



Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Policy

June 2026

This document must be read alongside:

- Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Procedures and Guidance
- The Choristers and Youth Choir Safeguarding Procedures
- Visiting Schools Safeguarding Procedures

Purpose

At the heart of our ten-year strategic plan is the image of Christ the Good Shepherd. He is the one who not only leads and directs his people as a shepherd but also cares for them, protects them and searches out those who are lost. It is upon this vision of Christ that the Cathedral of Christ at Canterbury bases its leadership, work and mission.

One of the central golden threads to the strategy is therefore the importance of wellbeing and sustainability which ‘seeks to provide a safe space for those in need, through our commitment to wellbeing, safeguarding, accessibility and inclusivity’.

In relation to the centrality of our vision of safety and wholeness of all, this document sets out Canterbury Cathedral’s safeguarding policy and protocols related to safeguarding children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

It has been informed by and is compliant with Church of England safeguarding framework, including Promoting a Safer Church (2017) and House of Bishops guidance.

Scope

This policy applies to all Cathedral staff, office holders, volunteers and contractors, without exception, and covers their work on and offsite. This policy safeguards worshippers, visitors, choristers, staff, office holders, volunteers and contractors.

The policy is particularly mindful of the children and vulnerable adults regularly engaged by the work of the Cathedral and the particular safeguarding presentations in this context. Those children and vulnerable adults include non-exhaustively: -

All children, comprising:

- Probationers and choristers of the Cathedral Choir.
- Children participating in on-site and off-site music outreach.
- Children visiting the Cathedral who become lost.
- Children attending school visits, educational visits and tours.

All adults, comprising:

- Vulnerable adults, including visitors and worshippers.
- Victims and survivors of abuse.

All new staff and volunteers must receive induction training on their safeguarding responsibilities on commencing in their role

Church of England Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Church of England is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its ministry and mission, promoting a safer culture and the welfare of every child, young person and adult. As such, the Church of England has robust policies, procedures and guidelines in place, to ensure good practice throughout the central organisation, its 42 dioceses and other Church bodies.

The Church of England will:

- Promote a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of safeguarding concerns or allegations (recognising that matters may be unsubstantiated, unresolved, or under investigation) and other affected persons
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others

The Chapter of Canterbury fully endorses the Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England, as well as the House of Bishops' (referred to throughout this document as HOB) Safeguarding Policies and Procedures document, including the adoption of key national church safeguarding policy documents:

The full up to date list of the Church of England policy and practice guidance documents can be found at: [Policy and practice guidance/the Church of England](#). Whilst recently revised guidance is available via the safeguarding e-manual.

Where specific situations occur, those responsible for safeguarding at Canterbury Cathedral will refer to the relevant Church of England policy and practice guidance.

Policy Principles

The Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral is accountable for g this Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults and committed to supporting paid and voluntary staff in achieving its implementation. The Cathedral is therefore wholly committed to:

- Safeguarding, nurturing and protecting all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- carefully selecting and training paid and volunteer staff who might come in contact with children or vulnerable adults, using Safer Recruitment principles and the Disclosure and Barring Service to verify their suitability.
- responding without delay to any safeguarding concern, disclosure, report, or allegation that indicates that an adult, child or young person may be at risk of harm.
- co-operating fully with the police, local authority and other appropriate statutory bodies relevant to an investigation.
- ministering appropriately to anyone, child or adult, who has experienced abuse only from clergy and those licensed to minister.
- offering appropriate pastoral support to those who are the subject of safeguarding concerns or allegations, while ensuring that children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable are protected.
- challenging any abuse of power especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- providing a pastoral ministry of care and nurture for all children and all adults.
- establishing a safe, caring community which provides a welcoming and compassionate or supportive and nurturing environment with a culture of 'informed vigilance' about the dangers of abuse.
- that all children, young people and adults, regardless of faith, will be treated with care, dignity and compassion so that whatever their gender, race or sexual orientation they are reassured that they are loved, as human beings created in God's image. In this knowledge they and those supporting them will be treated with tact, empathy and respect
- offering appropriate care for and supervision for any member of our cathedral community known to have offended against a child or adult, and where possible and appropriate to enable them to worship at the cathedral if they so wish working alongside statutory agencies as appropriate.
- to undertake all safeguarding duties in accordance with the Church of England national safeguarding guidance.

The Church of England's Theological Approach to Safeguarding from the House of Bishops is set out in the **Canterbury Cathedral guidance and procedures document**

Canterbury Cathedral's safeguarding policy, procedures and guidance should also be read in the context of other policies (listed below).

Managers, office holders, staff and volunteers, should familiarise themselves with current guidance set out in these policies.

Canterbury Cathedral Policies and Procedures that pertain to Safeguarding

- Whistleblowing policy

- Complaints policy
- GDPR policy
- Safer Recruitment policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Grievance policy
- Staff and Volunteers Behaviour Framework
- Conflict of Interest policy
- Volunteers' Problem-Solving policy
- IT policy and procedure
- Code of Conduct

Key Definitions

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as any person below the age of 18 years old.

Adult Safeguarding

- The Care Act 2014 provides the statutory framework for adult safeguarding. Safeguarding duties apply where an adult:
- has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met by the local authority);
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect, or the risk of it.

Categories of Abuse

Canterbury Cathedral recognises the categories of abuse identified in Church of England safeguarding policy and practice guidance. These include, but are not limited to:

- Grooming: a precursor to abuse, building a relationship with a child or adult at risk in order to gain trust and acceptance with the aim of exploiting that relationship to facilitate abuse. May include, for example, giving presents, money, helping with chores/homework, taking on trips/holidays or other forms of manipulation.
- Physical abuse: physical violence, including burning, scalding, drowning or other acts of physical violence. In relation to children, physical chastisement that leaves a bruise or mark e.g., a handprint, or using an implement even without leaving a mark

- Sexual abuse: Any sexual activity involving a child or any sexual activity involving an adult without their informed and freely given consent. Sexual abuse may include both contact and non-contact abuse, including grooming, exploitation, indecent images, exposure to sexual activity and online abuse.
- Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical or psychological needs, including failing to seek medical or physical care as needed, failing to feed, keep clean or supervise appropriately, also facilitating or not addressing self-neglect. For adults, neglect may also include acts of omission.
- Emotional abuse: persistent denigration, derogatory remarks, emotional ill-treatment or controlling behaviour that causes harm to a person's emotional wellbeing or development. Also exposing a child or a vulnerable adult to aggression or violence against another person, for example a child witnessing domestic abuse between their parents.
- Spiritual abuse is recognised as a form of emotional and psychological abuse that occurs within a religious context. It involves a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour, often by someone in a position of spiritual authority, such as clergy or religious leaders. This abuse can have a profoundly damaging impact on individuals, affecting their mental health, sense of self-worth, and spiritual well-being.

Canterbury Cathedral – safeguarding roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Everyone working, volunteering or holding office at Canterbury Cathedral has a role in creating and maintaining a safe environment. Specific safeguarding responsibilities are set out below.

Where the Visitor is the Archbishop or Bishop, they will enact their duties in accordance with the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Church of England and in compliance with the safeguarding policies and procedures of Canterbury Cathedral.

The Dean

Section 12(2)(f) of the Cathedrals' Measure 2022 states:

(2) The dean... must govern and direct on behalf of the Chapter the life and work of the cathedral; and in performing that duty the dean must in particular...

(2) (f) provide leadership on matters relating to the safeguarding of any children or vulnerable adults who work, volunteer or worship in the cathedral or who visit the cathedral.

The Chapter

As the governing charity trustees of Canterbury Cathedral, the Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral holds overall responsibility, and provides leadership, to ensure that Canterbury Cathedral fulfils its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Chapter is kept regularly informed about safeguarding matters and participates in decisions concerning safeguarding developments.

Further, detailed guidance on the roles and responsibility of the Cathedral Chapter can be found in: Chapter 5 of the House of Bishops' "Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance" (2017)

The Cathedral Safeguarding Committee Members

Chapter has established a Cathedral Safeguarding Committee which is responsible for:

- overseeing case work, both within the Cathedral and in partnership with the Diocese of Canterbury and other partners,
- overseeing and monitoring policy, procedures and practice in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring compliance

It is chaired by an Independent Chair who sits on the Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel and is supported by a Vice Chair. The Cathedral Safeguarding Officer is in attendance along with the Receiver General. The Committee reports directly to Chapter via the Chapter Safeguarding Lead.

The Chapter Non-Executive Safeguarding member

1 x Chapter representative – incl. representation on Safeguarding Committee

The Cathedral Safeguarding Leads

The CSL provides operational and strategic oversight of safeguarding and reports to RG.

The deputy CSL oversees operational safeguarding of young people including choristers, child servers and Children's Church and reports to CSL.

The Head of Safeguarding/ Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO)

The CSO provides operational capacity in relation to:

- case work, both within the Cathedral and in partnership with the Diocese of Canterbury and other partners,

- advising Chapter, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and departments on safeguarding matters,
- advising on and providing safeguarding training,
- reviewing and drafting policy and procedure

The CSO reports to the Cathedral Safeguarding Lead and keeps the Chapter Safeguarding Lead informed in relation to safeguarding matters, provides regular safeguarding reports to Chapter and attends Senior Leadership Team meetings as required. The CSO receives pastoral and work supervision from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

The CSO liaises and works with the Diocese of Canterbury Safeguarding Officers (in compliance with Church of England national guidance) and represents the Cathedral at the Diocese of Canterbury Safeguarding Operations Group as well as the Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel along with the Chair of the Safeguarding Committee.

NB. “where an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered abuse is made against a bishop or other church officer in the diocese or against any other person, advising on whether the allegation should be referred to the police for investigation and, if the advisor thinks it should be referred, making the referral”

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations (2016), cited in Church of England’s Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance (2017)

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Senior Leadership Team hold departmental responsibility and accountability for safeguarding. Their role includes:

- Ensuring that safeguarding is regularly on the agenda of SLT meetings.
- Ensuring that safer recruitment and employment practices are followed and embedded in their department.
- Ensuring that line managers, staff and volunteers, in their department are compliant with regard to their own safeguarding role, training requirements and team briefings.
- Ensuring that all concerns are followed up, and that risk assessments are undertaken, as required.
- Attending safeguarding training and briefings as required by Chapter.

Safeguarding Working Group (SWG)

The Cathedral Safeguarding Working group reports to the Senior Leadership Team and is responsible for developing, overseeing and monitoring policy, procedures and practice in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The group also helps support the CSO in co-ordinating the operational running of safeguarding within the Cathedral. Their role includes:

- Review of cases.
- Oversight of training and DBS checks.
- Monitoring safeguarding activities, compliance and risk.
- Advising and supporting Schools' and Music department.
- Making recommendations to SLT in operational areas.

Line Managers

Line Managers have responsibility for:

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers, under their leadership, understand their safeguarding responsibilities, and how to raise concerns.
- Ensuring that safer recruitment and employment practices are followed.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers attend training and briefing sessions as required by Chapter.
- Supporting any staff or volunteer member who raises a concern.
- Raising any issues, questions or accessing advice via the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.
- Ensuring that any concerns are acted upon
- Ensuring risk assessments are undertaken as required.
- Challenging poor practice with their teams, firmly but constructively.
- Provide proportionate briefings to all contractors providing services for Canterbury Cathedral. (*seek advice from the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, the HR Team or the Health & Safety Manager if you are uncertain.)

All staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility for:

- Ensuring that they understand their own safeguarding responsibilities.
- Reporting any concerns as set out in the accompanying protocols.

- Ensuring that they have completed and hold an up to date certificate for the mandatory safeguarding training required for their role.

Ensuring that they have a valid and up to date DBS certificate consistent with the requirements of their role.

- Observing good practice in working with children, young people, families and/or adults who may be vulnerable.
- Maintaining confidentiality about safeguarding matters – only speaking to those with whom it is necessary to communicate with.
- Recording all relevant information about concerns and actions, and passing to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer for secure storage.

Disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service

The Cathedral carries out checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for paid staff and volunteers who require it as part of their role. This is managed through the Safeguarding Team.

It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that they have an up to date DBS consistent with the requirements of their role.

Training

In line with the Cathedral's responsibility for providing safeguarding training for paid staff and volunteers, the modular training programmes developed by the National Safeguarding Team are delivered primarily online to all staff and volunteers. Basic awareness and Foundations training event is also provided. Bespoke training for our organists and musicians is also given by the diocesan safeguarding trainer and CSO. In addition, the chaperones are licensed through Kent County Council and undertake additional online safeguarding training to acquire this license.

It is the responsibility of the individual that they remain up to date with the required training for their role.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, to ensure that it remains consistent with Canterbury Cathedral safeguarding guidance, Church of England safeguarding requirements and relevant safeguarding legislation.

Review Date: June 2027