	Final agreement of the Volunteer policy and action plan, including recruitment, role expectations, support, and processes for removal from role.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	A volunteer policy will be agreed to include processes and policies for appointment of all volunteers which will cover areas including recruitment, role expectations, support and process for removal from role of volunteers and the maintenance of Register of Volunteers.		Safeguarding Coordinator, Chair of Safeguarding Committee, COO, Head of HR, Staffing & Remuneration Committee, Data Protection Lead and representatives from Council of Priests and Parish Pastoral Councils.	Policy to be agreed by Board of Trustee meeting Summer 2025.	Policy and processes to be in place by mid 2025 and then subject to annual review.	Moved to amber when plan reviewed in March 2024. This action is being addressed and will be captured in The Safeguarding Improvement Plan (6.1.1)
6.3	[CSSA 6.5]	Review the policy and practice for school governorship appointments (including of clergy) to ensure that safeguarding information known to the diocese is considered.				
	<i>How we will improve</i>		<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

	Policy and practice was reviewed in Spring 2023. New protocol for sharing of applicant details with Safeguarding Department for check against Diocesan Safeguarding files was implemented by July 2023	Director of Education, Safeguarding Coordinator, Data Protection Lead.	Policy and Practice reviewed and new version and Protocol in place from July 2023.	Policy, Practice Protocol to be reviewed annually.	Green when plan approved in December 2023.
6.4	[CSSA 6.6]	Review processes for incoming clergy and existing clergy appointments to ensure that they follow safer recruitment processes.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	Safeguarding Coordinator and Chancellor will carry out a review of current practices and identify areas for improvement, embedding new practices where necessary to include incoming Priest from other denominations.	Safeguarding Coordinator, Chancellor and Data Protection Lead.	Autumn/Winter 2024	Winter 2024.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
6.5	[CSSA 6.7]	Inclusion of the means to raise a complaint about the Bishop with the complaints policy.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	As the CSSA report confirms, this is a matter for national policy and not for the Diocese alone. The Bishop has agreed that any complaint made against him may be forwarded to the Archbishop of Liverpool as the relevant Metropolitan Archbishop. Complaints may also be made to the	CSSA and Bishops Conference of England and Wales.	End 2024.	December 2024. Thereafter await outcome of CSSA recommendation	Moved to green when plan reviewed in March 2025
	Papal Nuncio or directly to the Congregation for Bishops, in Rome. As the Bishop is the Chair of Trustees, a complaint may be made to the Charity Commission. Trustees may wish to develop an internal bespoke complaints policy concerning a complaint made against the Bishop.			for national resolution.	
6.6	[CSSA 6.8]	Ensure learning can be derived from complaints is reported to the Diocesan Trustee Safeguarding Committee and informs practice development.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	

	Any complaints relating to the Safeguarding Department will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee and learning shared with relevant parties including the Board of Trustees- via the annual report passed on by the Staffing and Remuneration committee who are advised of the nature and outcome of complaints received and determine any learning which should be shared with relevant parties across the Diocese.	Safeguarding Committee.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024-ongoing
6.7	[CSSA 6.9]	Ensure that safe routes for whistleblowing are available for all employees, clergy and volunteers.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	As with 6.5 above the position relating to clergy is a matter for national policy and not for the Diocese alone. The current Whistleblowing arrangements are set out by an Act of Parliament which does not cover clergy – although, as with anyone, it is open to them to report any serious concerns to the Charity Commissioner or allegation of any criminal conduct to the Police. So far as employees and volunteers are concerned, safe whistleblowing routes have been and are in place and consideration will be made to publishing the policy on the Diocesan Website.	Board of Trustees to consider publication of Whistleblowing policy on Diocesan Website at June 2023 meeting. Catholic Bishops Conference England and Wales (CBCEW) to take forward national resolution re clergy not being covered by the current whistleblowing legislation.	If agreed by Board of Trustees to authorise publication of Whistleblowing Policy covering employees, and volunteers by end December 2024.	June 2025. Thereafter await outcome of CSSA recommendation for national resolution.	Amber when plan approved in December 2023. This does not form a part of the eight standards and related specifically to issues highlighted in the 2023 audit.

Standard 7: Provision of and access to training and support for safeguarding.

7.1	[CSSA 7.3]	Build on early work begun to provide a graduated training programme with options for a range of roles within the diocese.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	Red/Amber/Green Rating Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
	Ensure all Clergy, staff and volunteers have access to the CSSA LMS system when available. Monitor completion and any refresher training provided.	Safeguarding Advisor/ Coordinator.	When LMS is launched.	Winter 2024.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in June 2024.
7.2	[CSSA 7.4]	Move beyond monitoring of compliance (attendance) to consider how the impact of training can be assessed more consistently.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	The Safeguarding Department will research and evaluate different models to assess training impact and implement the most appropriate, dependent on the training audience.	Safeguarding Committee, Safeguarding Advisor and Coordinator.	Spring 2025.	Spring 2025.	Moved to amber when plan reviewed in September 2024. This will be incorporated into the Training Strategy.
7.3	[CSSA 7.5]	Ensure that retired priests who provide any form of ministry access safeguarding training.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	Provision of safeguarding training with an expectation of in person attendance, online training being the exception.	Bishop, Safeguarding Team, EV Care of Clergy.	October 2024.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in June 2024.

	Bishop to ensure all Clergy who are providing any ministry must undertake safeguarding training.				
7.4	[CSSA 7.6]	Completion of work already in progress to include the voices of survivors within training.			
	<i>How we will improve</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	
	Continue and strengthen relationships with survivor support groups and the survivor reference panel, develop training where their lived experience can be heard and journey understood.	Safeguarding Team and Committee, Bishop.	See 1.2.3, 2.1 and 3.6 above.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.

Standard 8: Quality assurance of compliance and continually improve practice.

8.1	[CSSA 8.4]	Development of a safeguarding implementation plan based on the safeguarding standards.				
	How we will improve		Responsible	Timescale	Completion date	Red/Amber/Green Rating Red = to be completed Amber = Ongoing Green = completed
	Development had started in 2022 and was paused during CSSA Review and audit of cases to await CSSA recommendations and allow time for these to be considered by the Diocese. This will now recommence with consideration made to the CSSA Review and Report.		Safeguarding Coordinator, Safeguarding Advisor, Safeguarding Committee and Board of Trustees.	Draft to be progressed in remainder of 2023 and final version to be presented in 2024.	Ongoing with finalisation of plan and commencement of implementation in 2025.	Safeguarding Implementation Plan to be developed around this action plan.
8.2	[CSSA]	Introduction of routine case auditing.				
	How we will improve		Responsible	Timescale	Completion date	
	Arrange for external auditing by safeguarding professionals, including ecumenical and neighbouring Diocesan safeguarding personnel.		Safeguarding Coordinator, Safeguarding Committee and Board of Trustees.	Autumn 2025.	Ongoing with 3 yearly re-audit.	Moved to green when plan reviewed in September 2024.
8.3	[CSSA]	Consider establishing a means to provide reflective supervision to safeguarding team members.				
	How we will improve		Responsible	Timescale	Completion date	
	Reflective supervision to be recorded in monthly 1-2-1 supervisory discussions and safeguarding coordinator to reflect via the Safeguarding Committee Chair. Learning points to be discussed at Safeguarding Committee and minuted as well as documented on PAMIS. Relevant learning to be passed to Board of Trustees.		Safeguarding Advisor, Safeguarding Coordinator, Chair of Safeguarding and Board of Trustees.	October 2023.	Ongoing.	Moved to green when plan reviewed September 2024.

Glossary of Terms

CAFOD - an international development charity and the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

CaTEW -Catholic Trust of England and Wales

College of Consultors – a group of experienced clergy who assist the bishop in the governance of the diocese in accordance with Church law.

Chancellor – member of the clergy who oversees functions of church administration such as the issuing of official documents to the clergy.

Clergy – Bishops, Deans, Canons, Priests, Deacons.

Curia - an official body/department of the Catholic Church.

CSSA – Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency. The independent organisation which regulates, audits, reviews and monitors safeguarding in catholic church bodies. The CSSA has eight standards which lay out the expectations of safeguarding. They used these standards as the framework for their report.

Diocesan Board of Trustees – a group of clergy and lay members who are appointed to act in the Diocesan charity's best interests, set the strategy, make key decisions and oversee the running of the charity. A key part of those responsibilities is safeguarding.

Diocesan Safeguarding Committee – a group of clergy and lay members (some of whom are also Trustees) who oversee the work of the Safeguarding Department and report on a three monthly basis to the Board of Trustees.

Episcopal Vicar / EV – a priest who has oversight of a geographical area or specific area of responsibility.

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulations.

H.R. – a department of the Curia, Human Resources.

Installation Mass – the mass where a Bishop is appointed by The Holy See in Rome to be a loving father, a gentle shepherd, and a wise teacher to all.

Laity – ‘the lay faithful’, parishioners and worshippers who are not clergy or members of religious life groups.

LOUDfence - an organisation which promotes visible displays of support and solidarity with those affected by abuse. LOUDfence uses ribbons attached to churches and displays within to represent the voices of those who wish to speak out in support and defence of those affected by abuse.

PAMIS – (Parish Administration and Management Information System) the secure computer software which is used to manage cases of concern, investigated by the Safeguarding Department.

PSR – A Parish Safeguarding Representative, based in all parishes and provides a link between the safeguarding team and each congregation.

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 – an act of parliament which protects the rights of whistleblowers

SCIE- Social Care Institute for Excellence.