

Newcastle Diocesan Synod

Safeguarding Report

Note by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

This report highlights the roles and responsibilities of Diocesan Synod in relation to safeguarding and in particular asks Synod to adopt the national Safeguarding Policy as well as being aware of the related national Practice Guidance that is now available.

1. Role of Diocesan Synod in safeguarding arrangements

1.1 Diocesan Synod has four responsibilities with regard to safeguarding¹:

- Ensure there are adequate safeguarding resourcing in the diocese (this is the responsibility of the Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance under the governance of the Diocesan Synod)
- Adopt and implement the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance
- Develop and implement the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy (this is done in partnership with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel and the Diocesan Bishop)
- Review the diocese's safeguarding progress annually

2. National Safeguarding Policy

2.1 Promoting a Safer Church is the Church of England's national safeguarding policy for children, young people and adults which was approved by the House of Bishops' in 2017. <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>

2.2 The policy outlines the six overarching policy commitments as well as acknowledging the foundations for safeguarding work rooted in the gospel, human rights and the law, core principles, good safeguarding practice and learning lessons from the past.

2.3 The six policy commitments are as follows:

- i. Promoting a safer environment and culture
- ii. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church
- iii. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- iv. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- v. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- vi. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

¹ Source: *Church of England's Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance*, Section 2.3 page 12, [use this link to access the document](#) or request a paper copy from Church House, North Shields.

2.4 When the Policy was published 200 copies were purchased and a copy was sent to every parish within the diocese along with information about how additional copies could be purchased or downloaded.

2.5 Recommendation

That the Newcastle Diocesan Synod adopts this policy which must actively underpin all safeguarding work within the diocese and drive improvement in practice in parishes and deaneries and in the diocese as a whole.

3. Practice Guidance

3.1 The following Practice Guidance is available on the safeguarding pages of the Church of England's website (www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding) and also the Diocesan website (www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding)

Policy and Practice Guidance

- [Responding well to domestic abuse](#) (2017)

Practice Guidance

- [Key roles and responsibilities of church office holders and bodies](#) (2017)
- [Responding to, assessing and managing concerns or allegations against church officers](#) (2017)
- [Training and development](#) (2017)
- [Safer recruitment](#) (2016)
- [Responding well to those who have been sexually abused](#) (2011)
- [Safeguarding in religious communities](#) (2015)
- [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#) (2018)

Joint practice guidance with The Methodist Church

- [Safeguarding records](#) (2015)
- [Local Ecumenical partnerships](#) (2015)

3.2 Recommendation

That the Newcastle Diocesan Synod:

- adopts the Policy and Practice Guidance for responding well to domestic abuse;**
- notes the Practice Guidance that is available and informs safeguarding practice within the diocese.**

4. Reviewing safeguarding progress annually

4.1 This is undertaken by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel which meets twice a year currently and is independently chaired.

4.2 A safeguarding annual report is produced and included within the Annual Reports to the Diocesan Synod. The most recent report was presented to the Synod on 28 April 2018.

5. Resourcing and Safeguarding Strategy

5.1 These aspects of Synod's responsibilities are undertaken by the Board for Finance and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group and Bishop respectively under the governance of the Synod.