**Annual Report 2018: Safeguarding Team**



The Ely Safeguarding Team seeks to contribute to ‘People Fully Alive: Ely 2025’ in its strategic aims of developing healthy churches and serving the community. We aspire to strengthen and integrate concepts of ‘safeguarding’ and ‘protecting the vulnerable’ within the culture and everyday practice of all those working, volunteering or worshipping across the Diocese. This preventative aspect of our work includes raising awareness of the various ways in which abuse may be manifested, the processes by which it should be managed and how it may impact on survivors. The Safeguarding Team provides advice, guidance and leadership whenever concerns arise about the possible abuse of a child or adult at risk and in relation to allegations against church officers and where there are concerns in relation to adults posing a risk within congregations.

All aspects of work by the Ely Safeguarding Team are consistent with House of Bishops’ policies and practice guidance. Local strategies and practice guidance are based on these and endorsed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group. During 2018 two new policy and guidance documents relevant to safeguarding have been published, these are**:**

* **Parish Safeguarding Handbook (2018)**
* [**Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations that relate to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults practice guidance (2018)**](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/14413)

**Safeguarding referrals in** **2018**

There were 158 referrals in 2017 which represents an increase of 22% on 2017 when there were 129. This increase may be attributed to the increased levels of safeguarding training across the Diocese and the ongoing publicity surrounding past safeguarding failures across the church and other institutions and the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse of which the Church of England is a Core Participant.

Referrals may result in the provision of consultation and advice, internal casework management and/or referral onwards to statutory agencies. Many cases involve more than one category of harm: (for example a child who has been physically harmed may also be subject to emotional harm) in those cases we have identified a primary category for recording purposes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Primary Category of Referral**  | **Child** | **Adult** |
| Sexual Abuse | 3 | 3 |
| Non-current sexual abuse | 2 | 10 |
| Physical  | 2 | 2 |
| Emotional  | 4 | 0 |
| Neglect | 4 | 13 |
| Domestic Abuse | 0 | 5 |
| Financial | 0 | 1 |
| Spiritual | 0 | 2 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Source of Referral**  |  |
| DBS or Confidential Declaration Information | 18 |
| Information about an adult who may pose a risk of harm  | 21 |
| General safeguarding issues/advice | 57 |
| Enquiries from Statutory Agencies | 1 |
| Allegations about current or former clergy, parish employees or volunteers | 11 |

**Risk Assessments and Safeguarding Agreements**

Central to all safeguarding work are the holistic assessment of risk and the development of effective strategies to manage any identified risk. These are often complex, involving liaison with partner agencies in the community, such as probation and the police. Many alleged and convicted perpetrators of abuse move from place to place and thus inter-diocesan and inter-agency cooperation is essential in seeking to protect the vulnerable.

During 2018, 18 Safeguarding Agreements were in place. These relate to the reviewing of known, historical cases and newly reported cases. The subject of the Agreement participates in this process, and the Agreements are regularly reviewed and monitored. Where statutory agencies are involved they participate in this process. The purpose of such Agreements is to protect all within the church community, including the subject.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

The DSO has responsibility for ensuring that all relevant staff, volunteers and members of congregations have appropriate DBS checks completed. During 2018, 1719 DBS were undertaken across the Diocese, which represents an increase of 49% from 2017, when 1153 were undertaken. These checks are an essential part of ensuring the safety of all participating in church community activities.

**Safeguarding Training**

The Safeguarding Team began to deliver the Church of England’s ‘Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training and Development’ 2016 (hereafter referred to as ‘the Guidance) in January 2017.

The safeguarding team continues to deliver the full range of currently available National Church of England training modules.

In the main, the modules which apply to employees and volunteers in our parishes are: C0 Basic Awareness (online or face to face) C1 Foundation (Online or face to face) and C2 Leadership. To reach most volunteers, those modules have been delivered at evenings and weekends within Deaneries across the Diocese. The C3, S1 and S3 modules have been delivered at the Diocesan Office on a mixture of weekday and weekend dates.

**Numbers trained in each safeguarding module in Ely Diocese during 2018:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Module** | **Candidates 2018** |
| **C0 Basic Awareness (online)** | 1149 |
| **C0 Basic (face to face)** | 62 |
| **C1 Foundation** | 870  |
| **C2 Leadership** | 524 |
| **C3 Clergy and Lay Ministers** | 121 |
| **S1 Safer Recruitment** | 101 |
| **S3 Domestic Abuse** | 107 |

We recognise the commitment required by those attending this training, the majority of whom are volunteers and therefore want to make the training as convenient and local as possible, while making the best use of available resources.

**Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group (DSLG)**

Ely DSLG has strong multi-agency and inter-departmental representation which allows robust discussion on safeguarding issues, drawing on a wide range of professional experience and expertise. It is also a supportive group, offering advice and guidance on policy and practice matters. Ely Safeguarding Team is very grateful for all the contributions to its work made by diocesan and partner-agency members of the DSMG.

The Independent Chair of the DSLG, Katharine Jeary who was appointed in July 2016 resigned the role in December 2017. A new Independent Chair, Jon Chapman was appointed in March 2018.

**Past Cases Review**

During 2016, a review was started by the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team of all dioceses in relation to the 2009 Past Cases Review (PCR) and its continuing legacy.

On the basis of the information reviewed, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team concluded that the 2009 PCR should be repeated, the Diocese of Ely subsequently welcomed the recommendation and guidance of the Independent Scrutiny Team to undertake a new review.

The Diocese of Ely recruited four Independent File Reviewers who began Phase One of the Review in September 2018. They reviewed all personnel files held regarding Licenced Clergy, Lay Parish Staff and Volunteers and employees of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance.

Phase One (1) of the Review was completed in October 2018. Following additional guidance from the National Safeguarding Team, Phase Two of the Review began in February 2019. Phase Two will review all files identified as requiring further consideration in more detail.

In addition, an Interim Report was produced by the Independent Review Team following Phase One, which contains further recommendations for the Diocese to consider, all of which will be implemented as part of this continual improvement process.

**Parish Focussed Support**

A planned framework has been agreed for the Safeguarding Team to work with Parishes to support their compliance with House of Bishop’s Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. Parishes who are at risk of not having ‘due regard’ will be provided with Focussed Support. This process brings together the Safeguarding Team and parish in a coordinated response to help parishes overcome their difficulties. An action plan will be agreed, and ongoing support and challenge provided directly by the Safeguarding Team. This process is primarily supportive but may escalate, according to levels of parish engagement. This process was trialled in 2018 and feedback has been positive. This process will be fully launched during 2019 following completion of the Past Cases Review.

**Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)**

The Church of England is a Core Participant in the Independent Inquiry. The first public hearings relating to the Church of England were held during 2018.The Diocese of Ely, along with all other dioceses, responded to one formal information request from the Inquiry during 2018. Further hearings in relation to the the national and wider Church are scheduled to take place between 1-12 July 2019

**Looking beyond the diocese**

The essence of the Safeguarding Team’s work is promoting the safety of vulnerable people within the church community. Everyone is also subject to society’s legislative framework and the Ely Safeguarding Team seeks to strengthen community liaison, whilst also putting forward the perspectives of Church safeguarding policies and practice. The DSA represents the Voluntary Sector on the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

The DSAs, the DSO and the DSLG’s Independent Chair are all active in their respective regional and National Church safeguarding fora.

Ely Safeguarding Team also expresses its appreciation for the contribution to safeguarding work of all Parish Safeguarding Officers, who provide a helpful ‘front-line’ link in their parishes and keep safeguarding issues on local agendas.

*RB March 2019*