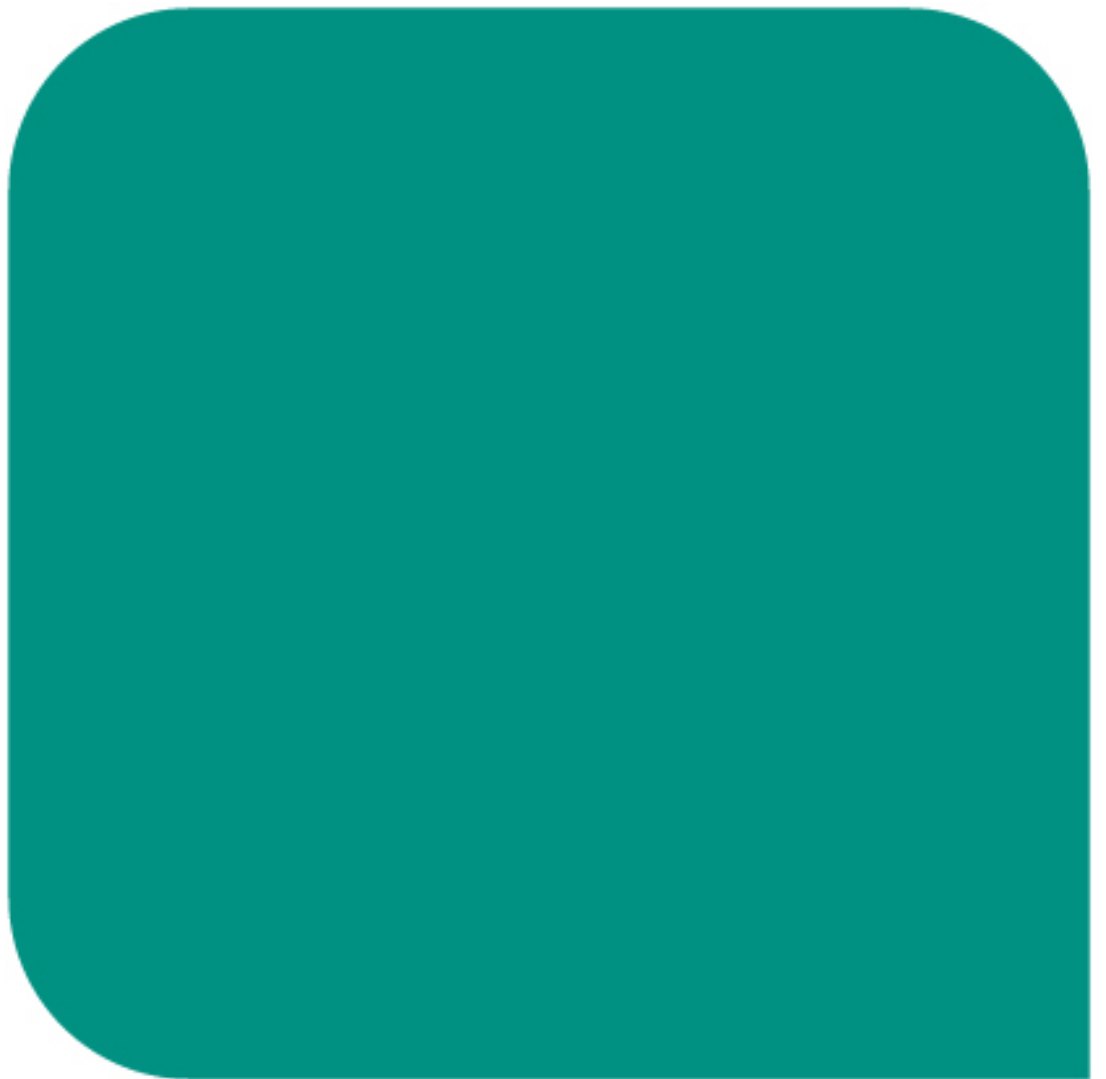




social care  
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# **Southwark Cathedral independent safeguarding audit (February 2020)**



The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) improves the lives of people who use care services by sharing knowledge about what works.

We are a leading improvement support agency and an independent charity working with adults', families' and children's care and support services across the UK. We also work closely with related services such as health care and housing.

We improve the quality of care and support services for adults and children by:

- identifying and sharing knowledge about what works and what's new
- supporting people who plan, commission, deliver and use services to put that knowledge into practice
- informing, influencing and inspiring the direction of future practice and policy.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 THE AUDIT PROGRAMME

- 1.1.1** The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is conducting an independent audit of the safeguarding arrangements of the cathedrals of the Church of England (CofE). This programme of work will see all the CofE's cathedrals audited between late 2018 and early 2021. It represents an important opportunity to support improvement in safeguarding.
- 1.1.2** All cathedrals are unique, and differ in significant ways from a diocese. SCIE has drawn on its experience of auditing all 42 CofE dioceses, and adapted it, using discussions and preliminary meetings with different cathedral chapters, to design an audit methodology fit for cathedrals. We have sought to balance cathedrals' diversity with the need for adequate consistency across the audits, to make the audits comparable, but sufficiently bespoke to support progress in effective and timely safeguarding practice in each separate cathedral.

## 1.2 ABOUT SCIE

- 1.2.1** SCIE improves the lives of people who use care services by sharing knowledge about what works. We are a leading improvement support agency and an independent charity working with adults', families' and children's care and support services across the UK. We also work closely with related services such as health care and housing.
- 1.2.2** Safeguarding is one of our areas of expertise, for both adults and children. We have completed an independent safeguarding audit of diocesan arrangements across the CofE as well as supporting safeguarding in other faith contexts. We are committed to co-producing our work with people with lived experience of receiving services.

## 1.3 THE AUDIT PROCESS

### SCIE Learning Together and our approach to audit

- 1.3.1** SCIE has pioneered a particular approach to conducting case reviews and audits in child and adult safeguarding that is collaborative in nature. It is called Learning Together and has proved valuable in the adults' and children's safeguarding fields. It builds on work in the engineering and health sectors that has shown that improvement is more likely if remedies target the underlying causes of difficulties, and so uses audits and reviews to generate that kind of understanding. Therefore Learning Together involves exploring and sharing understanding of both the causes of problems and the reasons why things go well.

### Key principles informing the audit

- 1.3.2** Drawing on SCIE's Learning Together model, the following principles underpin the approach we take to the audits:

- working collaboratively: the audits done ‘with you, not to you’
- highlighting areas of good practice as well as problematic issues
- focusing on understanding the reasons behind inevitable problems in safeguarding
- no surprises: being open and transparent about our focus, methods and findings so nothing comes out of the blue
- distinguishing between unique local challenges and underlying issues that impact on all or many cathedrals.

## Supporting improvements

**1.3.3** The overarching aim of each audit is to support safeguarding improvements. To this end our goal is to understand the safeguarding progress of each cathedral to date. We set out to move from understanding how things work in each cathedral, to evaluating how *well* they are working. This includes exploring the reasons behind identified strengths and weaknesses. Our conclusions will pose questions for the cathedral leadership to consider in attempting to tackle the underlying causes of deficiencies.

**1.3.4** SCIE methodology does not conclude findings with recommendations. We instead give the cathedral questions to consider in relation to the findings, as they decide how best to tackle the issue at hand. The Learning Together approach requires those with local knowledge and responsibility for improving practice to have a key role in deciding what exactly to do to address the findings and to be accountable for their decisions. It has the additional benefit of helping to foster ownership locally of the work to be done to improve safeguarding.

## Structure of the report

**1.3.5** This report is divided into:

- introduction
- the findings of the audit presented per theme
- questions for the cathedral to consider at the end of each findings section where relevant
- conclusions of the auditors’ findings: what is working well and areas for further development
- an appendix setting out the audit process and any limitations to the audit.

## 2 CONTEXT

### 2.1 CONTEXT OF THE CATHEDRAL

- 2.1.1** The leadership in each cathedral, as part of the audit process, is asked to supply a brief description of the institution. An edited version of Southwark Cathedral's is here:

*Southwark Cathedral is situated in one of the busiest parts of central London bordered by the internationally-famous Borough Market to the south, the River Thames immediately to the north and the newly-redeveloped London Bridge Station, the Shard and London Bridge itself to the east.*

*The Cathedral maintains a daily round of worship within the Anglican choral tradition and music is provided by a boys' choir, a girls' choir and a young adult choir drawn largely from former choristers. There are seven acts of worship each day in the Cathedral on weekdays from 8.00am Morning Prayer to Evensong at 5.30pm (sung on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays by Cathedral choirs and often by visiting choirs on Wednesdays and Fridays) and four services on Sundays including the 11am Choral Eucharist and 3.00pm Choral Evensong.*

*We are proud to be a parish church as well as a cathedral and take the ministry to our geographical parish very seriously. Our electoral roll currently stands at just under 400. We have a large regular congregation and average attendance on a Sunday is around 600 across all services. However, our central London location means that we have a large number of visitors to our services as well as people who worship with us regularly, but infrequently, and who worship at a church more local to them at other times. With such a large and fluid congregation, it is not always easy recognising everyone, which brings its own safeguarding issues.*

*Our congregation is actively engaged in Cathedral life and help us to promote an inclusive, faithful and radical ministry to our parish and the diocese. One of the most obvious ways in which this is done is through support of the ROBES Winter Night Shelter which runs for up to three months each year and for which the congregation supplies volunteers and team leaders from its base in nearby Christchurch, Blackfriars.*

*The parish is a very diverse community with huge differences in wealth within a very small area – from the multi-million pound homes fronting the River Thames and the area immediately behind that, to the social and council housing just behind that. The area is ethnically and socially diverse and our congregation reflects this, although most worshippers live outside the parish. It does, however,*

*mean that our worshippers are aware and concerned about the issues that affect those who live within the parish.*

*There is a very strong link between the Cathedral and Diocese, helped by the geographical fact that the diocesan offices are a five-minute walk from the Cathedral in Borough High Street. We receive huge support from the Diocese in all aspects of our life and we also share safeguarding, human resources and IT support, with the Cathedral contributing financially towards the salaries of shared posts. This brings enormous benefits to the Cathedral in being able to draw on experienced professionals without having to fund the costs of employing people full-time.*

*The Cathedral's governing body is the Chapter which has 13 members (seven clergy and six lay members) who are either ex-officio, appointed by the Bishop or elected by the congregation at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The Chapter, chaired by the Dean, is supported in its work by the senior management team drawn from department heads within the clerical and lay staff. It is chaired by the Comptroller and meets weekly. Safeguarding forms an integral part of the agenda.*

## **2.2 CONTEXTUAL FEATURES RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING**

- 2.2.1** The Cathedral's central London location has contributed to it being affected by two recent terrorist incidents: the London Bridge attack of June 2017, and the incident at Fishmongers' Hall, on the north side of London Bridge, in November 2019. While the Cathedral was not targeted in either incident, it was closed for some days after the former, and had to go into a lockdown procedure during the latter. The impact of these events, practically and psychologically, is evidently still strong.
- 2.2.2** Again by virtue of its city centre location, in an area, as described above, that includes poverty alongside wealth, Southwark Cathedral's community supports a large number of vulnerable people who enter the building or precinct, and who demonstrate a range of care and support needs.
- 2.2.3** The links with the Diocese of Southwark are very good, at a strategic and operational level, and the effect of this is evident in the Cathedral's safeguarding functions.

## **2.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE (INCLUDING LINKS WITH THE DIOCESE)**

- 2.3.1** The final responsibility for safeguarding, as for all aspects of life at Southwark Cathedral, rests with the Dean of Southwark, who has been in post since 2012.

### **2.3.2** Various people support the Dean in the promotion of good safeguarding:

- The Comptroller is the most senior lay member of staff in the Cathedral. He is the designated safeguarding lead on the Cathedral Chapter, sits on the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP), and is one of four Cathedral Safeguarding Officers (CSOs). His responsibilities include oversight of all lay staff, and he is assisted in this task through a service level agreement (SLA) for human resources, finance and IT services from the Diocese.
- The Canon Precentor leads on the safeguarding and wellbeing of the choristers
- The Sub-Dean (who is also the Canon Pastor) is responsible for pastoral care generally in the Cathedral, with a focus on ministry to children and young people.
- One of the lay members of Chapter is also a CSO.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) acts as the safeguarding adviser to the Cathedral, providing – along with her team – case work support, specific training, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) advice and operational management of the Cathedral safeguarding function. These arrangements have been in place, and working well, since being formalised in a signed agreement in 2018.

## **2.4 WHO WAS SEEN IN THIS AUDIT**

**2.4.1** The audit involved reviewing documentation, auditing case files, talking to people at the heart of safeguarding in the Cathedral – such as the Dean, Chapter members, safeguarding staff, music leads and people managing the floor of the cathedral – and discussing safeguarding with a number of focus groups. The site visit to the Cathedral lasted 2.5 days. Further details are provided in the appendix.



## 3 FINDINGS – PRACTICE

### 3.1 SAFE ACTIVITIES AND WORKING PRACTICES

#### Precincts and buildings

##### *Description*

- 3.1.1** Southwark Cathedral is located on the south bank of the River Thames, and is surrounded, in very close proximity, by various buildings: bars, restaurants, offices and Borough Market. It has an extremely small precinct, consequently, with just a narrow churchyard at the back, and a small courtyard at the front.
- 3.1.2** The management of the building falls largely to the vergers team. This is led by the Dean's Verger, who has been in post for 29 years. He is supported by the Canons' Verger, with 12 years in the role. There are two other full-time vergers, and one part-time. All are paid, although they are supplemented by volunteer vergers for some services.
- 3.1.3** The vergers open the Cathedral at 7am each morning, and close it, on those occasions when there is no special event taking place, at 7pm each night. Although there is a lone working protocol to which the vergers are subject, they are very rarely alone in the building; facilities staff are usually on site as well.
- 3.1.4** There are CCTV cameras with extensive internal coverage, and partial external coverage. The footage is monitored simultaneously in the vergers' office and at the reception desk. Footage is stored for 28 days. Currently, there are six walkie-talkies shared among people on the Cathedral floor. These are shortly to be replaced with 20 new ones.
- 3.1.5** The Cathedral offers regular daily worship; special events such as graduation ceremonies and fashion shows; and is available for general tourist visits, of which there are 180–200,000 per year. It is, therefore, a vibrant religious, cultural and community centre, visited by people making varied demands upon it, all of whose safety and welfare needs must be met.

##### *Analysis*

- 3.1.6** The auditors found that, overall, the safety and security of the buildings and precinct are well managed. Arrangements have been tested in extreme circumstances in recent months and found to be robust. Attention needs to be given to ensuring that the vergers are well supported during busy times, and as increasing commercial activities extend the opening hours of the Cathedral.
- 3.1.7** The influence of terrorism incidents is still being felt. This is evident in some practical changes, such as extra CCTV cameras, funded by the Home Office. The events are still very present and real for the Cathedral community, and have created a clear alertness to external threats. Impressively, this does not appear to have generated a culture of exclusion: access remains free, and people are still welcomed.

- 3.1.8** Management of the building is eased by there being only one entrance/exit for the public. The churchyard, which used to be open to the public, is now locked, although accessible from inside the Cathedral. It is not, therefore, an area of the grounds in which many unknown people can congregate.
- 3.1.9** The vergers team is well-established and experienced. The auditors noted some excellent practice from the vergers, such as the weekly review of incident forms being complemented by a quarterly thematic review of the forms, to spot any trends or recurring incidents. The vergers are well-known and approachable.
- 3.1.10** There is a cohesive team approach to the management of the Cathedral floor, with vergers, stewards, welcomers and day chaplains all assisting each other on a routine basis, but also in more concerning situations. There are well-understood protocols for safe working practice, such as only seeing people in line of sight of colleagues.
- 3.1.11** The Cathedral has been extensively praised by the police and other services, as well as the public, for how calmly and effectively it handled the lockdown during the Fishmongers' Hall attack, and this reflects the auditors' sense of a well-organised operation. A recent event in which safety systems did break down is the subject of a lessons-learned review.
- 3.1.12** The vergers have functioning operational and planning links with police and anti-terrorist forces in the area.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How is the Cathedral planning to support and address the increasing expectations placed upon the vergers?

## **Vulnerable adults**

### *Description*

- 3.1.13** Its location, coupled with the decision not to charge for entry, means a number of adults with quite readily-identifiable care and support needs, or evident vulnerabilities, visit Southwark Cathedral. Often this involves people who misuse drugs or alcohol, or who have significant mental health difficulties. The Cathedral is very close to two major hospitals, which has an impact here.
- 3.1.14** Additionally, but less obviously, there are vulnerabilities among the paid and voluntary workforce, and among the wider community and congregation.
- 3.1.15** The Cathedral is a significant partner in a south-east London collaboration of churches which runs the ROBES Winter Night Shelter for street homeless people, for 20 weeks during the winter. The shelter operates nightly for that period, taking place in two circuits of seven churches each. The Cathedral itself is not a venue, having nowhere suitable, but provides the volunteers for the Christchurch Blackfriars Shelter once a week, and the bulk of the fundraising behind ROBES. Cathedral clergy visit each week, eating with guests, and working alongside volunteers.

- 3.1.16** All those with regular contact with vulnerable adults are required to attend Foundation safeguarding training, a tailored version of the national Foundation course, and the quantity and quality of training is good (see 3.5). Where appropriate, staff and volunteers have DBS checks. It is troubling the Cathedral that the vergers are not seen as eligible, by the DBS, for an enhanced check. Staff feel this is not reflective of the vergers' contact with vulnerable people. Chapter has made a decision for some roles, ineligible for a DBS check, to have a basic criminal records check, paid for by the Cathedral.
- 3.1.17** The Cathedral has one volunteer who acts as a pastoral auxiliary, visiting two vulnerable people in their own homes. This appears well-managed by lone working policies.
- 3.1.18** An access audit has been undertaken recently to assess what improvements are needed in order to respond to people with a variety of needs; the outcomes are being considered by an access steering group.
- 3.1.19** The Dean has been taking a lead in expanding understanding across the community about domestic abuse, supported by the training which is delivered by the CSOs.

### *Analysis*

- 3.1.20** In the view of the auditors, the Cathedral supports vulnerable adults well, usually achieving a good balance between welcome and care of individual visitors to the Cathedral, and the general safety and welfare of the wider cathedral community. More attention needs to be paid to the vulnerable people within the regular Cathedral community, including volunteers and staff.
- 3.1.21** The balance between hospitality and community safety and welfare is a difficult one, and getting it right once is no guarantee that, with the next person, it will be handled as successfully. But the Cathedral has organisational strengths which make it well-placed to handle the challenges that vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers face. Good links with the Diocesan DSA; a strong team of CSOs; a visible pastoral presence; and a learning culture are all assets which support the Cathedral.
- 3.1.22** The auditors saw evidence of boundaries between appropriate pastoral care and over-involvement in people's lives tested quite strongly, and sometimes breached. But again, the reflective culture of the organisation has addressed this, and there are sensible checks in place, such as mechanisms to prevent vulnerable visitors becoming too linked with particular pastoral supporters.
- 3.1.23** A generally cohesive culture means that staff and volunteers are aware that there are plenty of people, in varied roles, who can be approached if there are concerns about a person's vulnerability.
- 3.1.24** Some highly disruptive, recurrent visitors have brought questions of the proper support to vulnerable adults to the front of the organisation's collective mind, which has led to fruitful discussions. In some cases, these visitors have not



been known, but others have been part of the regular Cathedral community. The challenges they have posed have been well-handled. A potential risk arising from the focus on these individuals is that those with less conspicuous needs may receive less attention.

**3.1.25** There are good links with support agencies, such as local homeless shelters and mental health teams.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How can the Cathedral maintain a proportionate focus on the welfare of less-obviously vulnerable adults within the congregation and community, alongside a very proper focus on people who create more evident challenges?
- Would enhanced DBS checks for vergers add a useful safeguard for the Cathedral, or might there be alternative means of achieving this?

### **Children**

**3.1.26** We look at issues relating to choristers below: here we look at children in the congregation; acting as servers; attending groups during Sunday worship; and visiting the Cathedral as part of school trips.

#### *Description*

**3.1.27** The Education Centre is led by the Education Officer, an ordained priest with a background in teaching, who reports to the Canon Chancellor. It accommodates 6,000–7,000 children a year on school trips, ranging from Reception classes through to sixth-formers. The Education Centre is a separate charity to the Cathedral, with a Board of Trustees which is chaired by the Dean, and largely populated by retired educationalists. It has a wider remit than simply the school visits, including offering Inset training to around 200–300 teachers and trainee teachers each year, although the school visits are by some margin its main focus.

**3.1.28** As well as the Education Officer, the school visits are run on a rota basis by 18 volunteers, operating two-to-a-class, many of whom have been working in this capacity for many years. On the Centre's website, again upon booking, and again upon arrival, it is made clear to schools that they remain responsible for their pupils at all times. The Centre insists on the school following its own, or its local authority's, guidance on staff/pupil ratios. At the booking stage, the number of children coming, and the contact details of the school and the group leader are recorded. These details are accessible to others in the Cathedral if necessary.

**3.1.29** On Sundays, a number of groups are run for children and young people. There is a crèche for preschool children, entirely run by parents. No child can be there without a parent/carer, and no adult can be there without a child. For children in the Reception to Year 2 age range, there is Junior Xpress I; for Years 3–6, there is Junior Xpress II; for secondary school-age young people, there is Youth Xpress.

**3.1.30** All volunteers in all groups have DBS checks and up-to-date safeguarding training. For the two Junior Xpress groups, there are two volunteers on duty; if on occasion fewer than the required four people are available, the groups are merged. Youth Xpress has two volunteers running it. In total there are 12 Junior/Youth Xpress volunteers, and the Education Officer commits half-a-day per week to the running of the groups.

**3.1.31** There is one server below the age of 18. Children in the congregation remain the responsibility of their parents/carers at all times.

### *Analysis*

**3.1.32** The auditors found that arrangements for assuring the safety of children involved with the Cathedral are good overall, and there is a positive sense that children are welcome in the Cathedral. There remain some areas where procedures and practice guidance need to be developed; these include assuring the safety and welfare of child servers, and arrangements for the crèche.

**3.1.33** There are well-developed systems for the booking and management of school visits. The accommodation for the groups is appropriate. A recent lockdown drill, held without prior warning while two secondary school classes were in the Centre went smoothly. The Education Officer has identified areas for improvement in aspects of the lockdown procedure as a result of the drill, and is progressing these with other agencies. It is to the Cathedral's advantage that there is only one public entrance, and it is staffed during the day, so the chances of a child leaving the building unattended are low.

**3.1.34** The requirement to purchase a permit to take photographs in and around the Cathedral allows a conversation to be had with visitors about the ban on taking any photographs of children.

**3.1.35** The Education Officer makes sure that volunteers' abilities and interests are considered when allocating work tasks, so children are with people who are able to support them. Additionally, of course, they are with their teachers.

**3.1.36** The Junior and Youth Xpress groups are well-run, with registers, emergency contact details and basic medical information available to group leaders. Some of these developments are recent, and bedding in, but seem to be working well. The auditors were struck by the degree of knowledge and insight about safeguarding among the group leaders; evidently the training has been effective, and the volunteers take it seriously. There is a good degree of confidence in how to handle any disclosure, both procedurally and emotionally.

**3.1.37** The crèche is run by parents, and the auditors were told it operates without Cathedral staff supervision. As it takes place on the Cathedral site, the auditors believe the organisation should satisfy itself that it meets the high standards of other Sunday groups.

**3.1.38** Arrangements to ensure the welfare of the one child server need to

formalised, so that the server, and future child servers, can be kept safe. It is encouraging that there is a drive to recruit child servers; it speaks of an organisation which does not view safeguarding requirements as a reason not to do something.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How might the Cathedral satisfy itself that the arrangements for the crèche are as robust as they need to be?
- How can the safety and welfare of child servers be best assured?

## **3.2 CHOIRS AND MUSIC**

### **Choir**

**3.2.1** All cathedral choirs raise a number of potential safeguarding issues. Young children need to be protected from any harm from the general public. Children working towards a highly prized goal in a competitive environment creates the potential for any choristers to be groomed by people in positions of trust within the choir context. Additionally, the demands of elite performance can be in tension with child welfare requirements and expectations.

#### *Description*

**3.2.2** Southwark Cathedral choir comprises girls, boys and lay clerks. The girls, from c.9–17 years, are directed by the Assistant Director of Music. They rehearse and sing Evensong on Mondays and Thursdays, and Sunday services once a term. The boys, from c.7–13 years, are directed by the Director of Music. They rehearse and sing Evensong on Tuesdays and Fridays, and also sing services every Sunday. Visiting choirs often sing Evensong on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

**3.2.3** Girl and boy choristers sing alongside adult male lay clerks. The main lay clerks have a DBS check (as well as safeguarding training), and there is a pool of c.100 choir deputies who are used on an occasional basis when needed. The choir deputies are not deemed by the DBS to be eligible for an enhanced DBS check, and their training poses a logistical challenge for the Cathedral, given their limited contact with the Cathedral.

**3.2.4** The Director of Music at the Cathedral has been in post since September 2019. He reports to the Canon Precentor, and manages a Music Department which comprises an Assistant Director of Music, with 22 years at the Cathedral; an Organ Scholar who has been in the role for six months at the time of the audit; and four paid chaperones.

**3.2.5** The role of the chaperones is clearly set out in a handbook for choir safeguarding: a contact point for parents; help in an emergency; ensuring choristers are dressed and ready to perform; dealing with lavatory trips and minor ailments; and helping with off-site trips.



- 3.2.6** Choristers are drawn from about 20 schools across London and the South East, including a good number of pupils from the nearby Cathedral Primary School. The school is not the choir school for the Cathedral, although two Cathedral clergy are governors at the school, and both parties see the relationship as working well. The choristers need not be resident in the Diocese of Southwark. Both boys and girls are paid a small fee for their work.
- 3.2.7** Boys and girls both serve a probationary period before joining the full choir. From there, progress through the hierarchies of the choirs is delineated by the awarding of different medals. The award of these is dependent both on singing ability and general behaviour. There are both boy and girl Head Choristers.
- 3.2.8** Choristers are brought to the Cathedral by their parents/carers, or if they are older and have written parental permission, they can travel alone. There is a clear signing-in process with the chaperone on duty, at which point they become the responsibility of the Cathedral, and remain so until they are signed out, and are handed to their parents, or make their own way home.
- 3.2.9** Following a recent change in location of the Song School, the choir now has a suitable, dedicated space in which to rehearse and robe. There are lavatories available to them which are not accessible to the public. The lay clerks have access to a separate room, entry to which is forbidden to child choristers.
- 3.2.10** The girls and boys have tended to tour abroad separately in alternate years. No tour took place in 2019 as the Director of Music changed.

### *Analysis*

- 3.2.11** Arrangements for assuring the safety and wellbeing of child choristers are good overall and continue to develop, with new systems and procedures being put in place as gaps are identified. Further work is needed to ensure that there are formal mechanisms to communicate with both choristers and their parents, and to record and monitor information about the continuing welfare of individual choristers.
- 3.2.12** The arrangements for the safe movement of choristers around the Cathedral are long-embedded, and have been made more straightforward by the move to the new Song School, which is a calm environment, away from the public. There are clear and unproblematic arrangements for the handing over of choristers to and from their families, and for contacting families should any issues arise.
- 3.2.13** The heightened sense of alert brought about by recent terrorist incidents has redoubled attention on people's safety, and there are procedures in place for the choir, which all key staff are aware of, should an attack occur in or nearby the Cathedral while choristers are on site. The choristers have not been shown the area in which they would cluster in an emergency, and the auditors debated whether showing it to them in advance might make any actual lockdown less frightening.

- 3.2.14** The arrangements for the logistics of the choir appear to have borne fruit, in that the choristers to whom the auditors spoke were unanimous in their feelings of safety within the building, the only issue being the unauthorised taking of photographs as they process in and out of services. Their parents similarly felt secure about the arrangements for their children, with some concern being raised that the systems keep the choristers so detached from other people that they risk missing out on the wider life of the Cathedral.
- 3.2.15** There is very little day-to-day contact between child choristers and adult lay clerks, and the lay clerks only go on tour with the boys. The large number of choir deputies poses the Cathedral a question about training: if such a large number are to be kept on the books, how can they most effectively be trained in a way that satisfies the Cathedral's high standards?
- 3.2.16** Four chaperones have recently been recruited, following two rounds of advertising, and the new arrangements are still bedding in. The unusual hours that chaperones have to work make it hard to recruit and retain staff. Chaperones seem to have a clear perception of their role in terms of chorister welfare and safe movement. There was less discussion about keeping an eye on potential internal risks, such as grooming or bullying, although the training they receive does address these issues. The list of tasks set out for the chaperone role in the choir handbook does not mention alertness for grooming or bullying. There is also a slight lack of clarity as to the role chaperones have in managing poor behaviour among choristers, or whether that is entirely the responsibility of the core Music Department staff.
- 3.2.17** An impressive degree of attention has been paid, especially by the new Director of Music, to promoting kindness as a focus in the choir. This is backed by posters, role-modelling and daily communication, and parents and choristers alike reported that this was positive. There is some uncertainty about the rewards and sanctions schemes for various behaviours; decisions need to be reached about what to use, and then these need to be communicated clearly to the children.
- 3.2.18** This emphasis on kindness feels to the auditors to be reflective of a generally strong focus on chorister welfare. Aided by the almost-equal workload between the two choirs, no chorister appears to be overly-pressured by their rehearsal and performance schedule, and the choristers were very positive about their lives in the choir. The inclusion in choir paperwork of sections on neuro-diversity and special educational needs and disability (SEND) suggests a thoughtful effort towards inclusivity.
- 3.2.19** While accidents are recorded, there is no equivalent mechanism for noting choristers' emotional wellbeing. While the attention paid to the welfare of the boys and girls is excellent, this may mean an opportunity is missed to promptly detect any less obvious concerns which may develop slowly over time. Monitoring concerns is important in the light of the number of different chaperones supporting the children.
- 3.2.20** More systematic and regular opportunities to meet with parents, particularly new parents, would create opportunities to maintain contact, provide

reassurance and seek feedback. Something similar for the choristers themselves would also be a chance to monitor how they are feeling, and what ideas they have for the safe running of the choir.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- Would the benefits of showing the choristers their lockdown venue outweigh any anxiety it may cause?
- How frequently would a choir deputy need to sing with the choir to be considered a Cathedral volunteer, with attendant requirements for training?
- How can chaperones be supported to maintain a proportionate focus on any potential internal and external risks for choristers?
- What is the appropriate role for chaperones in handling any poor behaviour among choristers?
- What are the best systems for rewards and sanctions, and how can these systems be embedded with the choristers?
- How can concerns about the emotional wellbeing of choristers be proportionately recorded and monitored?
- Is there scope for regular meetings between the Music Department and choir parents, and between the Department and choristers, so that all groups can share ideas and expectations?

### **Bell-ringing**

**3.2.21** Bell-ringing at Southwark Cathedral is done by a band of between 20 and 30 regular ringers, led by a Ringing Master and two Deputy Ringing Masters. The bell-ringers rehearse on a Wednesday evening, and ring the bells each Sunday morning and on special occasions. The current Ringing Master has been in his role for a year, having rung at Southwark since 2008, and having been a Deputy Ringing Master between 2016 and 2019.

**3.2.22** DBS checks are required for the three lead bell-ringers. Until last year, only the leaders were required to do safeguarding training, but this has now been extended to all regular ringers. To date, over 90 per cent have done the training, aided by the CSOs running a specific, tailored session for the ringers one Wednesday evening after their practice.

**3.2.23** Bell-ringers are let into the Cathedral by a verger, who remains until they have finished their practice. Similar arrangements pertain for visiting bands. It is a simple set up which works well.

**3.2.24** One regular ringer is under 18. He attends with his father. It is made clear to visiting bands of ringers, when they ring with the Southwark band, that any under-18s similarly have to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

**3.2.25** Sometimes visiting bands ring without their Southwark counterparts, and in those cases no checks are made regarding under 18s being with a parent or guardian. Nor is any check made as to whether a visiting ringer may be



subject to a Safeguarding Agreement. These arrangements could usefully be tightened.

- 3.2.26** The bell-ringers are not present at any Cathedral staff meetings. They have contact through occasional clergy visits to the tower, and on Sundays and Wednesdays as they wait to enter the tower. Otherwise, the Dean attends their AGM and annual dinner. This detachment from wider Cathedral life is not seen as problematic to the band, but it does create a slight risk that the general safeguarding culture is not easily shared with the bell-ringers.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How can systems around the monitoring of visiting ringers be improved?
- Is there a safeguarding benefit to be gained from the bell-ringers being somewhat more engaged in wider Cathedral processes, and if so, how can that best be achieved?

### **3.3 CASE WORK (INCLUDING INFORMATION-SHARING)**

- 3.3.1** When safeguarding concerns are raised, a timely response is needed to make sense of the situation, assess any risk and decide if any action needs to be taken, including whether statutory services need to be informed. In a cathedral context, this includes helping to distinguish whether there are safeguarding elements to the situations of people receiving pastoral support.
- 3.3.2** The auditors found that casework, together with recording and information-sharing practice, is excellent. This is supported by high quality advice from the DSA and her team. Responsibilities for taking action, and arrangements for monitoring this, need to be clarified, together with arrangements for recording and monitoring lower-level concerns.
- 3.3.3** The culture within the Cathedral appears to be encouraging of those who may wish to raise a safeguarding concern or receive support.

#### **Effectiveness of responses**

- 3.3.4** The auditors looked at eight case files, which demonstrated strong casework, both from the DSA, and the Assistant DSAs (ADSA) in her team. Responses are timely and clear, but demonstrate empathy towards the challenges faced by Cathedral staff and volunteers – for example, in how they have to balance a pastoral desire to help with, a bounded response to potentially difficult situations.
- 3.3.5** It is also helpfully clear who does the casework: the DSA and team, and not the CSOs. The CSOs are, however, an effective conduit for passing concerns between the congregation and the DSA and Cathedral hierarchy.
- 3.3.6** Where incidents have occurred, the case files bear witness to effective and cohesive responses, with transparent and prompt communication with people who may have concerns. Feedback from a local authority designated officer to the auditors strongly reflected good partnership working.

- 3.3.7** The auditors saw a very small number of cases where advice from the DSA did not appear to have been followed fully. A system is needed to ensure clarity about who is responsible for acting in response to advice from the DSA, that actions are recorded, and concerns are fully addressed in a timely way.

### **Effectiveness of risk assessments, safeguarding agreements and the risk management plan**

- 3.3.8** There are no worship agreements currently in place in the Cathedral. In spite of numerous attempts to put one in place recently, the person in question withdrew from the process. Worship agreements are coordinated and reviewed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST).

### **Quality of recording**

- 3.3.9** Case records are good. Because, for the audit, the DST helpfully printed off case records, the auditors did not witness the case record system itself in action. But the recording reflects a high standard of case work.

### **Information-sharing practice**

- 3.3.10** Information-sharing about active case concerns is good. Case files demonstrate timely and appropriate liaison between the Cathedral and the DST, and – where necessary – with statutory and other external partners. Linked to the earlier point about the CSOs being effective conduits for concern, there is a culture in which issues are habitually raised with the diocesan team, and advice then taken as to whether the matter is a safeguarding one. This, to the auditors, seems a more robust approach than one in which concerns are not promptly raised.
- 3.3.11** The retention and sharing of material relating to lower-level concerns, which can often be challenging in terms of what information it is legitimate to keep, and for how long, needs more thought.

### **Quality of engagement with the people who disclose abuse, share concerns of unsafe people or practice, or ask for help to keep safe for any reason**

- 3.3.12** There are many available routes for people who wish to disclose abuse, complaints and concerns, including the CSOs; ‘Listeners’ – two of whom are available after every Sunday morning service; and the clergy, who are a highly visible presence around the Cathedral. There is a culture in which people in the Cathedral community feel able to share their worries with people, a culture which is developed and bolstered by clear policies, preaching and the accessibility of key people.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- What protocols are in place to determine how long information is kept regarding concerns which may fall short of a safeguarding threshold?
- How might the Cathedral strengthen its oversight of casework responses within the Cathedral itself?



## **3.4 CLERGY DISCIPLINARY MEASURE**

- 3.4.1** The auditors saw no cases involving the use of the Clergy Disciplinary Measure in a safeguarding context, and did not hear of any such cases.

## **3.5 TRAINING**

- 3.5.1** Safeguarding training is an important mechanism for establishing safeguarding awareness and confidence throughout the cathedral. It requires good quality substance, based on up-to-date evidence, with relevant case studies, engaging and relevant to the audience. It also requires strategic planning to identify priority groups for training, details of the training needs/requirements of people in different roles, and of an implementation plan for training over time that tracks what training has been provided, who attended, and who still needs to attend or requires refresher sessions.

### *Description*

- 3.5.2** Training in the Cathedral is primarily delivered by the CSOs, and to meet ongoing demand, an extra CSO role was created in 2019, meaning that there are now two CSOs to deliver training across the Cathedral to all staff and volunteers. Relevant staff also have access to more specialist training delivered by the Diocese.
- 3.5.3** Since 2017, 450 clergy, staff and volunteers have received training either in mixed groups, or in targeted sessions – for example, for lay clerks, youth workers, night shelter staff and bell-ringers. Of these, 270 attended C1/Foundation level training, 46 attended C2/Leadership Training and a further 34 received training in C3, C4/Senior Staff training or C5/Refresher levels to reflect their responsibilities or particular roles. There are 30 volunteers currently waiting to be booked on to training, at which point all existing clergy, staff and volunteers will have received some form of training. Of training so far delivered, 88 per cent has been face-to-face with 12 per cent delivered online (C1/Foundation level only). The C1/Foundation course has been tailored to the Cathedral.
- 3.5.4** A safeguarding leadership module, equivalent to the C2 National Safeguarding Team course, is being introduced in 2020, aimed at team leaders and other people in supervisory roles.
- 3.5.5** The handling of bookings, and the monitoring of who has done, and who still needs to do, training, is the responsibility of the Cathedral's safeguarding administrator.

### *Analysis*

- 3.5.6** The auditors found that safeguarding training is well resourced and promoted, with attention paid to ensuring its relevance and accessibility to the many staff and volunteers. The emphasis on face-to-face training is a strength, but has meant that not everyone has yet received training, and some volunteers, in

particular, have not been able to access it. There is no strategic training plan in place, which may be a disadvantage as the safeguarding agenda continues to develop.

- 3.5.7** The training offer is comprehensive, and flexible to the needs of the various people in the Cathedral. Most training is offered to mixed groups of people in varied roles. This brings a useful sharing of perspectives, and broadens the delegates' understanding of how safeguarding operates in different aspects of Cathedral life. Some people suggested, however, that catering to mixed groups meant the training was a little too general.
- 3.5.8** Conversely, upon request, specific training tailored to particular groups is available. This lacks the cross-fertilisation mentioned, but it does mean that people feel the sessions are highly pertinent to them. It is a difficult balance to strike.
- 3.5.9** There is a comprehensive commitment to the delivery of face-to-face training, including the recruitment of an additional CSO to deliver it. The content is relevant to the setting, and includes important elements such as grooming, vulnerable adults and domestic abuse, as well as the mechanics of reporting concerns. This is valued by delegates, and many of the people to whom the auditors spoke were able to cite specifics of the course in such a way as to suggest it is effective in getting messages across. The focus on foundation training has been useful in supporting the development of a safeguarding culture and promoting visibility of the CSOs, but has meant that more specialised training to those with specific responsibilities has not been widely available.
- 3.5.10** Some volunteers spoke of the challenge of making time for face-to-face courses, and the Cathedral should consider if there may be a role for online training in some circumstances.
- 3.5.11** While the administrator ensures that all training is recorded and reports when requested about take-up, there is no regular monitoring of training delivery, quality and impact yet in place.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How might a training strategy help the Cathedral assure itself that all staff and volunteers are receiving the right training at the right time, delivered in the most effective way, and that this is having a positive impact?

## **3.6 SAFER RECRUITMENT**

### *Description*

- 3.6.1** The general, non-clerical recruitment processes of the Cathedral are set and overseen by the Comptroller, working with the Diocesan Director of Human Resources (HR), 10 per cent of whose time is purchased by the Cathedral under an SLA. There is a safer recruitment policy specifically for the

Cathedral, covering staff and volunteers, which was reviewed and updated by Chapter in November 2019 and will be reviewed and updated further in May 2020. It sets standards for safer recruitment practice and specifies in what circumstances an appointment will not be progressed.

- 3.6.2** The responsibility for recruitment rests with departmental heads, or in the case of the majority of volunteers, the Volunteer Officer. There is an expectation that for any role – paid or voluntary – there is an application form, an interview/discussion, the taking up of references, a confidential declaration from everyone interacting with children and vulnerable adults, and the DBS checking of people in all eligible roles.

### *Analysis*

- 3.6.3** Recruitment is done well. The safer recruitment policy is clear and thorough, and backed up on the ground by well-embedded processes. The auditors noted examples of excellent practice, such as the requirement to give a safeguarding presentation as part of the recruitment process for the Director of Music. Systematic monitoring of how consistently the policy is working is not in place, although all the relevant information is collected.
- 3.6.4** There is detailed, single central register-style database for recruitment, and the direction of travel towards a shared database with the Diocese seems sensible.
- 3.6.5** The recruitment files seen by the auditors were well kept and comprehensive, with a useful front sheet tracking the progress of each person's safe recruitment. Not every file seen contained the information indicated by the front sheet, but it was unclear whether this was because the information was missing or simply that it had not been put into the files seen. The relationship with the diocesan HR function appears to be working well, in that the systems in place in the Cathedral are strong.
- 3.6.6** It is unlikely that the choir deputies will be eligible for a DBS check, and the concern about the lack of an enhanced check for vergers is being actively addressed by the Cathedral. Importantly though, there is a recognition that safe recruitment involves much more than a DBS check, and Southwark has generally robust systems in place.
- 3.6.7** There appears to be a slight lack of clarity as to which of the many volunteer roles are accountable to the Cathedral's Volunteer Officer, with the point of uncertainty being the distinction between liturgical and non-liturgical volunteers.
- 3.6.8** Progress with safer recruitment is reported to Chapter through inclusion in the annual report by the CSOs. This is in general terms. Safer recruitment does not feature in the Cathedral's safeguarding action plan, and is not monitored systematically. Given its prominence in the *Promoting a Safer Church* policy both nationally and locally, the Cathedral may wish to consider how to assure itself that the application of the safer recruitment policy is operating in practice.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- What needs to be done to clarify the responsibility for recruiting, monitoring and supporting the full range of volunteer functions?
- How might the Cathedral assure itself that safer recruitment practice is operating consistently well?



## 4 FINDINGS – ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORTS

### 4.1 POLICY, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

- 4.1.1** Policies, procedures and guidance are important in creating the framework for promoting a safer environment and culture. The House of Bishops has produced an extensive range of policies and procedures which apply to the entire Anglican Church; however, there are gaps in these which need to be filled at a local level.

#### *Description*

- 4.1.2** Southwark Cathedral has an extensive suite of policies, procedures and guidance covering safeguarding in various settings, and related topics such as safer recruitment, bullying, grievances and so forth. These have been revised and updated since the publication nationally of the *Promoting a Safer Church* policy by the House of Bishops produced in 2017.
- 4.1.3** The Diocese of Southwark has its own policy and guidelines manual, *A Safe Church*, which was significantly updated in 2019. This is the manual to which the DSA and her team work, and therefore has a bearing on how cases are handled in the Cathedral. It is also used, for example, in relation to complaints about the safeguarding service (see 5.2). *A Safe Church* is built upon and compliant with House of Bishops' safeguarding policies.
- 4.1.4** The Cathedral supplements this with a one-page *Promoting a Safer Church* policy that gives a clear focus to the priority afforded to safeguarding, together with specific HR policies and handbooks for staff and volunteers. There is also a series of handbooks for the management and welfare of children in various settings: in liturgy, in the choir, in Sunday groups, and in the Education Centre. Each of these have many sections in common, but each then focuses on the specifics of the role/activity in question. Policies are in place for trips involving children, for lone working, and for emergency lock-down and/or evacuation of the Cathedral.

#### *Analysis*

- 4.1.5** The policies, procedures and guidance are good. Efforts have been made to ensure they are relevant to the Cathedral setting, and different groups of staff, volunteers and congregants are familiar with actions to take and where to raise concerns. Some thought needs to be given to how all policies and procedures are kept up to date and accessible, and their application and impact monitored.
- 4.1.6** The various policies, procedures and guidance are comprehensive, and are evidence of the productive working relationship with the Diocesan HR service, in that policies are clear, and written by people with the professional expertise to do them well. Additionally, the handbooks for children in their different roles are useful. Each is introduced by the Dean, which helpfully demonstrates senior clerical ownership of the safeguarding agenda. They contain useful

information, and incorporate a range of issues, such as behaviour guidelines, social media policy and how to raise concerns. They are lengthy, but feel pertinent. A commitment to diversity is evident in sections on disability.

- 4.1.7** The handbooks are recent, and so much of the content remains untested in practice. While many policies have review dates included, the handbooks – and a handful of other policies – do not.
- 4.1.8** Most importantly, the handbooks and other guidelines are out and about in departments, such as the Song School, and people cited them confidently, suggesting to the auditors that they are used habitually. While this is very positive, the use of hard copies of such documents can be a weakness, in that it can be hard to ensure that everyone is working to the correct version as policies/procedures are reviewed and updated. Some thought needs to be given to how this might be managed, while ensuring that all procedures remain easily accessible. At present, it is only the diocesan policy *A Safe Church* which is clearly signposted from the Cathedral's website, together with the Cathedral's *Promoting a Safer Church* policy and the *Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse*.
- 4.1.9** As the Cathedral moves towards a shared HR database with the Diocese, it may be that some HR policies can also straddle both organisations.
- 4.1.10** Given the importance of policies, procedures and practice guidance in setting the framework for a safer environment and culture, as detailed in the national and local *Promoting a Safer Church* policies, the Cathedral might wish to consider including reference to them in the safeguarding action plan, and put into place a means of monitoring their application and impact. This would in turn assist in the process of regular review.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- Can a systematic reviewing process of all Cathedral policies, procedures and handbooks be put in place, together with a mechanism for ensuring the correct version is always in use?
- How might the Cathedral assure itself that its policies, procedures and guidance are accessible, understood, consistently applied and effective?

## **4.2 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISER/S AND CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING OFFICER/S**

### *Description*

- 4.2.1** The DSA is a full-time, paid employee of the Diocese, with no conflicts of interest in her role. The DSA is a qualified social worker with a long career in local authorities, in front line practice and senior management. She is shortly to leave the Diocese and Cathedral, after some six years in post.
- 4.2.2** The DSA works alongside two ADSAs. One, with an education background,

joined the Diocese in autumn 2016. The other has worked in teaching and, more extensively, in police child and public protection teams, and had been in post for a year at the time of this audit. An administrative team supports the safeguarding professionals.

- 4.2.3** The DSA has worked closely with the Dean in relation to safeguarding and sacramental confession, the latter contributing this to a national working party developing practice and training in this sensitive area.
- 4.2.4** The work the DST does for the Cathedral is set out in a *Safeguarding Support and Procedure Protocol* between the two organisations which was agreed and signed in July 2018. No time input is set out; instead the *Protocol* lists a series of tasks, such as casework, identifying training needs and attendance at Chapter meetings to report on safeguarding, that the DSA and her team will carry out.
- 4.2.5** Southwark Cathedral has four CSOs. One is the Comptroller, the most senior lay figure in the Cathedral. The other three are all congregation members of many years' standing, and who have fulfilled a range of voluntary roles in the Cathedral. One has been a CSO for 10 years, one for 2 years, and the third for about six months. The longest-serving CSO is a lawyer by trade; the other two have education backgrounds. The two CSOs with an education background take the lead on training the staff and volunteers of the Cathedral in safeguarding.
- 4.2.6** The CSO role is voluntary (except for that of the Comptroller). All current role-holders are lay people, although that being a requirement is not specified anywhere. They see their role as being a first point of contact for people who wish to raise a concern. They have regular (six-weekly) meetings with the DSA. They will follow the advice of the DSA in relation to individual cases.
- 4.2.7** One ADSA holds regular safeguarding surgeries at the Cathedral, which anyone can attend for advice.

### *Analysis*

- 4.2.8** The work of the DSA is of a reliably high standard, be that in casework, partnership-building or more strategic planning functions. The case evidence suggests she is backed by a good team, and the links between the Cathedral and the safeguarding team are reflective of the excellent working relationships between the Diocese and the Cathedral. The combined resources of the DST, together with that of the Cathedral CSOs, appear to be adequate to meet the Cathedral's needs.
- 4.2.9** The DSA gets appropriate professional supervision and line management within the Diocese, but does not have a designated manager within the Cathedral. There is no formal mechanism by which the Cathedral receives assurance about the quality of the DSA's contribution. There is rightly a high degree of confidence in her work, but from a systems perspective, particularly in the light of her departure, thought should be given as to how the Cathedral plays a role in monitoring the DSA function. In this vein, it is positive that the Cathedral is playing a part in the recruitment of the next DSA.



- 4.2.10** The three volunteer CSOs are well-suited to the task. They are knowledgeable about safeguarding, and about the Cathedral, and are very familiar faces among the congregation and the Cathedral community. There was discussion about the CSOs being ‘one of us’ by the congregation, and this being seen as a positive in terms of accessibility. Some effort has gone into publicising their role, with posters in numerous prominent positions throughout the building. Delivery of training has also raised their profile considerably.
- 4.2.11** The auditors debated the desirability of the Comptroller also being a CSO; if the nature of the role is to give the community one of its own to raise issues with, then the Comptroller is arguably too senior a figure. However, given that there are three other CSOs, having the Comptroller as one means that the others have an easy route into the senior hierarchy of the organisation, and means also that there are CSOs about at weekends and during the week. In practice, the Comptroller acts as ‘first among equals’, maintaining oversight of every safeguarding case with which the CSOs are involved.
- 4.2.12** There is no role description for the CSOs. Currently, the set-up works well, but it would strengthen processes if the role were clearly set out.
- 4.2.13** As mentioned earlier, there is a good degree of clarity about the CSO role in relation to the DSA one, in terms of the CSOs not doing casework, but being a channel of communication to the DSA and her team.
- 4.2.14** The CSOs provide an annual safeguarding report to Chapter. This is a short document which touches on matters such as DBS checks and training, but does not appear to have an agreed structure and does not reflect fully the role of the CSOs, other than in relation to training delivery. Given the valuable role played by the CSOs, and their position linking the congregation with the Chapter, this is a lost opportunity. Further thought is needed as to whether a report such as this one is needed from the CSOs, and if so, what it should include.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How can the Cathedral, as opposed to the Diocese, satisfy itself of the quality of the work of the DSA and ensure that the DSA is managed and supported in her Cathedral role?
- Does the scope of the CSO role need setting out explicitly?

### **4.3 RECORDING AND IT SYSTEMS**

- 4.3.1** As discussed, there is a good training and DBS database.
- 4.3.2** There is a case file system for casework, but because the Cathedral printed out paper files for the ease of the auditors, it is hard to judge its efficacy. Certainly, the paper copies highlighted no concerns with how the system operates.



- 4.3.3** There is good awareness of the need to keep personal information securely.
- 4.3.4** Different groups within the Cathedral keep appropriate records for their own use – for example, regarding visitors to the bell tower, incidents occurring within the Cathedral of which the vergers need to be aware, records of home visits by Cathedral workers and so on.
- 4.3.5** It is unclear whether there is a formal information-sharing policy in place, supported by training, to assist staff and volunteers in balancing the potentially conflicting imperatives of respecting individual privacy while addressing potential safeguarding risks. The Cathedral has identified this as an area to address, and could potentially include it in the forthcoming revision of the safeguarding action plan.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How might the Cathedral support its staff and volunteers in ensuring an appropriate balance is found between individual privacy and safeguarding responsibilities?

## 5 FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### 5.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE

#### *Description*

- 5.1.1** A safe organisation needs constant feedback loops about what is going well and where there are difficulties in relation to safeguarding, and this should drive ongoing cycles of learning and improvement. Robust quality assurance enables an organisation to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Potential sources of data are numerous, including independent scrutiny. Quality assurance needs to be strategic and systematic to support accountability and shed light on how well things are working and where there are gaps or concerns. There also needs to be a baseline against which progress may be assessed.
- 5.1.2** Certain elements of the safeguarding structure in Southwark Cathedral serve a quality assurance function. Anyone on the Cathedral's electoral roll can attend The Annual Parochial Church Meeting, at which they can hold the leadership to account. There is a formal annual report on safeguarding by the CSOs to Chapter. Chapter meetings include safeguarding as a standing item, as do the weekly meetings of managers. Having experienced, lay CSOs with a clear line of reporting to the Comptroller means there is an element of congregational feedback to the Cathedral hierarchy.
- 5.1.3** The safeguarding administrator ensures that data on training is collected and provides this when requested.
- 5.1.4** The annual reporting to the DSAP (and see 5.4 for further details) involves some independent scrutiny of the Cathedral.
- 5.1.5** Some information relating to Cathedral safeguarding arrangements is included in the annual self-assessment of safeguarding arrangements submitted by the Diocese, which builds in another level of scrutiny.
- 5.1.6** There is no systematic structure by which the Cathedral assures itself of the quality of the safeguarding support it receives from the DST.

#### *Analysis*

- 5.1.7** The auditors found that elements of a quality assurance framework are in place but that more needs to be done to provide systematic assurance of progress towards achieving the objective of creating a safe church. This might include a regular programme of auditing aspects of activity, evaluating the impact of training, and seeking feedback from staff, volunteers, survivors and others who have used the safeguarding service.
- 5.1.8** Although there are good systems available to collect and collate performance information (for example, in relation to recruitment and training) there is no systematic review of this data to assess progress and establish where there

may be areas of underperformance. The development of a *Promoting a Safer Church* Action Plan, as specified in the national guidance *Promoting a Safer Church*, could assist. This is further referred to below.

**5.1.9** It is positive that safeguarding is a regular agenda item at key meetings, and leaders are very visible in their leadership of the safeguarding agenda. In the absence of a clear 'owner' of the safeguarding action plan, such as a Cathedral Safeguarding Committee, it is unclear where responsibility for systematically monitoring and assessing progress and assuring quality and good outcomes sits. The DSAP does not perform this function, although the recently established annual focus on the Cathedral is a very positive step.

**5.1.10** An annual report on the progress of the safeguarding action plan from the Cathedral Safeguarding Lead, which includes reference to the work of the CSOs, may be an additional element of quality assurance.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How might the Cathedral develop its approach to quality assurance, both internally and with a degree of external scrutiny, in order to comply with the expectations of *Promoting a Safer Church* national policy and provide assurance to the Chapter of progress towards their objective of creating a safe church?

## **5.2 COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE SAFEGUARDING SERVICE**

**5.2.1** A good complaints policy enables people to raise concerns, and to have timely and appropriate consideration of any problems. A strong policy is clear about who complaints should be made to, and how they can be escalated if necessary. Positive features include an independent element, an indication of a timetable which will be followed to ensure a timely response, and clarity that raising a safeguarding concern, and making a complaint about a safeguarding service, are two distinct things.

**5.2.2** Southwark Cathedral has a concerns and complaints policy for members of the public and volunteers. The policy directs people to the diocesan safeguarding policy, *A Safe Church*, and asks that if people do have a complaint to make about safeguarding, they contact the Bishop's Lead for Safeguarding.

**5.2.3** Staff are directed to either their grievance or public interest disclosure policies to make a complaint or raise a concern. Neither policy references making a complaint or raising a concern about the safeguarding service.

**5.2.4** Broadly, although the process for making complaints is clear in both Cathedral and Diocese, the lack of clearly signposted information about making a complaint about the safeguarding service in particular has the potential to be off-putting for complainants, many of whom will be anxious about raising concerns.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might the process for making a complaint about the safeguarding service be made more accessible and straightforward for the Cathedral community?

### 5.3 WHISTLEBLOWING

- 5.3.1** The auditors were impressed by the number of people within the Cathedral community who expressed the view that the culture was one which encouraged them to raise concerns without any fear of the consequences. This is a positive context for the Cathedral's Public Interest Disclosure Policy, which is clear and accessibly written, although focused primarily on internal processes.
- 5.3.2** In the event that a staff member does wish to 'whistleblow', they might appreciate being pointed to appropriate external organisations at an earlier stage. Some are mentioned in the policy, which is helpful. A useful addition may be the organisation Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work).
- 5.3.3** The Cathedral Public Interest Disclosure Policy is explicit that it does not cover volunteers, being reserved only for paid staff. In the safeguarding handbook for volunteers, they are pointed to the Concerns and Complaints Policy, so their needs are addressed. However, as mentioned above, the Concerns and Complaints Policy points people to a separate document for safeguarding, so there is a slight risk that, for volunteers especially, there are too many documents to get through before raising a concern.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the whistleblowing procedures for volunteers be streamlined?

### 5.4 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY PANEL

- 5.4.1** Based on the national guidance in *Roles and Responsibilities for DSAPs*, the panel should have a key role in bringing independence and safeguarding expertise to an oversight, scrutiny and challenge role, including contributing to a strategic plan.

#### *Description*

- 5.4.2** The DSAP has an independent Chair, an ex-Chief Inspector of Police who was previously a member of the group for about four years. His safeguarding knowledge comes from managing child abuse teams in south London. The Chair is paid an honorarium at a fixed amount irrespective of the number of hours worked. The panel includes the Cathedral Comptroller, alongside senior diocesan figures, representatives from parishes, and the DSA. The Comptroller is the only person on the DSAP representing just the Cathedral.



- 5.4.3** The DSAP has recently introduced an annual reporting framework, which looks at the Cathedral in some depth annually (alongside an annual focus on each of the three episcopal areas of the Diocese). The first session focused on the Cathedral took place in July 2019, with the Dean, a CSO, the Comptroller and the DSA all present. Prior to the meeting a performance pack was prepared by the DST and discussed at the meeting.
- 5.4.4** There is no equivalent to the DSAP within the Cathedral; Chapter and the various managers' meetings include safeguarding as a regular item on their meeting agendas.

### Analysis

- 5.4.5** The auditors judged that the new structure, with its annual in-depth focus on the Cathedral has the potential to be one element of an effective system for scrutinising the Cathedral's safeguarding. By giving the Cathedral specific, detailed attention, the DSAP can exercise its oversight function appropriately, and having the Dean and a CSO attend the DSAP for the occasion allows for useful discussions about priorities and challenges. This could be strengthened with the development of a more systematic approach to safeguarding action planning and monitoring within the Cathedral.
- 5.4.6** The use by the DSAP of a performance pack, by which the Cathedral is required to account for its safeguarding using certain key metrics, is a good innovation.
- 5.4.7** The reporting structure also means that, for other meetings, there just being one Cathedral representative feels proportionate.
- 5.4.8** What is less clear is how the DSAP offers support to the Cathedral, distinct from that from that offered by the DSA. There are, for example, no visits to the Cathedral from DSAP members, to build relationships and understanding.
- 5.4.9** The development by the Cathedral of a *Promoting a Safer Church* action plan would provide a clear framework for DSAP scrutiny which is 'owned' within the Cathedral. A formal annual report from the DSAP Chair to the Dean, in a similar way to which an annual safeguarding report goes to the Diocesan Council of Trustees, may help strengthen the scrutiny and assurance role of the DSAP in relation to the Cathedral.

### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How might the scrutiny and challenge function of the DSAP be further developed in relation to the Cathedral?

## 5.5 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.5.1** Safeguarding leadership takes various forms – strategic, operational and theological – with different people taking different roles. How these roles are understood, and how they fit together, can be determinative in how well-led the safeguarding function is.

## Theological leadership

### *Description*

- 5.5.2** Theological leadership starts with the Dean, supported by the residentiary canons and other senior clergy. The Dean has been in that role since 2012, but at the Cathedral since 1999, and in the Diocese of Southwark since 1995. He has, therefore, seen and overseen a significant shift in safeguarding culture. The Dean leads training on safeguarding and the seal of confession, and works at a national level on debating that tension.
- 5.5.3** The Sub-Dean/Canon Pastor has been in post for five years, and has responsibility for pastoral care, and for ministry to children and young people. He is a governor at the Cathedral School, and the Minister-in-Charge at St Hugh's, the Cathedral's daughter church. All new congregants at the Cathedral are invited to join a group led by the Sub-Dean, and this looks at the importance of creating a safe church.
- 5.5.4** The Canon Precentor has served in her role in Southwark for over seven years, although was retiring in the week of the site visit. She has responsibility for music and liturgy. Her successor will take on the lead safeguarding role within Chapter.
- 5.5.5** In addition, there are three Diocesan Residentiary Canons who also shape the theological leadership around safeguarding.

### *Analysis*

- 5.5.6** It is evident that the Dean and his senior clerical colleagues take the task of giving a theological impetus to safeguarding very seriously, and this has a positive effect across the life of the Cathedral.
- 5.5.7** The Dean makes his focus on the safeguarding agenda very visible, with sermons, newsletters and introductions to Cathedral policies. 'Creating a safe church' is an explicit objective within the Cathedral's Masterplan. At every level in the Cathedral, people were able to cite to the auditors examples of how the Dean takes a lead on this agenda, and the well-embedded safeguarding culture (see below) in the Cathedral surely owes much to this.
- 5.5.8** The Dean's recognised expertise on the knotty issues of safeguarding and the seal of confession is reflective of a genuinely thoughtful engagement with the complexities of safeguarding in a faith context, which in turn suggests his engagement with the topic is likely to be meaningful to the Cathedral community.
- 5.5.9** Locating the lead safeguarding role within the senior clergy team should further strengthen the theological leadership on safeguarding.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- None.

## Strategic leadership

### *Description*

- 5.5.10** Strategic leadership for safeguarding, as with all aspects of Cathedral life, rests with the Dean and Chapter. The Chapter consists of the Dean, the five Residentiary Canons, the Comptroller, two Cathedral Wardens, two representatives from the congregation and two persons appointed by the Bishop, one clerical and one lay. One of these is also one of the CSOs. On Chapter, the Comptroller is the designated safeguarding lead, although that role will shortly pass to the new Canon Precentor (see above).
- 5.5.11** Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at Chapter meetings, and the DSA attends Chapter once a year to report fully on Cathedral safeguarding.
- 5.5.12** Safeguarding is also one of six core priorities, under the title Creating a Safe Church, in the Southwark Cathedral Masterplan, a long-term strategic vision, from which arise a number of more specific action plans, one of which is for safeguarding.
- 5.5.13** The Masterplan also focuses on areas related to safeguarding, such as the development of the Education Centre and links with the Diocese.
- 5.5.14** The Dean meets regularly with the DSA. He and Chapter value and follow the DSA's advice.

### *Analysis*

- 5.5.15** It is positive that the Cathedral's Masterplan includes safeguarding, and that there is a good degree of read across between the Masterplan, the *Promoting a Safer Church* policy and the safeguarding action plan. With the creation of a safe church at its core, this has led to demonstrable improvements and helps focus and shape the attention given to safeguarding by a well-established senior leadership team who work well together.
- 5.5.16** With the inherent blurring of strategic and operational roles with a cathedral hierarchy, maintaining a longer-term vision for safeguarding amidst the daily pressures of doing it well can be hard. The Masterplan, however, gives a structure to Chapter, and has enabled significant tangible changes to occur. Moving the Song School and bolstering the chaperone provision were both part of this agenda, as were the focus on training, promotion and embedding safeguarding in meeting structures.
- 5.5.17** Chapter described to the auditors how they have, therefore, achieved major safeguarding steps forward in recent years. With no similarly large safeguarding tasks on the horizon, the challenge will be to maintain a systematic approach to continued development and improvement.
- 5.5.18** Although a useful place to start, the safeguarding action plan does not yet fully reflect all the elements of the Cathedral's *Promoting a Safer Church* policy. A review with this in mind could provide a focus for next steps.



**5.5.19** Forthcoming changes to the senior personnel within the Cathedral offer a further opportunity to review the strategic leadership of safeguarding, alongside the strategic plan, in order to build on the progress made to date and ensure that the whole safeguarding system is as robust as possible.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How can Chapter best refresh its safeguarding strategy and action plan, and systematically review and measure progress?

### **Operational leadership and management**

#### *Description*

**5.5.20** A pivotal figure in the operational leadership and management of the Cathedral is the Comptroller, as the senior lay member of staff. He has been in role since 2005, having previously held a similar post at Chelmsford Cathedral. Since summer 2019, the Comptroller has moved to working part-time, with a new Commercial Director taking on the commercial development aspect of the Comptroller's role. The Comptroller described safeguarding in its broadest sense taking up a good proportion of his time.

**5.5.21** The structure for operational management centres around the senior management team, consisting of the Dean, Sub-Dean, Canon Precentor, Comptroller, Commercial Director and Finance Director. Safeguarding is on every agenda of senior management team, and the DSA attends at least every six months and whenever required to report or advise.

**5.5.22** Alongside senior management team, there is a weekly operational management meeting, which is tiered, so that progressively over the course of the meeting more staff members join, and the discussion broadens. Every key department (bar bell-ringing – see 3.2) is represented, including the Music Department.

**5.5.23** The close links with the Diocese are reflected at operational level, with important safeguarding posts such as the leads for HR and communications being held jointly across Diocese and Cathedral.

#### *Analysis*

**5.5.24** The day-to-day management of safeguarding is effective. It depends on the effective day-to-day management of the wider life of the Cathedral, and this is in place, with a collaborative and cohesive set of departments working within clear structures.

**5.5.25** Safeguarding is represented at all key operational meetings by the Comptroller, and the DSA feeds into such meetings with appropriate regularity.

**5.5.26** The impact of the recent and imminent departures of key people such as the Canon Precentor and DSA will need to be monitored. But with new people will



come new ideas, and the recent arrival of the Commercial Director has seen positive steps in safeguarding terms, with the introduction of staff and volunteer lanyards.

**5.5.27** The forthcoming changes of personnel noted above may be an opportunity to check whether current systems for delivering the safeguarding agenda are robust in themselves or overly dependent on the commitment of individuals. This could include consideration of a cathedral safeguarding committee comprising key managers and specialist staff as a successor to the working group that has led the preparations for the safeguarding audit.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- What steps are needed to clarify the operational responsibilities for delivering the Cathedral's *Promoting a Safer Church* agenda?

### **Culture**

**5.5.28** The most critical aspect of safeguarding relates to the culture within any organisation. In a CofE context, that can mean, for example, the extent to which priority is placed on safeguarding individuals as opposed to the reputation of the Church, or the ability of all members of the Church to think the unthinkable about friends and colleagues. Any cathedral should strive for an open, learning culture where safeguarding is a shared responsibility, albeit supported by experts, and which encourages people to highlight any concerns about how things are working in order that they can be addressed.

**5.5.29** One person to whom the auditors spoke said of the Cathedral leadership that 'it appears to be gentle, but it is not a coincidence that safeguarding all works as it does'. This, to the auditors, encapsulates helpfully an overall sense that the safeguarding culture in the Cathedral is well-embedded, and that this is the result of many years of thought and effort at various levels.

**5.5.30** There is clear safeguarding leadership from the top, reinforced through lots of visual, oral and written messaging. Safeguarding feels very normalised, in that it is a comfortable matter of conversation throughout the Cathedral, without any sense of it as something to be feared or avoided. The messages given to the auditors by senior leaders found echoes throughout the organisation, suggesting communication has been effective.

**5.5.31** More generally, the organisation seems cohesive. Departments appear to work well together, and there are initiatives such as all-staff breakfasts, held three times a year (to which the DSA also comes) to reinforce this. There is also a culture of learning; incidents are habitually followed by debriefs and reflection. The staff and volunteers throughout the Cathedral have a wide range of experience, skills and professional backgrounds, and appear well-engaged with the safeguarding agenda.

**5.5.32** The most significant recent incidents – the two terror attacks – have had a significant impact on people's attitudes, but the Cathedral's culture of openness has remained, albeit tempered by a heightened sense of caution.

**5.5.33** The focus on the terrorist incidents, coupled with the cohesive and positive internal culture, gives rise to one concern. Most safeguarding cases involve people known to the victim, and that needs to be remembered, even as the Cathedral rightly focuses on keeping its community safe from external threats. The Dean expressed a strong awareness of the risks of grooming, and training and other messaging also strengthen this awareness, but the terror attacks do nonetheless, at this point in time, unsurprisingly dominate the discourse around risk in the wider Cathedral community.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- What opportunities as well as risks are presented by the number of significant changes of people in key posts that are forthcoming?
- How can the Cathedral continue to assure itself that the awareness of external threats is not at the expense of a similar focus on the possibility of internal ones?

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

This section provides the headline findings from the audit, drawing out positives and the areas for improvement. The details behind these appraisals are in the Findings.

- 6.1.1** The safety and security of the buildings and precinct are well managed.
- 6.1.2** The Cathedral supports vulnerable adults well, achieving a good overall balance between welcome and care of individual visitors to the Cathedral, and the general safety and welfare of the wider Cathedral community. More attention needs to be paid to the vulnerable people within the regular Cathedral community, including volunteers and staff.
- 6.1.3** Arrangements for assuring the safety of children involved with the Cathedral are good overall. There remain some areas where procedures and practice guidance need to be developed; these include assuring the safety and welfare of child servers, and arrangements for the crèche. Overall, there is a sense that the Cathedral is a place where children are welcome.
- 6.1.4** Arrangements for assuring the safety and wellbeing of child choristers are good overall and continue to develop, with new systems and procedures being put into place as gaps are identified. Further work is needed to ensure that there are formal mechanisms in place to communicate with both choristers and their parents, and to record and monitor information about the continuing welfare of individual choristers.
- 6.1.5** Procedures relating to visiting bell-ringers could usefully be tightened.
- 6.1.6** Casework, together with recording and information-sharing practice, is excellent. Responsibilities for taking action, and arrangements for monitoring this, need to be clarified, together with arrangements for recording and monitoring lower-level concerns.
- 6.1.7** Safeguarding training is well resourced and promoted, with attention paid to ensuring its relevance and accessibility to the many staff and volunteers. The emphasis on face-to-face training is a strength, but has meant that not everyone has yet received training, and some volunteers, in particular, have not been able to access it. There is no strategic training plan in place, which may be a disadvantage as the safeguarding agenda continues to develop.
- 6.1.8** Recruitment is done well. The safer recruitment policy is clear and thorough, and backed up on the ground by well-embedded processes. Systematic monitoring of how consistently the policy is working is not in place, although all the relevant information is collected.
- 6.1.9** The work of the DSA is of a reliably high standard, be that in casework, partnership-building, or more strategic planning functions. The case evidence suggests she is backed by a good team, and the links between the Cathedral

and the safeguarding team are reflective of the excellent working relationships between the Diocese and the Cathedral. The combined resources of the DST, together with that of the Cathedral CSOs, appear to be adequate to meet the Cathedral's needs.

- 6.1.10** Elements of a quality assurance framework are in place but more needs to be done to provide systematic assurance of progress towards achieving the objective of creating a safe church.
- 6.1.11** There are good complaints and whistleblowing policies in place. Each could be improved slightly, but they are helpful documents as they stand.
- 6.1.12** The new DSAP structure, with its annual in-depth focus on the Cathedral has the potential to be one element of an effective system for scrutinising the Cathedral's safeguarding. It is not clear how the DSAP offers support to the Cathedral, distinct from that offered by the DSA.
- 6.1.13** It is evident that the Dean and his senior clerical colleagues take the task of giving a theological impetus to safeguarding very seriously, and this has a positive effect across the life of the Cathedral.
- 6.1.14** It is positive that the Cathedral's Masterplan includes safeguarding, and that there is a good degree of read across between the Masterplan, the *Promoting a Safer Church* policy and the safeguarding action plan.
- 6.1.15** The day-to-day management of safeguarding is effective. It depends on the effective day-to-day management of the wider life of the Cathedral, and this is in place, with a collaborative and cohesive set of departments working within clear structures.
- 6.1.16** There is an overall sense that the safeguarding culture in the Cathedral is well-embedded, and that this is the result of many years of thought and effort at various levels.



## APPENDIX: REVIEW PROCESS

### DATA COLLECTION

#### Information provided to auditors

In advance of the audit, staff at Southwark Cathedral sent through the following.

- Cathedral site map
- Southwark Cathedral Overview of the functioning of the Cathedral, governance etc.
- Job description of the Diocesan/Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser.
- Safeguarding self-audit summary.
- Safeguarding Support and Procedure Protocol.
- A summary of relevant sections of the past three Chapter meetings.
- Overview of safeguarding training since 2017.
- Cathedral *Annual Report and Accounts* for the year ending 31 December 2018.
- Dean's *Annual Report*, Easter 2019.
- *Risk Register 2020*.
- Safeguarding leadership arrangements.
- Annual safeguarding reports to Chapter and the Annual Parochial Church Meetings in 2017 and 2018
- Report of the Diocesan/Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser to the Chapter and Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2019.
- *Promoting a Safer Church Policy*.
- Responding to domestic abuse.
- Safer recruitment policy.
- Concerns and complaints policy.
- Public interest disclosure policy.
- Volunteers policy.
- Equality and diversity policy.
- Cathedral trips policy.
- Cathedral emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Disciplinary policy.
- Grievance procedure.
- *Learning Centre Safeguarding Handbook*.
- *Volunteers Safeguarding Handbook*.
- *Children and Young People Participating in Liturgy Safeguarding Handbook*.
- *Junior and Youth Xpress Safeguarding Handbook*.
- *Chorister Code of Conduct*.
- Choir photography form.
- Chorister mobile phone policy.
- Chorister registration and medical form.

- Choristers drop-off and collection form.
- Pastoral care information leaflet.
- Safeguarding Officers poster.
- Support in Southwark poster.
- Trips approval forms for young people and vulnerable adults.
- Cathedral safeguarding Diocesan self-audit 2018.
- Sermon preached on Sunday 19 January 2020.

Also in advance of the audit, SCIE received feedback about the Cathedral from statutory partners and the Cathedral School.

### **Participation of members of the Cathedral and Diocese**

The auditors had conversations with:

- Dean of Southwark
- Comptroller
- Sub-Dean/Canon Pastor
- Canon Precentor
- Canon Chancellor
- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- Chair of the Diocesan Advisory Safeguarding Panel
- Volunteers Officer
- Visitor Services Manager
- Education Officer
- Director of Music
- Assistant Director of Music
- Organ Scholar
- Two choir chaperones
- Head Verger
- Deputy Head Verger
- Three Cathedral Safeguarding Officers (in addition to the Comptroller)
- Director of Human Resources
- Ringing Master (by phone after the site visit)

Focus groups were held with:

- Cathedral staff
- Chorister parents
- Choristers
- Youth leaders
- Volunteers and members of the congregation

**What records / files were examined?**

The auditors explored eight case files and five recruitment files.