



ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

**ANNUAL REPORT TO BISHOP OF ROCHESTER
REGARDING SAFEGUARDING**

**REPORT FOR THE PERIOD:
1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020**

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Introduction

This is the second Annual Report submitted by Chapter on safeguarding in and across the Cathedral community. Once again, the year has seen a number of safeguarding challenges. Nonetheless, and as we report below, the solid progress made in 2018 and in 2019, was recognised by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) in its independent review of the Cathedral's safeguarding arrangements. In the paragraphs that follow, we review the key safeguarding areas of the last year and look forward to further tightening of safeguarding governance and leadership in 2020.

Music Department (including links with the King's School Rochester)

The past year has seen some key appointments in relation to music and the choirs. Francesca Massey was appointed as Director of Music and Organist and Ben Charles was appointed as Principal of King's Rochester. These appointments continued the commitment to improving the culture and approach to safeguarding in relation to the Cathedral's choral music and continued positive relationships between the Cathedral and King's School. The contribution to this ongoing process by Adrian Bawtree, who served as Interim Director of Music until August 2019, should also be acknowledged.

A significant announcement was made in November 2019, that a single mixed treble line of boys and girls would be introduced from September 2020, with all choristers attending King's Preparatory School. This demonstrated our commitment to equality and will bring significant benefits in terms of harmonising safeguarding practice and prioritising the welfare of the choristers together with their musical and educational development. The SCIE audit noted that the plans "are thoughtful and comprehensive and demonstrate continuing joint commitment by the Cathedral leadership and the King's Preparatory School to the safety and wellbeing of the choir children." The system for adult singers in the choir has been restructured with permanent Principal Lay Clerks supported by a pool of Deputy Lay Clerks, to achieve more consistency, both in musical terms and also in personnel. The SCIE audit described this restructuring as "a conscious and well thought out response to the events of previous years, with the aim of achieving a significant change to a healthier culture which is focused on creating a safe environment for everyone."

The continued strengthening of relations between the Cathedral and King's Preparatory School was also demonstrated by the appointment by the school of a Chorister Tutor, to be responsible for chorister tea in school and transit from the school to the Cathedral at the end of the school day, and to have responsibility for the rota of volunteer Chaperones. The role description and induction protocol for volunteer Chaperones has been updated. Updated registers and observation sheets for Chaperones to note any observations or concerns have been introduced for every rehearsal/service/event. The written protocols for the safeguarding of choristers (joint protocol for those at King's and ancillary protocol for those not at King's) have been kept under review and amended during the course of the year. A new Choristers Handbook (now a single document for both boy

and girl choristers) was issued in September 2019, with safeguarding information given more prominence – the choristers themselves also now receive an induction including information about safeguarding, reporting etc and seeking their views on communication.

Education

All schools are sent the “Safeguarding for visiting groups” document at the point of booking. They are asked to complete and return the associated form. Groups arriving without prior booking are now also asked to complete the same form.

Guidelines for dealing with un-booked groups and missing persons have also been produced and shared with volunteers.

Safeguarding is discussed at all Learning Team volunteer meetings.

Volunteers

Sterling work has been undertaken by the Volunteer Manager over the course of the last year to thoroughly overhaul all aspects in relation to volunteers’ understanding and reporting of safeguarding. Specifically, she has undertaken one to one training for volunteers who struggle with online learning; enhanced the Cathedral noticeboards by regularly reviewing content and making it suitable for different audiences, e.g. children; reviewed all volunteer files to check content etc and all volunteers are now safely recruited in accordance with House of Bishops Guidance. She has been rigorous in her application of DBS procedures and training requirements in accordance with volunteer roles.

All volunteer Information folders held at the Welcome Desks and the Crypt have been updated with current safeguarding information, incident forms and a flowchart of how to report an incident.

SCIE Audit

A small team from SCIE undertook a wide-ranging three-day audit of safeguarding process and compliance across the Cathedral in September 2019. The audit team met with a cross-section of people from the Cathedral and King’s School, along with some choristers and their parents, during their visit.

In their subsequent report the SCIE team observed that “safeguarding at Rochester Cathedral has many areas of strength, many of which the Dean, Chapter and staff identified in their self-assessment”. Some of the areas of strength commented upon by SCIE were:

- Strong relationship between the King’s Prep School and the Music Department, supported by good policies and working practices, to promote the safety and wellbeing of choristers.

- Systematic and strong leadership by the CSG of the delivery of a comprehensive safeguarding action plan which inspires confidence across the workforce.
- Public and consistent leadership of safeguarding by the Dean, Canon Precentor and Chair of the CSG in particular.
- Good casework delivered and overseen by the widely known and respected Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.
- Development of a strong and comprehensive framework of policies and procedures.
- Delivery of training in safeguarding across the entire workforce of clergy, staff and volunteers.

Very helpfully, the SCIE team drew attention to a number of areas where they considered priority should be given moving forward. These include:

- Clarifying governance and leadership arrangements within the Cathedral and together with the Diocese;
- Developing a comprehensive quality assurance framework;
- Strengthening its approach to the oversight and management of offenders and those who may pose a risk to others and;
- Embedding Safer Recruitment practices in all parts of the Cathedral.

The CSG has drawn up an action plan to progress the various suggestions for the further improvement to safeguarding practice and culture across the Cathedral. Good progress has already been made against many of the deliverables including the introduction of a procedure for lost children. All measures have also been allocated a priority rating. Whilst overseen by the CSG the action plan has been endorsed by Chapter who will continue to monitor progress proactively.

Past Cases Review

Following Sir Roger Singleton's independent report in 2018 into the Church of England's handling of its 2007-2009 Past Cases Review, the Diocese of Rochester was identified as one of seven dioceses required to redo its original Past Cases Review. Alongside this, as part of ongoing scrutiny work around past cases across the entire Church of England, all dioceses are required independently to review all outstanding files. This is called Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2) and must be completed by the end of 2020.

The Cathedral's part in PCR2 was completed in January 2020. In total the Case Officer reviewed the personnel files of 829 current and former staff and volunteers. Less than 1% of files were found to need further work and the Case Officer's final report noted that "the general picture at the Cathedral's offices is positive ... there is clear evidence of proactive efforts to develop an ethos and culture that is protective in safeguarding matters rather than simply reactive when problems occur." A small number of recommendations were made, and these have been included in the Cathedral's Safeguarding Action Plan.

Training

All staff are required to have completed Basic Awareness training as part of their induction before they commence their role. All staff training is up to date as is training for the Dean, Residentiary Canons and all members of Chapter have completed the required levels of safeguarding training. All Chaplains and Priest Vicars have either undertaken the required level of training.

All volunteer Information folders held at the Welcome Desks and the Crypt have been updated with current safeguarding information, incident forms and a flowchart of how to report an incident.

Below is a schedule of total numbers of staff and volunteers who have undertaken C0, C1 and C2 training.

	Staff	Volunteers
C0 – Basic Awareness	84	346
C1 – Foundation	29	255
C2 – Leadership	26	32

Vulnerable Adults

Victims/survivors of domestic abuse are part of our vulnerable community because of the huge impact of domestic abuse on individuals and society.

The Cathedral used the occasion of the White Ribbon Day in November 2019 to raise awareness of an aspect of domestic abuse and violence over a period of two weeks. The aim was to draw attention to the whole domestic abuse agenda and start conversations on the back of the international campaign using both secular and non-secular literature, statistics, quizzes and visual displays. The materials were accessible to both visitors and worshippers during the period. Conversations with visitors, volunteers, members of the congregation and staff were fruitful. It is planned that in 2020, there would be further awareness raising on different aspects of domestic abuse using workshops, training, intercession, sermons and possibly press releases.

The SCIE audit highlighted the need for the Cathedral to demonstrate how it consults its vulnerable groups. Vulnerable groups have been mostly identified, though this would remain a growing list. The modalities of how individuals within the groups could be engaged by the Cathedral representatives is being worked out. This may include using community forums, focus group interviews and questionnaires.

Cathedral Sunday Club

All Sunday Club volunteers have undertaken C0 and C1 training and in addition most attend Sunday Club meetings where there is an opportunity to discuss safeguarding issues. Last year a session was run for children, in three age-groups, to raise their awareness of the

importance of staying safe, what being safe feels like, good and bad secrets and children's rights. Parents were informed that the session was happening and were invited to attend with their children.

The Year Ahead

Much positive progress has been made over the last year. As we now look forward to a further year the intention is to complete all the actions arising from the SCIE audit including, where necessary, any further tightening of safeguarding policy and process. We are determined not to let the solid work of the last 18 months or so be eroded and will continue to look for opportunities to demonstrate our commitment to the further consolidation of a strong and visible safeguarding culture across the Cathedral, including with both children and vulnerable adults. We intend to continue our robust approach to safeguarding training. We will be looking to evaluate how our staff and volunteers have implemented the learning from the training as well as how they feel about the level and quality of the training and how we might be able to exploit staff views etc more in relation to feeding comments back to the National Safeguarding team as they look to review content. In addition, we regard it as a high priority to start a focus group that can look more closely at both how the Cathedral manages vulnerable adults and, in the same vein, what sort of lead the Cathedral might be able to give locally as regards bringing issues around adult vulnerability more to the fore.

Cathedral Safeguarding Officer Overview

The Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO) has now been in place for two years, the role continues to require more than the time agreed by Chapter with the Diocese allocated to the role. The CSO's role includes advising on the initial response to incidents, training, policy and attendance at meetings. The case involving the conviction of the former Director of Music has continued to make demands on the CSO.

The National Safeguarding Team has recognised that Cathedrals require additional guidance and training which will make further demands on the CSO who has participated in the national Cathedral safeguarding network to ensure that Rochester maintains its involvement in developing safeguarding.

The coming year is the time that Chapter and the Diocese should plan for the future provision of professional safeguarding advice in the Cathedral.

Conviction of Former Director of Music

In July 2019 the Cathedral's former Director of Music was sentenced to a term of imprisonment following his conviction for voyeurism and gross indecency with children during his time at Ely and Rochester Cathedrals. The National Safeguarding Team has commissioned an independent Learning Lessons Review of the case. It is anticipated that the final report may be published by the end of 2020.

Dean's Perspective

My thanks to those who have contributed to this Annual Safeguarding Report and the immense work that continues to happen across the Cathedral to ensure it remains a safe environment for all.

Of note in this report is the significant changes that have been made in the music department. My thanks to Canon Matthew, Francesca Massey and Jeremy Lloyd. The new arrangements will further the work of creating a new culture of openness and transparency and will hopefully put the choral tradition on a sound footing for the future. Good communication between the King's School and the Cathedral has helped to strengthen good working practice and this will progress in the coming year. It was satisfying to see that these changes were welcomed by the SCIE Audit.

The SCIE Audit provided a timely opportunity to measure the changes we have implemented. Their report was reassuring and encouraging to Cathedral staff that their labours had not been in vain. It was an enormous piece of work to prepare on top of the Past Cases Review and routine matters. The Cathedral team is small and hardworking. Again, I'm grateful for the guidance and thoroughness of Greg Barry, the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, Kay Williams, Simon Lace and Sandy Stuben whose tireless work with Cathedral volunteers is crucial.

As numbers of visitors to the Cathedral increase, with events such as the Adventure Golf and Knife Angel, it is important to remain watchful and make sure we have appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and enough trained volunteers on hand. These remain ongoing challenges and there is a positive attitude in the Cathedral that they are not only essential, but deliverable.

Lastly, my thanks to those who constitute the Cathedral Safeguarding Group, formally the Safeguarding Implementation Group and the valuable contribution they make. It's good to acknowledge that the implementation part is now over, and we have a strong platform on which to build.



The Very Revd. Dr Philip Hesketh
Dean of Rochester



Mr Simon Lace
Chapter Clerk – Executive Director