

Responsibilities

Responsibilities within the Diocese

The following are extracts from *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance 2017* (also known as 'Key Roles'). <http://bit.ly/ChurchOfficeHolders>

The full document outlines the roles and responsibilities of office-holders and bodies within:

- the National Church
- Dioceses
- Parishes
- Bishop's Mission Orders (BMOs)
- Cathedrals
- Peculiars
- Religious Communities
- Theological Education Institutions (TEIs)
- Church of England schools.

1. The role of the Diocesan Bishop

The Diocesan Bishop is ultimately responsible for ensuring good safeguarding arrangements and practice in the Diocese in line with House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and guidance.

In certain circumstances, the Bishop may delegate these functions pursuant to Section 13 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 by instrument subject to the approval of the Diocesan Synod (unless a matter is urgent, in which case the Bishop can seek the approval of the Bishop's Council and standing committee of the Diocesan Synod). Delegation may be to a Suffragan Bishop and/or Assistant Bishop. In addition, the Diocesan Bishop may ask someone to carry out safeguarding tasks on his/her behalf, for example an Archdeacon. The ultimate responsibility, however, will always rest with the Diocesan Bishop.

The Diocesan Bishop's role is to:

- provide leadership and direction in promoting a safer church
- attend national training and any local training, as required
- with the Bishop's Staff, Diocesan Synod and Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), ensure the adequate resourcing of safeguarding in the Diocese (please see Appendix 1 of [Key Roles](#) for additional guidance)
- seek to ensure that there is a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese with clear lines of accountability between Diocesan groups and bodies. In addition, to ensure that there are clear arrangements in place with cathedrals and any other relevant church bodies, for example religious communities or TEIs
- ensure that safeguarding is a regular item on the Bishop's Staff Team agenda and that the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) is able to attend meetings, as required
- ensure that the Diocese adopts and implements House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance
- ensure that the Diocese has a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP). The group should have clear terms of reference and be directly accountable to and regularly report to the Diocesan Bishop and other Diocesan bodies (see Appendix 2 of [Key Roles](#) for a model terms of reference)

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- appoint a suitably qualified independent chair (see Appendix 3 of [Key Roles](#) for a model role description) to the DSAP and work with the chair and the DSA on the choice of members
- appoint a suitably qualified and experienced DSA(s) following consultation with the National Safeguarding Team (NST) (see Appendix 1 of [Key Roles](#) for additional guidance)
- ensure that the DSA(s) are provided with the appropriate financial, organisational and management support and that they meet with the Bishop regularly, and that they have full access to all records including clergy personal files. This includes ensuring that the DSA(s) receives supervision that is appropriate for the role and that they have sufficient time to undertake continuing professional development (please see Appendix 1 of [Key Roles](#) for additional guidance on DSAs)
- ensure that the Diocese develops a Diocesan safeguarding strategy that is informed by the national [Promoting a Safer Church](#) Business Plan
- ensure that the Diocese has arrangements in place to monitor and support safeguarding arrangements in parishes. This should include monitoring as part of the Archdeacons' responsibilities and visitations
- ensure that a Diocesan central record of clergy, licensed lay ministers and other church officers who have a role with children, young people and vulnerable adults is kept that will enable a prompt response to enquiries and enable tracking of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) compliance, renewals and safeguarding training. This record should include start and finish dates, all posts held and next post when known, DBS information and training attended. Where there have been safeguarding concerns, these should be clearly indicated and cross-referenced to clergy/personnel files in accordance with data protection principles and House of Bishops' guidance
- ensure that a complaints and whistleblowing procedure is in place which can be used for those who wish to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues
- ensure that arrangements are in place to share relevant information (after having received advice from the DSA and Registrar) about individuals with other Dioceses, other church bodies, other denominations and organisations or the National Church as appropriate
- ensure that the Diocese provides arrangements to support survivors of abuse
- ensure that adequate safeguarding training is available and that all clergy, licensed Readers, lay workers and other church officers who have relevant contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults participate accordingly
- discharge his/her legal duties to have regard for safeguarding in the authorisations of ministers and the exercise of discipline. This would include:
 - where satisfied, directing a Priest or Deacon who has authority to officiate in the Diocese to undergo a risk assessment
 - considering the suspension of any Priest or Deacon holding any preferment in the Diocese, if, on the basis of information provided by the local authority or police, the relevant individual presents a significant risk of harm
 - in cases involving a Churchwarden, a PCC member, a member of a District Church Council or Synod, a Secretary or Treasurer of a PCC, a licensed Reader or lay worker, considering suspension where the individual involved has been arrested on suspicion of committing an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (or charged without having been arrested), or if the Bishop is satisfied that an individual represents a safeguarding risk on information provided by the police or local authority
- ensure that the Diocese reviews progress annually.

2. The role of the Diocesan Synod

The Diocesan Synod is the body of representatives of the clergy and lay people in the Diocese, which meets together with the Bishops, Archdeacons and other senior office-holders in the Diocese to discuss matters of concern to the Diocese, and to make provision for those things that require some form of action or statement. In terms of safeguarding, the Diocesan Synod will:

- ensure that there is adequate safeguarding resourcing in the Diocese
- adopt and implement the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance
- develop and implement the Diocesan safeguarding strategy
- review the Diocese's safeguarding progress annually.

3. The role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

The functions of the DSA are set out in the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016. In broad terms, the functions are as follows:

- where an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered abuse is made against a Bishop or other church officer in the Diocese, or against any other person, advising on whether the allegation should be referred to the police for investigation; and, if the DSA thinks it should be so referred, making the referral
- co-operating with, and supporting the work of, the police, local authorities and other bodies in cases in which it is suspected that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered abuse or is at risk of suffering abuse
- giving advice, information and support to those who have suffered abuse
- giving advice to the Bishop and other church officers on safeguarding matters
- co-ordinating the work of the DSAP
- providing, or co-ordinating the provision of, training on safeguarding matters
- implementing, or co-ordinating the implementation of, the guidance issued by the House of Bishops. To ensure that training is delivered by suitably experienced qualified trainers
- giving advice, information and support to PCCs and Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) on the implementation of that guidance and, where appropriate, challenging PCCs and PSOs on what they have done to implement that guidance
- issuing guidance on safeguarding matters for church officers in the Diocese and PSOs in any parish in the Diocese that is consistent with the guidance issued by the House of Bishops
- where the DSA thinks that safeguarding matters are not being dealt with properly and it has not proved possible to resolve within the Diocese the points at issue, informing the NST
- where a clergy risk assessment is required, making the arrangements for it to be carried out
- where a non-clergy risk assessment is required, either carrying out the assessment or making the arrangements for it to be carried out
- giving advice to the Bishop and other church officers in the Diocese on the conduct of a clergy or non-clergy risk assessment and, where such an assessment has been carried out, advising on the steps to take in light of it and monitoring any such steps as are then taken
- promoting good practice on safeguarding matters
- taking such other action in connection with safeguarding matters as the DSA considers necessary or appropriate.

An additional key responsibility is to offer safeguarding advice and guidance to other church bodies. Although these are separate bodies from the Diocese there should be agreed safeguarding arrangements in place supported by information-sharing protocols. In particular to:

- cathedrals. Some Dioceses have a formal agreement with cathedrals to provide joint safeguarding arrangements. If there are separate arrangements, the DSA should liaise

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regularly with the named safeguarding leads in cathedrals and offer advice on safeguarding matters, as required. Some cathedrals have employed a professional safeguarding adviser. In these situations they must work closely with the DSA. All concerns or allegations against church officers must be reported to the DSA

- religious communities. Some Dioceses have a formal agreement with religious communities in the Diocese to provide joint safeguarding arrangements. If there are separate arrangements, the DSA should liaise regularly with the named safeguarding leads in communities and offer advice on safeguarding matters. All safeguarding allegations or concerns in relation to a church officer should be reported to the DSA in line with House of Bishops' guidance
- TEIs. The DSA should liaise regularly with the named safeguarding leads in TEIs and offer advice on safeguarding matters. All safeguarding allegations or concerns in relation to a church officer who is licensed by the Bishop, who is an ordinand or who has a role in a Diocese should be reported to the DSA in line with House of Bishops' guidance.

Please see Appendix 1 of [Key Roles](#) for additional advice on the level of resourcing and Appendix 4 of [Key Roles](#) for a model DSA job description and person specification.

Independence

The DSA must be able to offer independent professional advice to the Diocese. This is in line with the recommendations arising from the reports into the Diocese of Chichester. Independence, in this context, signifies that they are not ordained clergy; have not undertaken any other paid role in the Diocese; and do not discharge or ever have discharged any managerial functions in the Diocese outside of a safeguarding role and do not have any other conflicts of interest that would impact on undertaking a safeguarding role.

Additional Safeguarding Resources

To meet the current requirements of the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy, Practice and Regulations, a Diocese **must** have in place:

- dedicated administrative support for the DSA
- dedicated support to oversee DBS checks and renewals. The shape of the DBS role will be dependent on what system the Diocese uses to process DBS checks
- confidential office space, access to the Diocesan e-mail system and secure storage
- arrangements for out-of-hours cover and DSA absences
- 'authorised listeners' or an externally provided service to support victims/survivors of church abuse
- a pool of 'link people' to support church officers who are the subject of concerns or allegations
- Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Advocates or an externally provided service
- independent chair of safeguarding panel. The arrangements vary from Diocese to Diocese, from paid to unpaid. At a minimum the chair should receive expenses and access to Diocesan training in line with the training and development framework
- recording processes in line with House of Bishops' guidance.

4. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel

The DSAP will oversee safeguarding arrangements in the Diocese. The role of the panel is to:

- offer external expertise and challenge to the Diocese on safeguarding matters

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- advise and make recommendations to the Diocesan Bishop and senior leadership team on the development and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
- seek to ensure the implementation of House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance
- have particular regard to the rigour of the church's arrangements to respond to allegations against church officers, manage risk and support victims/survivors of abuse
- seek to ensure that effective arrangements, including information sharing, is in place with statutory partners
- advise on arrangements to support and monitor the implementation of good safeguarding practice in parishes
- consider information and themes from quality assurance processes, for example Diocesan self-assessments, lessons learned reviews, independent audits and file audits to make recommendations to improve safeguarding arrangements
- receive anonymised management information relating to case work, including risk assessments and safeguarding agreements that the Diocese has completed to maintain oversight of safeguarding work
- monitor the Diocesan requirements relating to safer recruitment, DBS disclosures and safeguarding training and advise accordingly
- contribute to the Diocesan safeguarding strategy and its annual progress review
- advise the Bishop on any circumstances where the Diocese proposes to depart materially from the House of Bishops' safeguarding guidance (includes both policy and practice guidance). To advise the NST if the DSAP continues to consider that a safeguarding matter is not being dealt with properly by the Diocese or other church body
- review progress annually and report this to the Bishop and the identified Diocesan body or bodies.

5. The Archdeacons

The position of Archdeacon is pastoral, administrative, disciplinary and quasi-judicial. The essential nature of the role has been described as “being a good steward so that others are freed to be the worshipping, witnessing and ministering Church”. In particular, the Archdeacon shall assist the Bishop “in his pastoral care and office, and... shall see that all such as hold any ecclesiastical office within the same perform their duties with diligence, and shall bring to the Bishop's attention what calls for correction...” They also, within their Archdeaconry, “...hold yearly visitations” to parishes and “induct any Priest”. They are key to offering leadership and direction in promoting a safer church and supporting parishes with safeguarding concerns.

In terms of safeguarding, an Archdeacon's role is to work closely with the DSA:

- in the handling of serious safeguarding situations relating to church officers in parishes, which relate to allegations against church officers
- supporting and advising parishes in relation to safeguarding policy and practice
- supporting Incumbents to attend safeguarding training and be familiar with the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and relevant guidance for parishes
- attending senior staff safeguarding training (C4)
- attending Diocesan refresher safeguarding training every three years
- working with the DSA to assist in monitoring good safeguarding practice in parishes and during their annual inspection ensuring that parishes (PCCs and clergy) are adhering to good safeguarding practice by paying due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance

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- when new in post, having a one-to-one induction session with the DSA regarding House of Bishops' safeguarding policies and practice guidance, and how they are implemented in the Diocese; and for information about past and current safeguarding issues in churches in his/her Archdeaconry.

It is important that the Diocese makes arrangements to support Archdeacons in their safeguarding role.

Responsibilities within the parish church

1. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Incumbent

The Incumbent may be called the Vicar, Rector or Parson and for the purposes of this policy will also include Priest-in-Charge.

The PCC is the main decision-maker of a parish. Its members are clergy, Churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. Its powers and duties are defined by legislation and can principally be found in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

It has the responsibility, along with the Incumbent, to promote the mission of God in its parish.

Legally, the PCC is responsible for the finances of the parish. It also has ultimate responsibility for the care and maintenance of all church buildings and their contents. Although these responsibilities are executed by the Churchwardens, all PCC members must share in the oversight. It has a voice in the forms of service used by the church and may make representations to the Bishop on matters that affect the welfare of the parish.

All PCCs are charities, although most do not need to register with the Charity Commission, except those with an annual income of more than £100,000. Therefore, every member of a PCC is also a charity trustee. If a PCC is a charity it must comply with the Charity Commission guidance and legislation in relation to charities.

The Incumbent's role is to provide leadership concerning safeguarding, and to encourage everyone to promote a safer church.

The PCC and the Incumbent have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community. In terms of safeguarding, with the Incumbent the PCC will:

- **promote:**
 - a safer church for all in the church community, and ensure there is a plan in place to raise awareness of safeguarding matters, promote training and ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously by all those in the church community
- **adopt:**
 - the House of Bishops' [Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement](#)
 - the House of Bishops' and Diocesan safeguarding policies and practice guidance, while being responsive to local parish requirements
- **appoint:**
 - at least one appropriately experienced designated PSO to work with the Incumbent and PCC. This PSO should be a lay person. It cannot be the Incumbent. The PSO may also be the DBS Administrator for church officers who work with children or vulnerable adults but, if not, the PCC should appoint another individual. The PSO should be supported, trained and given a copy of the parish safeguarding policy and procedures
- **ensure that (with regard to safer recruitment, support and training) all church officers who work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults:**
 - are recruited following the House of Bishops' [Safer Recruitment](#) practice guidance

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- are aware of and work to House of Bishops' safeguarding guidance (includes both policies and practice guidance)
- attend Diocesan Safeguarding Training at least every three years
- **provide:**
 - appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the PCC which involve children and vulnerable adults
 - access to a safeguarding handbook
- **display:**
 - a formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops' [Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement](#). This should be signed on behalf of the PCC
 - contact details of the PSO, churchwarden and any other local leaders
 - information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, for example local authority contact details, domestic abuse and key helplines such as ChildLine (see Appendix 5 of [Key Roles](#) for model 'safeguarding in parishes – who's who')
- **respond by:**
 - creating an environment which is welcoming and respectful and enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently
 - having a procedure in place to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance and in consultation with the DSA
 - reporting all safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers to the DSA
 - ensuring that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/ or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the DSA
 - complying with all data protection legislation, especially in regard to storing information about any paid and unpaid workers and any safeguarding records
 - ensuring that an 'activity risk assessment' is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults and run in the name of the church.

Reviewing and reporting progress:

The PSO should regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting. At the APCM the PCC should provide an annual report in relation to safeguarding. In the PCC's annual report will be a statement which reports on progress and a statement as to whether or not the PCC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding.

Hiring out church premises

- Any hire agreement with any person/body wishing to hire church premises must contain a provision whereby the person/body hiring the premises agrees to comply with the relevant safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops and the Diocese.
- The hire agreement should also contain a provision whereby all those hiring church premises are required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, relevant staff have had appropriate DBS checks and that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring.
- Ensure that all those hiring church premises carry full public liability insurance for this, or are covered through the church's insurance (for example, hire for a children's party).

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Working in a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP):

- If working within an LEP, agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding policy to follow, including where to seek advice in urgent situations in line with the practice guidance. This decision should be ratified by both the Bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership and shared with the DSA; in the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified.

During a clergy vacancy

- During an interregnum the PCC must, working with the Churchwardens, ensure that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing the information on to the new Incumbent. The departing Incumbent must give the safeguarding information to the PSO who can pass the information on to the new Incumbent when he/she takes up their new role.

2. The Churchwarden

Churchwardens are the senior lay representatives of the parish. The role of the Churchwarden is extremely varied but generally involves management, maintenance and mission in accordance with the Churchwardens Measure 2001 and the Canons of the Church of England (see in particular Canon E1). They are the foremost in representing the laity and in co-operating with the Incumbent, and they have a duty to maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard, particularly during the times of divine service. In co-operation with the Incumbent, Churchwardens are generally responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the parish.

In relation to safeguarding, the Churchwardens work with the Incumbent, PCC and PSO to:

- ensure that, in the period of a vacancy (during an interregnum), the Incumbent's safeguarding roles and responsibilities are fulfilled, in consultation with the PCC, PSO and the Area Dean
- pay attention to the specific needs of children and vulnerable adults when undertaking health and safety inspections and risk assessment
- ensure that risk assessments are carried out before new activities are undertaken
- ensure that all parish activities with children and vulnerable adults are adequately supervised and insured
- ensure that the parish has procedures for responding to complaints and grievances
- answer questions regarding safeguarding as they arise in the Archdeacon's visitations, and respond to any specific safeguarding advice which may be given by the Archdeacon.

3. The Parish Safeguarding Officer

Each PSO's role is to:

- work closely with the Incumbent to advise within the parish on all safeguarding matters relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults
- receive, with the Incumbent, any concerns about children or adults in the parish and make sure that proper advice is sought and proper referrals are made
- report all matters relating to concerns and allegations of abuse against church officers, in liaison with the Incumbent, to the DSA who will liaise with the statutory agencies as required. Concerns about the Incumbent should be raised directly with the DSA
- ensure that any ex-offenders with offences against children or vulnerable adults known to be in the church community are notified to the DSA and contribute to managing safeguarding agreements

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- promote safer practices in all activities and make any recommendations required taking into account the particular arrangements of the parish
- seek to ensure that safer recruitment practice is followed, with the support of the Diocese
- attend Diocesan safeguarding training at least every three years
- maintain safeguarding records
- complete national, Diocesan and parish safeguarding self-assessments as required
- contribute to the annual review of parish safeguarding arrangements
- regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting. At the APCM the PCC will provide an annual report in relation to safeguarding.

The PSO may also be responsible for:

- being the Children's and/or Vulnerable Adult Advocate
- being the DBS Administrator (see below)
- supporting other church officers who work with children or vulnerable adults
- providing or arranging provision of safeguarding training for parish workers (both volunteers and paid staff).

Preferably the PSO should be someone who is a lay person, has good pastoral and organisational skills and experience of working with children/young people or vulnerable adults, although not always currently involved in such work in the parish. They should not be the Incumbent or his or her partner. Please see Appendix 8 of [Key Roles](#) for a model role description.

The level of the resource will be dependent on the size and complexity of the parish. These roles are often voluntary but some larger parishes have paid posts. Some parishes have one PSO for children and one for vulnerable adults. If required, in rural parishes or in group arrangements, arrangements for safeguarding may be shared whilst remembering that legal responsibilities will continue to rest with the individual parishes.

4. The Parish DBS Administrator

Every parish should have a nominated person who is responsible for administration of DBS applications. Usually the PSO will incorporate the administration of DBS applications into his/her role. However, where necessary or appropriate (for example in large, busy parishes), this position may be undertaken by a separate person.

In particular, the parish DBS Administrator is responsible for:

- establishing the true identity of the applicant, through the examination of a range of identification documents as set out by the DBS
- checking and validating the information provided by the applicant on the application form
- ensuring that the application form is fully completed and the information it contains is accurate.

Responsibilities within the Cathedral

1. The Dean

The role of the Dean is to provide leadership concerning safeguarding, and to encourage everyone to promote a safer church.

In every cathedral the Dean will, in Chapter:

- have an oversight of the activities that are the responsibility of the Chapter, particularly involving children and vulnerable adults
- inform and work in co-operation with the DSA in the event of allegations, suspicions or disclosures of abuse, and ensure that those who may present a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults are effectively managed
- encourage a culture of safety and vigilance
- provide an annual report to the Bishop on safeguarding policy, procedures, practice and review in the cathedral.

2. The Chapter

In every cathedral the Chapter will:

- accept that its duty of care is to promote a safer church for all in the cathedral community, and ensure that there is a safeguarding strategy in place
- create an environment which is welcoming, respectful and safe from abuse, and which enables and encourages concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently
- adopt and implement House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance
- provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the Cathedral with clear lines of accountability
- appoint a Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO) (and possibly a deputy if required) to work with the Dean, the Chapter and cathedral staff to implement House of Bishops' policy and guidance. This person should be a paid safeguarding professional. Use the DSA role description as a guide for this role. Make arrangements to ensure that appropriate support, supervision and training is provided for these officers. It is advised that this may be best achieved by entering an agreement with the Diocese to share resources and offer an integrated safeguarding service; this may also be achieved by cathedrals in close proximity sharing a resource
- nominate someone to attend the DSAP
- collaborate and liaise where required with the statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensure secure storage of records
- liaise with the DSA to ensure that all safeguarding responsibilities are met within the life of the cathedral
- ensure that all safeguarding allegations or concerns in relation to a church officer are reported to the DSA in line with House of Bishops' guidance
- ensure that suitable training is provided for church officers in line with the training and development framework
- provide appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the cathedral
- ensure that appropriate DBS processes are in place
- provide a complaints and whistleblowing procedure which can be used for those who wish to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues
- complete national safeguarding self-assessments as required
- ensure, in liaison with any affiliated schools, that the Chapter fulfils its statutory

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responsibilities and a progress review forms part of the annual safeguarding review. It is important that there is an agreement in place between a cathedral and the school that clearly defines where the safeguarding responsibilities of each party begins and ends

- review progress annually, including an annual review of the cathedral safeguarding policy, practices and procedures.

Church of England schools

Church schools are not covered by the provision of this guidance.

The responsibility for safeguarding in Church of England schools on a day-to-day basis rests with the school governing body (or, in the case of multi-academy trusts, with their board of directors). They are the bodies directly charged with carrying out DBS checks and with the safeguarding of children at the school in line with statutory guidance for all schools. The safeguarding responsibilities of controlled and aided church schools come under the relevant Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and increasingly directly under the Department for Education (DfE) for academies.

Nevertheless, the fact that they are church schools and have clear links to the church through governance means that the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) and the Diocese, as well as the parish, cannot wholly dissociate themselves from any safeguarding issues in the school. The SDBE has a potential advisory role in relation to safeguarding and the implicit obligation to use their powers of appointment of governors with due regard to safeguarding. This includes reinforcing through appointment processes that they should not act in such a way as to bring the Diocese into disrepute. DBEs will usually refer schools to current advice and guidance from the DfE and/or the local authority but will also work closely with the DSA to ensure that clear arrangements are in place to deal with any safeguarding concern or allegation that may relate to a church officer who also has a role in a school. As current regulations provide that foundation governors can only be removed from office by those appointing them, liaison between schools, DBEs, DSAs and local authorities is essential. Further, schools' links to parishes mean that safeguarding issues can also be taken through the parish accountability structures, which are part of the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

Church volunteers in schools

Volunteers who go into a church school from their parish should be recruited and checked in line with the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment Guidance via the agreed arrangements in the Diocese. It is the school's role to check with the parish that these have been completed. The volunteers need to be aware of and work with the school's safeguarding policy, and have undertaken some basic safeguarding training. All volunteers must possess a personal copy of the local Safer Working Practice Guide for their work and comply with it. This would also apply to any Bishops' Visitors who go into schools on behalf of the DBE.

Allegations against church officers in dual roles

There should be clear procedures in place about how to deal with any safeguarding concern or allegation in relation to a church officer, including a member of the clergy, who also has a role within a school, in line with local LSCB procedures. If a concern or allegation has arisen in a school setting it is the school's responsibility to inform the statutory agencies and liaise with the DSA. If a concern or allegation has arisen in a church setting it is the DSA's responsibility to inform the statutory agencies and liaise with the school accordingly. Where there is any confusion about whose responsibility it is to undertake a safeguarding action arising from a concern or allegation against a church officer arising in the school, it is the school's responsibility to clarify this with the local authority and liaise with the Diocese accordingly.