



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

Safeguarding in our parishes

Ely Diocesan Safeguarding Team

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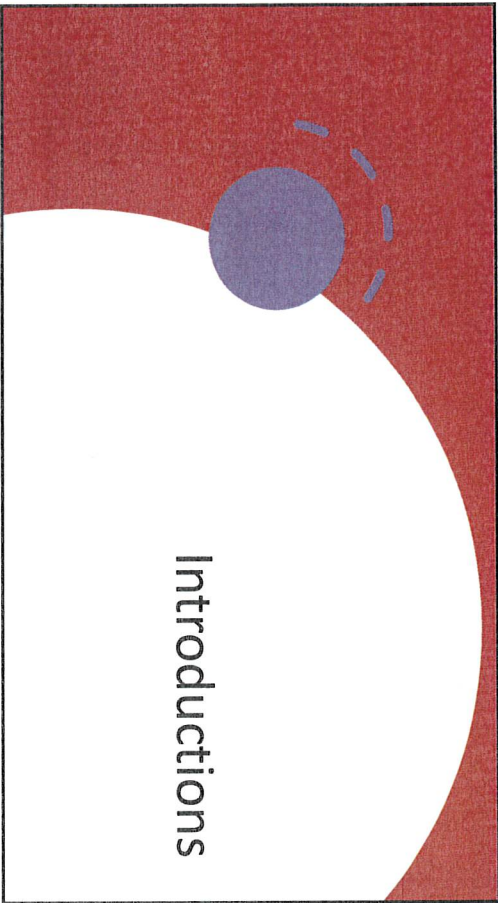
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



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Diocese of Ely

National and Diocesan Updates

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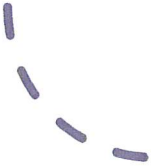
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Background

- The independent safeguarding audit programme for the Church of England was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council and is overseen by the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team (NST).
- It is part of the Church of England's national response to the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).
- It is led by the INEQE Safeguarding Group
- The independent audit programme is running for 5 years from 2023 to 2028.
- Audits include both the diocese and cathedral.




The Purpose of the INEQE Audit Programme

The purpose of these audits is to make sure dioceses, cathedrals and palaces are doing all they can to create environments where everyone feels safe, valued and respected.

It's a chance for us to shine a light on what's working, spot any gaps, and strengthen how we safeguard everyone across the diocese and cathedral communities.

Think of it as a safeguarding health check—with a big dose of collaboration and reflection!



What are they looking at?



IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND IDENTIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT – IMPROVED IN RESPECT OF THE FIVE STANDARDS.



PROCESS: HOW FAR HAVE WE COME FROM POC2 AND SOC.



HAVE WE ENLIGHTENED OUR PRACTICE BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THOSE REVIEWS AND HAVE WE CREATED A SAFER ENVIRONMENT AS A RESULT



OUR LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK – HOW DO WE ENSURE WE LEARN LESSONS FROM THE PAST AND PRESENT TO ENSURE WE CONTINUE TO IMPROVE OUR PRACTICE IN THE FUTURE.

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The Diocese of Ely – Timeline

- February 2025 preparation started for the Audit
- September 2025 – SPOCs to be confirmed
- October 2025 – Information gathering and surveys
- On-site visit – 2nd - 6th February 2026
 - One to one discussions
 - Focus groups
- Key audit dates and times will be shared on the diocesan website when available.

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The Diocese of Ely: What has been done so far

- The SPOC's have been identified – Sarah Kennedy (DSO) for the Diocese, Iain Osborne for the Bishops Office and James Reveley from the Cathedral
- A MyConcern 'Health Check' has been completed, and we will be creating an action plan in respect of the areas identified for improvement.
- Cathedral and Diocesan Safeguarding Teams have completed detailed self-assessments using the National Safeguarding Standards and will update these monthly from this point on.
- Communication about the audit has now started and will continue now for all those across the Diocese through updates and briefings moving forward.

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What happens next: What we need from you!

We are encouraging those parishes who have not yet engaged in the dashboard to do so as this is what INEQE will look at to ensure our parishes are compliant with the national standards. For support with getting the dashboard operational contact a member of the safeguarding team.

Ensure those within your Parish have the appropriate training and that your safer recruitment processes are robust and consistent.

In the next few months we will likely call on you for support in preparation the pre-audit evidence and in particular examples of good practice in relation to the five standards. Please help with this as best you can!

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Surveys

As part of the audit process, the team from INECG Safeguarding Group would like to engage with a wide spectrum of individuals from dioceses, parishes and cathedral communities through online surveys.

These surveys will act as a mechanism through which individuals can comment on matters relevant to the audit's focus.

Participation in the surveys is optional.

The surveys are both anonymous (the audit team are not seeking to identify individuals) and confidential (individuals will not be identified in INECG's report).

The purpose of the surveys is to enable the audit team to conduct a wider analysis of practice across Church bodies and give individuals the opportunity to contribute to the audit.

No one from the Church of England or other body will be provided with or have access to the survey responses.

Have your say! It's important for as many voices as possible to be represented, so that the auditors gain a true picture of the safeguarding culture in our diocese.

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Opportunities to be involved



There will be various opportunities for people across the diocese to engage and participate in the audit process whether through completing questionnaires that will be circulated prior to the audit visit or participating in focus groups discussions.



Therefore, please save the dates 2-6th February 2025. You will not be required to be free for the whole three days; however, we do not as yet have the timetable - watch this space and please hold these dates for now.

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A Big Thank you!

Thank you to everyone in
advance for contributing
any time, information,
and commitment to this
important work.

Every form completed,
and piece of evidence
gathered strengthens our
shared safeguarding
culture.

Together, we are ensuring
our Diocese and
Cathedral remain safe,
supportive communities
for everyone!

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Contacts

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Managing Concerns and Allegations

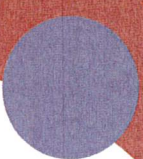
The new *Managing Allegations* code of practice sets out the processes for assessing and managing safeguarding concerns and allegations against church officers.

It became effective on 1st September 2025.

It is mainly a technical document, aimed at safeguarding professionals and others who will manage the process. This replaces the current 2017 House of Bishops' Practice Guidance on Responding to Allegations.



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The new Code includes clear pathways with detailed guidance on how to deal with allegations and managing risk with different categories of Church Officer for example, clergy, employees, volunteers, elected members of bodies and those who are deceased.


It includes a new process for dealing with allegations about failing to follow safeguarding procedures where there is no direct abusive behavior or risk has been developed. This focuses on learning and development where that is a more appropriate outcome. A learning culture where mistakes can be promptly admitted and dealt with creates a more robust system where people will put their best action being taken when failures put others at risk of harm.

It provides more clarity on the role and functions of the Safeguarding Case Management Group (formerly known as 'core groups') with improved structures, decision-making processes and escalation where necessary.


For full details: *Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations*, | The Church of England




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What support is available

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The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

Diocesan Safeguarding Team

Safeguarding Duty Phone: 01353 652747 (Please do not use this number for queries about DBS checks, training or recruitment issues)

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Training, Criminal Record Checks and Parish Safeguarding Officer Support

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