Deputy Diocesan Safeguarding Officer - Background paper

Welcome and thank you for your interest in this post. This information is a brief introduction to the Diocese and the role.

Our website, found at https://www.chesterdiocese.org/content/the-diocese and the website of the Church of England found at https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding will provide you with more background information, policies and Codes of Practice.

The Diocese of Chester

The diocese spans from Wirral and the Welsh border in the west to the limestone hills of the Derbyshire Peak District in the east. The north of the diocese reaches up to the rivers Mersey and Tame and the conurbations of south and east Manchester, and south to the towns of Crewe, Sandbach and Nantwich on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent and Shropshire.

It has a population of around £1.6m and is served by around 265 parishes, 345 Churches and 215 benefices.

Safeguarding arrangements in the Diocese of Chester

In every diocese of the Church of England, the Diocesan Bishop and The Diocesan Board of Finance Trustees are accountable for safeguarding.

There is a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP), of independent and external representations and an independent chair, which provides scrutiny and independent oversight of the safeguarding work.

There is also a Safeguarding Executive Group, which is an internal operational and strategy group, focusing on implementation of the safeguarding business plan, culture change and policy development.

Each diocese is required to have a Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO). The purpose of the statutory DSO role is to support the Diocesan Bishop and the diocese in developing policy and good practice, providing training, and ensuring appropriate response, management and support in relation to allegations of abuse, safeguarding risk assessments and managing offenders seeking to attend church activities/services, and working with statutory authorities as appropriate.

In addition to its work for the diocese, the DSO also provides support to the cathedral Dean and the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO).

The Chester Diocese safeguarding team currently consists of the DSO, the deputy DSO post (vacant), one full time and one part time professionally qualified Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers, a safeguarding project support worker, a safeguarding training administrator and some additional freelance and volunteer trainers. Additionally, Chester Cathedral employs a full-time professionally qualified Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.

Each parish within the Diocese has its own volunteer Parish Safeguarding Officer who, along with the clergy and trustees (PCC members) lead on safeguarding in each Parish.

Further information

National Codes of Practice and guidance can be found on the Church of England's website.

The most recent independent safeguarding audit report by INEQE of Chester Diocese can be found on Chester Diocese website.

November 2026