



Diocese of Southwark

Annual Safeguarding Report 2019

This report summarises the activity of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) during 2019 and identifies a number of key work priorities for 2020.

Executive summary - 2019 activity and planned work for 2020

During 2019:

- More than 2060 individuals at the Cathedral and across the Diocese attended one of the 93 safeguarding courses delivered (January to December 2019)
- There was a 32% increase in new matters referred to the DST during the year - 516 in 2019 compared with totals of 392 in 2018 and 360 in 2017
- 2244 online Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) applications were submitted
- Serious Incident Reporting arrangements were revised and 9 safeguarding serious incident reports submitted to the Charity Commission
- SafeBase case recording system came into operation on 1 January 2019
- A revised version of A Safe Church was published to reflect current House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance
- There was an increase in Assistant DSA (ADSA) resources from March 2019 following a resourcing review
- Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2) was initiated on 4th November 2019

During 2020:

- An independent audit of safeguarding arrangements at Southwark Cathedral will take place from 25-27 February 2020
- The Diocesan Secretary will become the Bishop's Lead for Safeguarding when the Deputy Diocesan Secretary retires in the summer
- The Past Cases Review 2 will be undertaken and completed by the end of December 2020

1. Safeguarding activity during 2019

The team offers a variety of support to worshipping communities across the Diocese, including specialist safeguarding training, advice on procedural and

policy matters and casework support in relation to both non-recent and current safeguarding concerns.

1.1 Training

NB - italic figures in brackets represent 2018 totals for comparative purposes.

In 2019, the Diocese delivered an extensive safeguarding training offer to clergy, those in authorised ministry and to a range of other church officers, including paid staff and volunteers. This offer is in line with the national Learning and Development Framework approved by the House of Bishops which was further revised in July 2019 leading to some adjustments to our programme in September. 1966 (1758) individuals attended safeguarding courses from January to December 2019. (This does not include Safeguarding Foundation courses for Cathedral staff and volunteers - see below).

The Diocesan based training programme (largely delivered by the DSA and Assistant DSAs) is complemented by parish/deanery-based sessions, usually delivered by a small number of voluntary trainers and the ADSAs. Evaluations completed by participants continued to be largely positive for the courses delivered although it is a challenge to achieve the correct balance between directly taught content and group work. National training materials are adapted for local use in most courses.

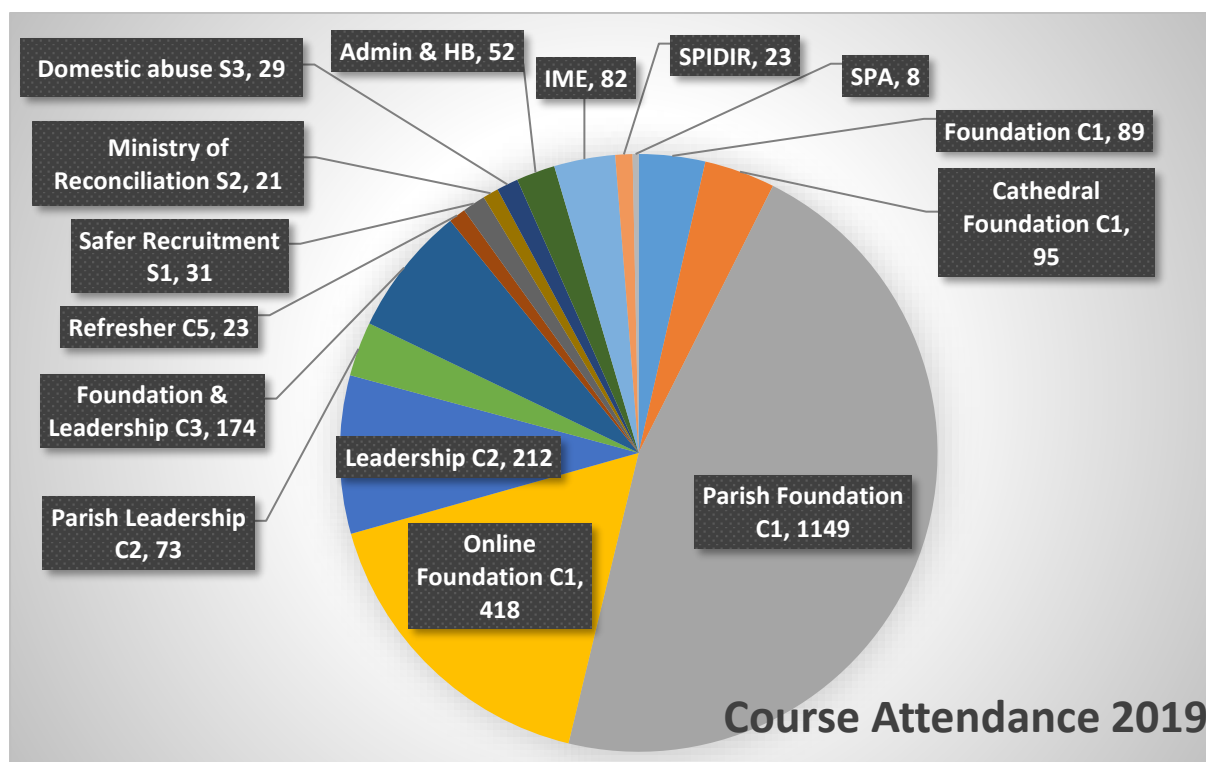
A rolling programme of training for very large numbers of staff and volunteers at Southwark Cathedral continued in 2019 with 95 individuals attending 8 Foundation courses there.

Two online safeguarding training courses were available in 2019 and take up increased significantly from 2018 when they were launched. 533 (316) people completed the Basic Awareness (formerly C0) course and 418 (218) individuals completed the Foundation course (formerly C1) online.

From January to December 2019:

- 41 (42) courses were delivered as part of the Diocesan safeguarding training programme to 832 (827) participants. There was an ongoing focus on ensuring clergy and those in authorised and commissioned roles attend relevant courses, usually a day-long Foundation and Leadership event (formerly C3).
- 44(35) safeguarding courses were delivered locally to parishes or deaneries involving 1149 (922) participants. Parishes were again encouraged through the parish safeguarding audit, to request a local training event if they had not previously held one. 37 were delivered by voluntary trainers and 7 by the Assistant DSAs or DSA.

Numbers attending different safeguarding courses during 2019 are shown on the following pie chart.



The provision of effective training remains crucial to the promotion of good safeguarding practice and the prevention of harm and abuse.

The size of the Diocese means that it remains challenging to reach and deliver training to all those who require it under mandatory requirements. Our Training Administrator is involved in operating our systems which remind and encourage individuals to keep their training up to date. The availability of the Foundation course online has been a helpful way for some people to access mandatory training and the number of online courses completed in 2019 almost doubled on the 2018 total.

We continue to remind clergy, Readers and SPAs when their training is due for renewal. An ever-increasing number of people in a range of lay leadership roles need to be equipped for ministry through appropriate safeguarding training.

In spring of 2019, the Safeguarding Training Administrator visited a number of possible new venues for training across the Diocese. 4 new venues were used in 2019 with 2 further venues, south of the M25, planned for use in 2020.

The DSA and the Dean were asked to support the development of a national training course on “Pastoral Conversations, the Reconciliation of the Penitent and Safeguarding” during 2019. In spite of some extensive work done locally, including delivery of a refreshed and extended course for clergy and within IME, arrangements for national roll-out are yet to be agreed.

1.2 New referrals

In 2019, the DST saw an increase of approximately 32% of new matters referred from the 2018 total. This followed a 9% increase the previous year. 516 new referrals were received by the safeguarding team during 2019 (392 in 2018).

In 2019, the safeguarding team reviewed the personal files of all clergy either arriving in or leaving the Diocese and provided necessary advice to the Bishops on any safeguarding information required for inclusion in Clergy Current Status Letters. Approximately 47 (95) clergy files were reviewed in 2019 (9% of new matters referred).

Other types of new referrals include the provision of advice to parishes where there may be concerns about the circumstances of individuals within congregations, risk assessment of those individuals with blemished DBS checks (31 (25) cases in 2019), and 10 requests for new worship agreements.

A number of cases formed responses under serious safeguarding situation procedures where concerns have been reported about the conduct of church officers, including those in ordained and lay ministry - 10 (21) newly referred cases in 2019. It should be noted that the team has also managed the ongoing responses to 7 existing allegations cases where involvement began prior to January 2019. These are not counted as new cases but several matters required multiple core group meetings and significant work by team members. Of the 10 newly-referred cases, 7 related to safeguarding concerns about a member of clergy and 3 about another church officer (3). Core group meetings were required for all.

The majority of the team's casework relates to current situations but 10 (59%) of the 17 cases requiring a core group process related to reports of non-recent abuse, in some cases dating back over decades. We have been able to refer those affected locally to specialist support resources including an independent listening service provided by 31:8, counselling provision provided by Confidential Care and a number of Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs). In one complex matter spanning diocesan boundaries, we have been able to offer a number of individuals specialist support from the ISVA seconded to the Diocese of Chichester Safeguarding Team.

There is an ongoing need in 2020 to provide suitably skilled individuals who are able to take on the Link Person role in supporting individuals who are the subject of safeguarding concerns and allegations. Pastoral care and support is identified in each case and there is an important need to focus on the vulnerabilities of those about whom concerns have been voiced.

Subject Access Requests made under the Data Protection Act have remained a resource intensive component of the work of the team. Three SARs were made in 2019, two being fully responded to in year (the third was responded to in early 2020). The Data Protection Act of 2018 means that there is now less time for the Diocese to respond to such requests. These requests are extremely complex.

In 2019, the 516 newly referred matters can be classified as follows:

- 92 (18%) new cases related primarily to children or young people (87)
- 137 (27%) new cases related primarily to an adult who may be at risk of harm (134)
- 44 (9%) new cases related to a situation where there was a concern about domestic abuse (17)

In addition:

- There were 31 (6%) new referrals relating to a blemished DBS check (25)
- 10 requests were made for new worship agreements and at the end of the year we had 41 (30) worship agreements in place across the Diocese enabling individuals who are known to pose risk to worship safely in parishes
- 155 (30%) of the new referrals were procedural queries, information requests relating to individuals or information being logged with the DST
- 47 (9%) were blue file reviews

The increase in volume, complexity of referrals and consequential impact upon the workload and resourcing of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team remains under regular review by the DSAP, Deputy Diocesan Secretary and Diocesan Secretary. During 2019, the 1.6 full time equivalent Assistant DSA resource was increased to 2.0. The second full-time ADSA joined the team at the end of March bringing extensive Police experience with her.

1.3 Disclosure and Barring Service checks

Online DBS checks are undertaken through an independent umbrella organisation, APCS. 2244 (2131) online applications were made during 2019. 346 (235) online applications were submitted in relation to 203 clergy, 34 ordinands, 109 Readers and SPAs. These figures relate to both new checks and renewals.

The feedback from those using the online system remains positive. There are a total of 425 live online accounts across the Diocese - some parishes have more than one person set up as an ID checker or disclosure manager. During 2019, 86% (81%) of enhanced DBS checks had been processed in less than 7 days (measured from the day the application was submitted to APCS to the day the disclosure notice was emailed by APCS to the parish or Diocese). 10% of the checks have taken longer than 14 days.

There has been a move towards parishes making more use of basic criminal records checks where there may not be eligibility for a particular role to have a more comprehensive DBS check. These basic criminal record checks cost £23 each, including for those individuals in voluntary positions. DBS checks for volunteers are free. There have been a number of cases where APCS have challenged whether certain roles (where there is no regulated activity) meet the eligibility criteria for a DBS check and if not, the basic criminal records check provides an alternative.

31 (25) alerts were received from APCS as a result of blemished DBS checks. This represents about 1.4% (1.2% in 2018) of all the DBS check applications submitted. All of these cases require risk assessment by a member of the DST so that advice can be given to the recruitment lead in the parish or the Diocese on whether the appointment should proceed and on any additional safeguarding measures which may need to be put in place.

DBS checks remain an important element in ensuring that those who work with the most vulnerable in our church communities are appropriately selected as part of the wider safer recruitment process.

1.4 Safeguarding quality assurance

Parishes were not asked to complete a self-audit of their local safeguarding arrangements in 2019. This was in response to some feedback received from parishes about the demands being placed upon them and also taking into consideration the demands of the Past Cases Review 2 return (see below).

The DSA contributed safeguarding questions to the year's Archdeacons' Articles of Enquiry - these questions related to the following up of actions arising from the 2018 self-audit and the adoption of safeguarding policies by the PCC.

1.5 New national policy and guidance

During 2019, the Church of England National Safeguarding Team (NST) issued national practice guidance on:

- Safeguarding Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission (January and August)
- Safeguarding Training and Development (July)
- Safer Recruitment - Permission to Officiate (July and December)
- Past Cases Review 2 (August)
- Safer Environment and Activities (November)

All such policy and practice guidance has been approved by the House of Bishops and the Diocese is obliged to act in accordance with this guidance. Documents are available via: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding#policy-and-practice-guidance>

New practice guidance expected during 2019 on responding well to spiritual abuse has been delayed.

Our local policies and procedures, *A Safe Church (ASC)*, had been revised in 2018 to reflect the practice changes contained within extensive national guidance published over the previous three years. Further revisions to incorporate changes arising from the 2019 publications of practice guidance and following some other feedback and changes were made in late 2019 and an updated version was made available on the diocesan website. It has since been produced in hard copy format for parishes and was distributed in January 2020.

The online version of A Safe Church is available at:

<http://southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-and-procedures>

1.6 Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission

Following high-profile safeguarding related incidents in the charity sector, the Charity Commission updated its guidance on Serious Incident Reporting in October 2018 with a particular focus on the reporting of Safeguarding Serious Incidents. The Church of England worked with the Charity Commission to agree bespoke guidance for DBFs, PCCs and Religious Communities on how to identify and report a Serious Incident (see 1.5).

A letter sent to all Incumbents and PCC Secretaries by the Diocesan Secretary on 21 February 2019 drew attention to the relevant guidance and actions required under the arrangements. All PCCs needed to pass a resolution to delegate the responsibility for preparing Safeguarding Serious Incident reports to the DSA. As of 10th February 2020, 299 PCCs had passed the resolution.

In 2019, 9 Safeguarding Serious Incident Reports were submitted to the Charity Commission.

2. Safeguarding resources and management in the Diocese of Southwark

The Safeguarding Team is made up of a full-time Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser with a professional social work background in local authority Children's Services. There are two permanent Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers. In late March 2019, the previously 0.6 full-time equivalent role was filled by a new member of staff so both ADSAs are now full-time. The ADSAs have experience as a former Police officer with specialism in public protection and child protection and a senior teacher respectively.

The Advisers are supported by a full-time Safeguarding Administrator and a half-time equivalent Safeguarding Training Administrator.

Resources for a fixed-term part-time Past Cases Review 2 Project Co-ordinator role was agreed in 2019. This post has been recruited to and will take the lead on ensuring that the Diocese of Southwark complies with the requirements of PCR2 (see below).

Resourcing remains under review and safeguarding has been identified in the diocesan budget as a potential area for further resource if needed.

Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk of harm is supported by a large number of people across the Diocese including approximately 600 Parish Safeguarding Officers and others in voluntary roles such as voluntary trainers. The DST continues to receive considerable and invaluable support from the Archdeacons, Bishops, the Communications Team, legal advisers and others. Professional supervision is provided to the DSA by an external safeguarding consultant.

In 2019, safeguarding policy and practice continued to be overseen within the Diocese by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP). The term of office for the Independent Chair runs until November 2021. The DSAP is made up from individuals with key roles within the Diocese and Cathedral as well as external representatives from statutory partners including:

- The Metropolitan Police Service
- Kingston and Richmond Children's Services (Achieving for Children)

During 2019, the DSAP met with each Area Bishop and their Episcopal Area representatives to discuss safeguarding matters locally. The July DSAP meeting focused on safeguarding at Southwark Cathedral - the Dean and Cathedral Safeguarding representatives attended.

Line management arrangements for the DSA, through the Deputy Diocesan Secretary who is also the Bishop's Lead for Safeguarding, continued to provide an effective structure for overseeing the work of the DST during 2019. These arrangements will change in 2020 with the retirement of the Deputy Diocesan Secretary. The Diocesan Secretary will be assuming line management responsibility for the DST and also the role of Bishop's Lead for Safeguarding.

3. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).

The Church of England is one of the institutions which has been scrutinised in the Public Hearing strand of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, chaired by Professor Alexis Jay. In July 2019 the Inquiry considered the extent of institutional failings to protect children from sexual abuse within the Anglican Church through a third set of hearings.

An interim report and recommendations arising from the 2018 hearings was published in 2019 and considered by the DSAP in its July meeting. The DSAP plans to meet in June 2020 to consider the substantive report on the Anglican Church from IICSA which is now due to be published in the spring of 2020.

4. Other developments and PCR2

A safeguarding case recording system was commissioned in 2018 and came into use on 1 January 2019. We purchased a licence for the SafeBase system developed by the Diocese of Canterbury. A number of other dioceses use the same system. SafeBase provides a more robust means of recording the team's casework. There have been some issues in relation to system support available from the Diocese of Canterbury and the system's reporting functionality. We are seeking an improved offer of support for SafeBase and some development discussions in 2020.

The DSA and members of the team continue to engage with safeguarding colleagues in other dioceses and at the National Safeguarding Team in a range of activities and initiatives. In 2019, the DSA was involved in the commissioning process for risk

assessment training and one of the ADSAs has been trained in risk assessment within the church alongside other DSA colleagues from across the country.

Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2) is taking place nationally with every diocese organising and being responsible for local completion in line with specific practice guidance by December 2020. It is a major piece of work involving the independent review of the personal files of all clergy and church officers with roles with children and vulnerable adults. In addition there will be an examination of all Diocesan safeguarding records relating to concerns which have been raised about members of clergy of church officers.

A primary aim of PCR2 is to ensure that there are no outstanding and unmanaged safeguarding risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults posed by church officers. The review will seek to ensure that the support needs of known survivors of church abuse have been considered and met. PCR2 reports and outcomes will be reported back to IICSA.

Bishop Christopher referenced PCR2 at Diocesan Synod in November 2019 and wrote to all Incumbents, PSOs, Churchwardens and PCC Secretaries during Advent to ask for their help in identifying any past and remaining safeguarding concerns about church officers in parishes. Archdeacons were asked to ensure that arrangements for the completion of a required return (Table 1A) were made for those parishes in vacancy. Parishes needed to submit their completed and declared Table 1A by 14/2/20 to the designated PCR2 email address.

PCR2 will be a major piece of work for the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) through until its conclusion at the end of the year. Funding for fixed term project management support was agreed by DCT as well as funding towards the costs of the independent reviewers. Some match funding is being made available by Archbishops' Council. A PCR2 project co-ordinator starts on 18 February 2020.

An outline plan for PCR2 was agreed with Bishop Christopher at a formal PCR2 initiation meeting on 4th November. We anticipate that independent reviewers will be looking at our records from May to July 2020. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) has a major role in ensuring PCR2 takes place and a PCR2 Reference Group has been established, chaired by Chris Smart (Independent Chair of DSAP) - it will meet throughout the year. The Reference Group is establishing a risk register for PCR2.

Background and overview information on PCR2 can be found at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/PCR2%20Background%20and%20Overview.pdf>

From 25-27 February 2020, safeguarding arrangements at Southwark Cathedral will be audited by the Social Care Institute of Excellence. This is part of a national programme of independent safeguarding audits of Cathedrals taking place across the country. Throughout 2019, an audit planning group has been meeting, chaired by

the Sub Dean, in preparation for the audit. The DSA is also the Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser. Considerable work has taken place and is ongoing to strengthen and enhance the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults at the Cathedral. The SCIE audit report will be published following the audit and the Cathedral Chapter will be preparing an action plan in response to the considerations raised.

Kate Singleton

10 February 2020