

# LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT  
TO THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD  
January 2021 - December 2021



LICHFIELD  
CATHEDRAL

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## 1. INTRODUCTION



- 1.1 The following has been prepared by the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO), on behalf of the Dean of Lichfield, the Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral and the Chair of the Cathedral's Safeguarding Committee.
- 1.2 This report is required under section 5.1 of The Church of England Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance (October 2017).
- 1.3 The purpose of the report is to provide the Bishop of Lichfield with an overview of the Cathedral's safeguarding policy, procedures and practices. However, Chapter recognise that the report can also offer an update to other stakeholder organisations, and therefore it is the Cathedral's intention to share this report, confidentially, both internally and externally.
- 1.4 The 2020 report noted the impact of COVID, and it is with regret that much of 2021 has suffered a similar fate. The Cathedral was closed for in person worship and to visitors for the first half of the year, slowly reopening during the summer and autumn, and having to respond with reintroduced COVID secure measures to the threat of Omicron in the winter.
- 1.5 Concerns about gathering together has had a detrimental impact on our congregation numbers, the return of volunteers, and the reintroduction of children's activity, such as children's church or Messy Church.
- 1.6 Despite the closure at the start of the year, the Cathedral opened as a vaccine clinic, which offered its own safeguarding challenges, especially with the vulnerability of those attending for early priority vaccinations. However, working closely with the GP practices, and once the operational team were used to dealing with the large number of people, the Cathedral quickly fell into a pattern of vaccine centre operation. We were delighted to be part of the country's fight against COVID and our safeguarding experience meant that we worked to ensure vulnerable patients were well cared for.
- 1.7 As the Cathedral began to reopen and some normality looked to be returning, the SCIE Safeguarding Audit took place. It had already been agreed that the audit would be delayed from 2020 and furthermore when it

was planned for 2021 it would take place remotely. This created several challenges, not least the witness of our daily life, however we worked closely with the audit team and used video conferencing and file sharing technology to facilitate the audit.

- 1.8 The Cathedral would like to thank the auditors for accommodating the challenges this posed and the professionalism with which they undertook the audit. The Cathedral was relieved and grateful to receive a positive outcome that concluded it was a safe place for children, young people and vulnerable adults (see section 6).
- 1.9 The audit also proved to be a positive motivator to ensure policies and procedures were updated, which was an action that had rolled over from 2019 to 2020, and subsequently into 2021.
- 1.10 Chapter and the Safeguarding Committee are now focussed on maintaining the good work already underway, and using the SCIE Audit Action Plan, as a way of monitoring work required to continue to improve the safeguarding service.

## 2. SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND GOVERNANCE



- 2.1 The Dean and Chapter are responsible for safeguarding at Lichfield Cathedral. Chapter are advised by the Cathedral's Safeguarding Committee, which is chaired by Mark Hope-Urwin, who is also a Chapter Member.
- 2.2 Simon Warburton, Executive Director, has the responsibility of being the designated Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO).
- 2.3 Jane Hardy, Office Manager, is also the Cathedral Safeguarding Co-ordinator (CSC). Jane is the secretariat to the Safeguarding Committee.
- 2.4 Other members of the Safeguarding Committee include:
  - ✦ The Canon Precentor, Canon Gregory Platten is charged with oversight of ministry and outreach to children and young people.
  - ✦ The Director of Music, Ben Lamb leads the Cathedral Choir and acts as a primary liaison with Lichfield Cathedral School.
  - ✦ From the 1 July 2020 the Cathedral has been supported by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA), Neil Spiring, as part of a Service Level Agreement with Diocese.
- 2.5 The Safeguarding Committee meets bi-monthly and is grateful for the support of its additional members including Lichfield Cathedral School (Safeguarding Lead, Jo Owens and the Trustee charged with Safeguarding, Jenny Mason).
- 2.6 To improve the relationship, and oversight, the CSO has replaced the CSC on the Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Panel (DSSP). The Cathedral has a dedicated agenda item and both CSO and DSA offer feedback regarding case load and issues. It has also been agreed in principle that both organisations would offer critical feedback to one another, however details of this need to be explored further in due course.
- 2.7 The contract management sub-committee reports directly to the Safeguarding Committee. The contract management sub-committee meets on an ad-hoc basis as contracts need managing. In 2021 the Sub-Committee met twice in May and October, both meetings were related to annual contract reviews.

- 2.8 Members of the Committee include, the CSO, DSA, Canon Custos and CSC. The Canon Custos continues to be the pastoral point of contact for contract recipients.
- 2.9 Safeguarding appears as a standing item on Chapter and with the Executive Management Team with the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer attending both meetings (in attendance at Chapter and as a member of the Executive Management Team). Any new safeguarding issue is reported at the next earliest opportunity using a case reference number.

## 3. THE SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE



- 3.1 During 2021 the Safeguarding Committee met 8 times in January, February, March, April, May, July, September and November. The Contract Management sub-committee met prior to each safeguarding contract renewal. The members of the sub-committee also undertook the annual safeguarding contract review.
- 3.2 Key items discussed by the Committee include:
- 3.2.1 Supervision and safeguarding of Choristers
  - 3.2.2 Updates from Lichfield Cathedral School, Diocesan Safeguarding Team and the Cathedral.
  - 3.2.3 Any new safeguarding concerns
  - 3.2.4 DBS monitoring
  - 3.2.5 Contracts
  - 3.2.6 Training
  - 3.2.7 The national safeguarding audit – first half of the year and Audit Action Plan in the second half of the year.
- 3.3 The Chair of the Safeguarding Committee signed off the DBS list on the 19 May 2021. This was the earliest opportunity following the early year COVID lockdown.
- 3.4 The Contract Management Sub-Committee undertook an annual review of two contracts (May/October).

## 4. POLICIES



- 4.1 The Cathedral follows the Church of England safeguarding guidance and a link to 'Protecting All God's Children' (2010) is available on the Cathedral's website.
- 4.2 Also available on the website are copies of the Cathedral's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (April 2021), the Safeguarding Handbook (April 2021), Domestic Abuse Policy (January 2020)
- 4.3 There is clear instruction on the website for safeguarding enquiries both in office hours and out of office hours. An area was added to include safeguarding during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.4 The Cathedral also provides links to the Cathedral School's Safeguarding Policy and the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy. Within the Diocesan section we also provide details of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, the Training Advisor and the DBS Administrator.

# 5. SUMMARY OF SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS



- 5.1 During 2021 there have been 38 reported safeguarding issues. This has increased from 13 in 2020. The cases have ranged in seriousness from 'for information only', recruitment and declarations, and reports to social services (LADO and adult social services).
- 5.2 There are two active Safeguarding Contracts both of which received their annual reviews during 2021. The Canon Custos has contacted both individuals and offered appropriate pastoral support as required.
- 5.3 All incidents were reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor for which the Cathedral is grateful for their ongoing support.
- 5.4 All enquiries continue to be recorded, and electronic files are kept within a secure area of the Cathedral server with restricted access. Communication of files to external bodies are secured using a password which is sent separately. Hard copies of any files are kept within a lockable filing cabinet in the Cathedral office, and this is administered by the Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- 5.5 One safeguarding case required a Core Group (in relation to a church officer) of which the DSA chaired and the CSO and Dean attended. The case was reported to the LADO, but they saw no need for intervention and passed it back to the Cathedral to manage. After a thorough investigation the case was not substantiated, and the complainant was informed.

# 6. SCIE AUDIT



- 6.1 The SCIE Audit took place between the 8 – 10 June 2021. The following is a copy of their conclusions:
- 6.2 The Cathedral site is well managed and there is a strong team of vergers who are recognised and who put in place effective safeguarding and security arrangements.
- 6.3 There are robust processes in place for visiting schools and for children using Messy Church or involved in the Cathedral's other activities. However, information regarding the use of IT, social media contact with children, use of personal mobile phones, photographs and live streaming could usefully be put in one place to strengthen the message.
- 6.4 Vulnerability of volunteers themselves is recognised and acted upon and support is offered. Appraisal systems are in place for public facing volunteers and good processes to support their work are evident. There is nothing in place for volunteers who may have to leave their post due to becoming vulnerable. Vergers recognise and take trouble to get to know vulnerable visitors as do the Residentiary Canons.
- 6.5 Choristers feel safe and the Cathedral has put in place clear arrangements for their safeguarding and wellbeing. There is further provision for other children coming into contact with the Cathedral. However, better communication regarding safeguarding might be required between the Cathedral and the school to create a more effective case work system. Broader communication of safeguarding processes between the Cathedral and chorister parents is needed.

- 6.6 The safeguarding practice of the bell tower at Lichfield Cathedral is good. There are links with the CSO and all ringers are volunteers and so have been trained and safely recruited. There are robust procedures in place to mitigate risk for children but there is perhaps less evidence of support for vulnerable adults.
- 6.7 Case work and information sharing between the Cathedral and the Diocese is good and it is positive that there is a Service Level Agreement in place for safeguarding support.
- 6.8 Training in safeguarding has been carefully considered, is well managed and has been rolled out to all Cathedral staff and volunteers. Training is tracked and refresher training is required. Volunteers cannot remain in post without attending training. Some additional more specialised training might be useful in some areas.
- 6.9 All staff and volunteers go through a recruitment process which includes an application form, references, a self-declaration, an interview and a DBS where required. The Cathedral has invested in this process and the provision of a new post to coordinate volunteers has been welcomed.
- 6.10 The Cathedral has a suite of policies covering safeguarding including a comprehensive safeguarding handbook for staff and volunteers. As above, a policy covering expectations for staff and volunteers on the use of electronic equipment and social media (including live streaming) might be useful.
- 6.11 The CSO at Lichfield Cathedral is effective, well recognised and highly regarded. He has managed a volume of work which might be difficult for another post holder. As part of succession planning, the Cathedral might wish to consider how the role will develop long term.
- 6.12 Chapter has a vision for safeguarding within the Cathedral and is strong in both scrutinising safeguarding strategy and operations and in challenge where required.
- 6.13 Quality assurance could be strengthened by better links with the DSSP and the school. Safeguarding could further be strengthened by being clearly included in the strategic plan.
- 6.14 The Safeguarding Committee works well and is effective with clear terms of reference. It is accountable to Chapter and oversees operational safeguarding across the Cathedral. The Dean has thought carefully about the theological leadership of safeguarding and has addressed this in sermons, as has the Canon Custos. There are further opportunities to develop this.
- 6.15 The strategic leadership of safeguarding at Lichfield Cathedral is good and Chapter is scrutinous. There is currently the lack of a 'critical friend' due to the DSSP not meeting during COVID-19 and strategic planning to support survivors of abuse is not yet in place.
- 6.16 The operational leadership of safeguarding in Lichfield Cathedral is strong and well embedded across all departments. Most Operational Leads for safeguarding have a clear line of communication via the Safeguarding Committee, but additional formal links might further strengthen processes.
- 6.17 There is a strong safeguarding culture across staff and volunteers at the Cathedral and there is some communication of safeguarding in place to those who worship or visit there. However, further opportunities to strengthen and reinforce this could be taken.
- 6.18 The audit resulted in an Action Plan which is forming part of the Safeguarding Committee's agenda. A copy is published on the Cathedral's website and will be updated annually until all of the items are resolved.



# 7. TRAINING



- 7.1 At the end of 2017, Chapter made a commitment that mandatory safeguarding training would be provided to all clergy, staff and volunteers by the end of 2019. At the end of 2019 459 members of staff, volunteers and committee members had received training either face to face or online.
- 7.2 The training is to be reviewed every 3 years and due to COVID-19 this could not happen in person during 2021. The Church of England has renewed its training materials and the Basic Awareness and Safeguarding Foundations courses were available for completion online. The Volunteer Co-ordinator helped to roll this out to the volunteers and the CSC ensured Cathedral staff completed the training.
- 7.3 To date 82 existing volunteers have renewed the training and 48 new volunteers have completed it. Many of the volunteers would prefer to attend a face-to face course and the CSC will look into the possibility of this happening in 2022.
- 7.4 The Safeguarding Committee has agreed that, and in line with Staffordshire County Council guidelines, all new staff, volunteers and committee members should be trained within 3 months of starting as Cathedral volunteers.
- 7.5 More immediate training will be provided for staff and volunteers who have specific roles and responsibility relating to children or vulnerable adults.

# 8. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND DBS'S



- 8.1 All staff and volunteers requiring DBS's, including those that required updating, have been completed within 2021. These are reviewed by the Chair of the Safeguarding Committee and signed off at the start of each year. In line with the guidance from the National Safeguarding Team, the Cathedral is committed to reviewing DBS checks every three years, which is a reduction from the previous five year commitment.
- 8.2 All staff and volunteers go through a safer recruitment process. This includes:
- Application forms
  - References
  - DBS/Voluntary Disclosures/Voluntary Declarations – depending on the role
  - Review of CVs identifying gaps or areas of concern
  - Face to face interviews/initial meeting
  - Induction
- 8.3 The Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Volunteer Co-ordinator have all completed a Safer Recruitment course.



## 9. LINKS WITH LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL SCHOOL



- 9.1 Lichfield Cathedral School is a key stakeholder and holds a joint responsibility for safeguarding of the Choristers. There can be up to 23 boy choristers and 18 girl choristers.
- 9.2 The Cathedral is grateful for the support of the School who provide the wrap around care for the choristers. This includes supervision through School appointed Matrons.
- 9.3 Safeguarding is identified within the Service Level Agreement between the Cathedral and the School. The Cathedral's Safeguarding Privacy Policy also highlights the commitment for the Cathedral to communicate safeguarding issues as required.
- 9.4 Lichfield Cathedral School were approached to offer some feedback in terms of the working safeguarding relationship.
- 9.5 'The lines of communication between school and cathedral are very good. We have specific processes for sharing information and we are not afraid of doing so. Our candid information-sharing supports our mutual ability to safeguard the choristers and, at times, the wider pupil body. I feel totally reassured by the confidentiality and concern shown by the various members of the Cathedral's Safeguarding Committee. This is evident in the regular meetings and in the way they are conducted.
- 9.6 In the longer term, I would like to see more overlap between our safeguarding policies, though I recognise the differing demands of a school safeguarding policy and one with a remit that extends beyond children. The school policy has its roots in the Staffordshire local safeguarding partnership, which includes healthcare and the police. Is there any possibility in the future of mirroring some aspects of our policy in yours, and vice versa?'  
(Ms Jo Owen, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Lichfield Cathedral School)

## 10. CHILDREN'S CHURCH AND MESSY CHURCH



- 10.1 Children's Church and Messy Church have been managed by the Canon Chancellor who is also a member of the Safeguarding Committee. Both are facilitated by volunteers who have all received a DBS check and have attended a safeguarding training session.
- 10.2 It is worth highlighting that attendance at Messy Church is with the child's parent or guardian and it is made clear that carers are expected to remain with the child. Children's Church is supervised by a leader and helper and whilst parents are welcome to stay whilst their child settles in, they do not need to stay.
- 10.3 A new Chancellor took over responsibility for these activities, however due to COVID-19 all Messy Church and children's church activity ceased. It was tentatively reinstated at the start of the 2020/21 academic year, but due to the pandemic once again stopped. The Cathedral was hopeful that both might start again in 2021, however this was not to be the case, and we are now looking to relaunch our formal children's activities in 2022.



# 11. CHALLENGES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD



- 11.1 The Cathedral Safeguarding Committee continues to work its way through the SCIE Audit Action Plan. Whilst the action plan has been publicised on the Cathedral website, the working document includes priorities and deadlines, and is monitored at each Safeguarding Committee meeting.
- 11.2 Chapter needs to prepare a Survivors Policy, and this should be done in conjunction with willing survivors.
- 11.3 Maintaining vigilance as the Cathedral reopens and restarts some of its child orientated activity.
- 11.4 To be mindful of potential post COVID wellbeing crisis that is already being experienced in the young, particular in relation to our joint care of the choristers from the Cathedral School.
- 11.5 To consider greater alignment of Safeguarding Policies between the Cathedral and Lichfield Cathedral School.

# 12. THE DEAN'S PERSPECTIVE



- 12.1 For much of 2021, COVID continued to restrict access to the Cathedral for worshippers and visitors alike, the role of the Cathedral, and how it responded to its community, needed to evolve. I would like to thank the Cathedral team for the way in which they approached the challenges of COVID, and how this impacted on the safeguarding of our community, both locally and through our new audience online.
- 12.2 2021 also involved the Cathedral's SCIE Safeguarding Audit, and I would like to pass on my thanks for the auditors who undertook the audit virtually, but with an appreciated level of professionalism and sensitivity. I would also like to thank the Cathedral team who worked hard to prepare for the audit, to respond to the requirements of the auditors, and ultimately in ensuring the Cathedral received such a positive response. Whilst we were pleased with the results of the SCIE audit, we know that we must not be complacent and remain vigilant to ensure the safety and protection of all.
- 12.3 The challenges for the year ahead are clear, there will be an inevitable impact emerging from COVID on everyone, with the young and elderly particularly vulnerable from the lasting effects on their wellbeing. I am pleased these issues are already being addressed thanks to a competent and committed safeguarding committee and safeguarding team.

