Canterbury Cathedral

Safeguarding Procedures and Guidance

Reviewed and Updated June 2026

This document must be read alongside:

The Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Policy,

The Child Chorister and Youth Choir Safeguarding Procedures document and

The Visiting Schools Safeguarding Procedures

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1. Canterbury Cathedral: people and contact details

Head of Safeguarding
Larry Deabreu – Interim Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO)
The Cathedral Safeguarding Officer has strategic responsibility for safeguarding procedure, advice and case oversight across Canterbury Cathedral.

Cathedral Safeguarding Lead (CSL)
Emma Pennington - Canon Missioner and Cathedral Safeguarding Lead.

Deputy Cathedral Safeguarding Lead
Lindsay Yates - Canon Precentor.

HR Manager
Vicki Wesley

Receiver General
Kathryn Beldon

Head Constable
Fred MacCormack

Chorister Welfare Lead (CWL)
Kelly-Jayne French - Responsible for pastoral care, welfare monitoring and safeguarding liaison for choristers within the Music Department.

Independent Chair of Chapter Safeguarding Committee

Cathedral Safeguarding Team
safeguarding@canterbury-cathedral.org

Diocesan Safeguarding Officers
Paul Brightwell and Fiona Coombs

Independent Chair of Diocesan and Cathedral Advisory Panel
Jack Wise

2. Victims and Survivors Charter

Support for anyone who has been the victim of abuse, and/or if you want to tell someone about abuse that has happened to you

Talking about experiencing abuse is never easy, you may have tried to tell people before. We hope that you feel safe to talk to us at Canterbury Cathedral and in the Diocese of Canterbury. We have worked together to make a set of promises to you – a charter:

This is our promise to you

If you have something you want to talk about it is important you feel you:

- Are listened to and taken seriously
- Are valued as a whole person
- Are able to make choices and decisions about what to tell us, and what happens
- Understand that we cannot always keep information confidential – we will tell you who needs to be told, and why
- Are told about what is happening in your case regularly
- Are well supported in choosing if you want a referral or an introduction to other people who can help you e.g. the Police, other agencies who can help
- Are supported to be able to provide information, or talk to someone (if you wish to) to explain how what happened made you feel and what it means to you now
- Are supported in continuing to come to Church, if that is what you want to do
- Are given support to find help from victims' support services, like people or charities who can help you
- Are given clear information about what has happened as a result of what you have told us
- Are assured that you heard and that we will endeavor to learn from your experiences and our mistakes.

If you want to report abuse, please contact Larry Deabreu, the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer on 01227 865225 or through safeguarding email safeguarding@canterbury-cathedral.org or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 01227 459401 through their website or email safeguarding@diocant.org

IN AN EMERGENCY PHONE THE POLICE ON 999

Further Support and Help

If you would like to get support from someone else, outside the Church, here are some agencies that can help:

- Safe Spaces - 0300 303 1056, safespaces@firstlight.org.uk is a free and independent service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church.
- Building Hope (independent advocacy service) – 0300 110 110
- Samaritans - 116 123 (24 hrs)
- NSPCC - 0808 800 5000, help@NSPCC.org.uk
- Childline: 0800 1111
- MACSAS (Minister And Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors) - 08088 01 03 40, helpline@macsas.org.uk
- Survivor Voices – Please use their contact form here
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000 247
- Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Partnership – 0808 2000 247
- Family Matters Kent - 01474 536661, admin@familymattersuk.org
- Kent Sexual Assault and Abuse Service – 01227 451753
- Kent County Council Children's Safeguarding – 03000 41 41 41, social.services@kent.gov.uk
- Kent County Council Adult Protection – 03000 41 9191, social.services@kent.gov.uk

3. Principles of Safeguarding at Canterbury Cathedral

The Cathedral is wholly committed to:

- safeguarding and protecting all children, young people and vulnerable 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.
- *regardless of faith, all children, young people and adults should 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.*
- 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 every complaint made which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed.
- 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.
- extending pastoral care to those known to have offended against children or vulnerable adults while ensuring that children and vulnerable adults 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.

4. Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Procedures

Purpose and Scope

Safeguarding within the Canterbury Cathedral operates in accordance with the Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Procedure and Procedures and reflects the Church of England's Safeguarding Code of Practice and all other Church of England relevant Safeguarding Guidance.

This Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Procedure sets out the safeguarding arrangements specific to the Canterbury Cathedral and should be read alongside the Cathedral's safeguarding policy and Child Chorister and Canterbury Youth Choir Safeguarding Procedures.

Canterbury Cathedral is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment in which all people can flourish, especially children and the vulnerable. This commitment reflects the Cathedral's values of Compassion, Collaboration, Commitment and Curiosity, which underpin the approach taken to the care and safeguarding of everyone.

These procedures apply to:

Staff
Volunteers
Contractors and external organisations using the Cathedral
Cathedral Communities
Residents of the Precincts
Cathedral staff, chaperones and others working with choristers.
Cathedral Office Holders

For further procedures for those staff, chaperones and others working with choristers see the Child Chorister and Youth Choir Procedures Document.

For further procedures for those staff and volunteers working with Visiting Schools see the Visiting Schools Safeguarding Procedures

Definitions

Safeguarding
The process of protecting children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation, and promoting their welfare in accordance with Church of England safeguarding guidance and national safeguarding legislation.

Emergency Services
In an emergency or where a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police via 999.

Cathedral Constables
On-site Cathedral Constables are available to respond immediately to safeguarding or security concerns within the Cathedral precincts and will liaise directly with Kent Police where require.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone working or volunteering at Canterbury Cathedral.

All staff and volunteers must:

- Maintain an awareness of safeguarding responsibilities;
- Follow Cathedral safeguarding policies and procedures;
- Act promptly if a safeguarding concern arises;
- Share concerns through the appropriate safeguarding reporting channels

The Cathedral Safeguarding Team provide a key point of contact within the Cathedral for pastoral and safeguarding concerns and expertise

5. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously and reported promptly within 24 hours.

Staff should follow the Cathedral safeguarding guidance when responding to concerns, often summarised through the four key stages of safeguarding response:

Recognise
Respond
Record
Refer

You must not investigate – only proper authorities and trained professionals should do so.

What to do if....

You have concerns about possible abuse (including domestic abuse and allegations against a colleague or clergy):

- In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
- You can go directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO), Constables, or, if urgent, make an immediate referral to police or appropriate care services.
- Keep a record of the concern on the logging a concern/disclosure form and refer to the CSO or use the online logging a concern form on the safeguarding email.
- If you are unsure about your concerns (eg whether they are safeguarding related or pastoral) consult your line manager and decide together when to seek advice from the CSO or speak to the Constables.
- Always inform the person you spoke with (eg line manager), and the CSO of your actions.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person any allegations relate to.

A child, young person or adult wishes to disclose they have been abused

- Listen. Keep listening. Do not question or investigate but reassure and be compassionate.
- Do not premise confidentiality; tell them we need to share this, but only with those who can help to protect them.
- Assure them they are not to blame.
- Tell them what you are going to do and that they will be hold what happens.

- Use the logging a concern form, disclosure section to make careful notes of what is said (using the words of the person disclosing), do not add your own words, record dates, times, events, who you spoke with and your actions. Sign and date.
- Report to the CSO. If they are not available, alert the Cathedral Safeguarding Lead or Canon in Residence.
- Only tell those who need to know. Not the person the allegations relate to.

Things to remember:

- Anyone under 18 years is a child in law
- Treat everyone with respect, setting a positive example and respect personal space and privacy.
- Ensure your actions are transparent and open, cannot be misunderstood.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour, regardless of position and authority.
- Do not put anyone, including yourself, in a vulnerable or compromising situation.
- Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- You must not keep allegations or suspected abuse secret.
- You can get advice and support from the person you report to or the CSO.

If you have concerns about a person with whom you have a close relationship, e.g. familial, martial, friendship, please pass all information onto your manager immediately.

What to do if.....

You are a line manager, clergy or a Cathedral Constable

Your role is to be the first port of call for staff and volunteers working out of hours, or who are uncertain, unable or not confident enough, to take concerns directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.

You have concerns about possible abuse (including domestic abuse and allegations against a colleague or clergy):

- In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
- You must go directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO), Constables, or, if urgent, make an immediate referral to police or appropriate care services.
- If this is not possible, and the matter involves a Church Officer, particularly a member of clergy, you must inform the Diocese of Canterbury Safeguarding Officers on

- Keep a record of the concern and actions on the logging a concern/disclosure form and refer to the CSO or use the online logging a concern form on the safeguarding email.
- Always inform the person you spoke with (eg line manager), and the CSO of your actions.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person any allegations relate to.

A clergy/staff member, volunteer, contractor or Community member tells you they have concerns about possible abuse (including allegations against a colleague or clergy):

- In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
- Reassure the individual that they were right to talk to you.
- You should go directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer to inform them.
- Make sure the individual has kept a record of what made them concerned on the logging a concern form.
- Keep your own record of what happened, who you spoke with, and your actions.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person the allegations refer to.

Things to remember

- Individuals may feel very upset or angry about the things they are discussing with you. Please try to support through the process, or refer them to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer for advice and support.
- You can get advice and support from the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.
- Do not attempt to investigate.
- Simply listen. Do not ask leading questions. If you need to clarify a point, just ask an open question.

It is also your responsibility to ensure that you and your team, observe safer working practice guidance in recruitment and behaviours. If you need advice or support with this, please contact the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer or HR.

Hearing a Child's Disclosure/Allegation

Things to remember:

- Listen actively to the child and without using leading questions.
- Reassure the child that they were right to talk to you
- Tell the child that you cannot always keep things confidential, and that depending on what they say, you may need to tell the right people

- Do not attempt to undertake an investigation or speak directly to the person against whom allegations have been made.

It is critical to make a written note of the conversation including:

- what the child has said, including their exact words over critical points;
- time and date of the conversation
- location where the conversation took place;
- details of who was present
- name of the child
- your responses to the child;
- circumstances leading to the disclosure;
- physical and emotional appearance of the child, e.g., the child crying;
- length of conversation;
- date and time of the conversation and your signature.

The 'logging a concern' form will aid in the documenting of any concern needs to be referred with 24 hours of the discussion.

The above list is equally applicable when speaking with a vulnerable adult. A form to log concerns is available from the reception in Cathedral House, the security office, the Head of HR, or from managers and on the website.

Reporting Concerns about Vulnerable Adults

Referrals of suspected abuse may be made to Adult Social Services, the police and other statutory bodies in the following circumstances:

- an individual over 18 with their consent;
- if the individual is a vulnerable adult with the capacity to make decisions, the information belongs to that individual unless there is a public interest concern (see below);
- the individual (over the age of 16 years) does not possess the capacity to make the decision (see below).

Public Interest Concern

There are some circumstances in which sharing confidential information without consent will normally be justified in the public interest. These are:

- evidence, or reasonable cause to believe, a child or adult is suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm;
- prevention of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Consent and Capacity
Consent: To give consent, a vulnerable adult should possess ability to understand and retain relevant information, believe it to be true and be capable of making a choice.
Capacity: Should be based upon the presumption of mental capacity and upon the consequent right of an adult to make a choice in relation to personal safety. The local authority carries out such assessments under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Good Practice in Sharing Information about Vulnerable Adults
Do not make these decisions without consultation. Safeguarding concerns must always be discussed with the CSO. This may be done, at least initially, without identifying the individual concerned. Except in emergencies, the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the statutory agencies.

Responding to an Adult experiencing Domestic Abuse
When supporting a victim of domestic abuse (women are more likely to face issues of domestic violence but not uniquely) consider the following:

- believe what the adult confides;
- offer reassurance;
- do not minimise the danger;
- support and respect an individual's choices – even if the choice is to return to the abuser;
- the protection of confidentiality.

If there are children in the household, their protection must also be considered. Under such circumstances, total confidentiality cannot be promised as the family may need to be referred to Children's Social Services.
The advice of the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer must be sought on any domestic abuse case whether or not children are involved. The National Church Guidelines on responding to domestic abuse are available on the Cathedral Intranet.
Safeguarding concerns relating to choristers should normally be reported to the Chorister Welfare Lead or a member of the Cathedral Music Department leadership team.

Concerns will then be escalated to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer and/or Cathedral Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

Safeguarding concerns should be formally recorded using the Cathedral's safeguarding reporting processes, including completion of a "Logging a Concern" form where required. Concerns should be referred to the Cathedral Safeguarding Team as soon as possible and normally within 24 hours. At present, safeguarding concerns are recorded in accordance with Cathedral internal safeguarding procedures. The Music Department is working towards implementing CPOMS as a centralised safeguarding recording system, which will further strengthen the recording and monitoring of safeguarding and pastoral concerns.

If a child or young person is in immediate danger or requires urgent assistance, staff must contact the Cathedral Constables or emergency services without delay.

Non-urgent safeguarding concerns may also be reported directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Team via safeguarding@canterbury-cathedral.org.

Record Keeping and Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation contains principles governing the use of personal data. Records in relation to safeguarding issues, should not be destroyed. Such records should be kept securely. There is nothing in data protection legislation which limits appropriate disclosure in order to protect a child or adult who might be at risk. The essential element is that information sharing should be reasonable and proportionate. Safeguarding issues must always take precedence over data protection.

Safeguarding Cases are uploaded onto MyConcern by the CSO. The Safeguarding Team have access to this new system. Cathedral safeguarding records are kept securely and must not be destroyed without reference to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.

A Subject Access Request would be considered by the CSO.

Allegations or Concerns Against Church Officers

Where there are concerns that a member of the Cathedral staff (ordained, lay, paid or volunteer) is thought to have harmed a child or vulnerable adult and/or has apparently behaved inappropriately, raising questions about the individual's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults, a referral must be made to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer at the earliest opportunity.

Following consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officers, the CSO contacts the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and if appropriate, the police. For any serious safeguarding situation, a safeguarding Case Management Group holds an initial strategy discussion related to management of the investigation from the perspective of the Cathedral. A meeting is held at the conclusion of the investigations to review the effectiveness of the Cathedral's management of the case.

Situations when there is no Conviction or Court Determination

For many reasons, a case might not come to court, including innocence of the initial allegations. Sometimes concerns remain, however. Even following an acquittal there may remain evidence of inappropriate or misguided behaviour which needs to be addressed. The advice of the statutory agencies should be sought about any continuing risk to children or adults. It may still be appropriate in some circumstances, and in accord with legal advice, to continue disciplinary action if the allegations relate to an employed Church Officer.

If there remain unresolved matters of concern, a professional risk assessment should be carried out in order to determine the suitability of the person to continue in a professional capacity in which there is contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Referral for Barring

In the instance of a paid or voluntary worker offending against a child or vulnerable adult, or displaying behaviour raising safeguarding concerns, the Cathedral Safeguarding Working Group should consider the case, and then contact the DBS in line with statutory requirements. The DBS will determine whether the individual concerned should be placed on a 'barred' list in order to prevent further direct contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. Prior to any referral, the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer will contact the DBS professional advice line.

Whistleblowing

Paid staff, volunteers and members of the congregation should be encouraged to acknowledge individual responsibility to bring matters of unacceptable practice, performance, or behaviour to the attention of the Line Manager, a Senior Manager or the Receiver General.

> The whistleblowing policy document is available from line managers and may be accessed from the policy section on SharePoint.

6. A Safe Environment for Children

Children's Church

The Cathedral has a Children's Church which meets during Cathedral Sunday morning services. Children under five are accompanied by parents. The Church leader and permanent helpers are DBS checked. A list is kept of all children registered to attend and no child can attend without the written consent of their parents. Any special health and dietary needs of the children are recorded.

Child Servers

Schools Department

The Schools Department runs tours and activities for visiting children of all ages from schools in the UK and overseas.

All visiting children are accompanied by a responsible adult from their school at all times and the children remain the responsibility of these adults throughout their visit.

All Schools Department permanent staff and volunteer guides are DBS checked.

OFSTED guidelines for registered groups of children under eight recommend staffing levels as follows:

	Adult	Child
2 years and under	1	3
3 years	1	4
4 to 8 years	1	8

There should always be a minimum of two adults present, preferably one of each gender.

Any non-registered group in the Cathedral should have a similar adult/child ratio.

There is no official statutory guidance for children over eight years old. Numbers should be based on a risk assessment. As a minimum there should be at least TWO adults (preferably

one male and one female) for the first TEN children and an additional adult for each additional TEN children.

Staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities, and more so if that activity is considered high risk, or potentially dangerous, or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved; a similar approach should be taken with vulnerable adult groups.

For all groups using the Cathedral, there should be:

- a first aid kit on any premises used by children or vulnerable adults.
- an incident book kept in a secure place where all accidents and significant incidents are recorded as well as the names of any adults visiting the group.
- a register of children attending the group including contact numbers for their parents, key medical information (e.g. allergies) and any special needs. For visiting school groups, this information should be held by the accompanying teachers.
- in premises which are used by children's groups, the ChildLine telephone number (0800 1111) and that of Family Lives (0808 800 2222) should be displayed. Family Lives provides advice and support to parents and carers in all aspects of family life.

Good Practice in Working with Children

Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children is wholly appropriate in certain contexts. Care needs to be taken, however. The following guidelines drawn up by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) are suggested:

- keep everything public.
- touch should be in response to a child's needs and not related to the worker's needs.
- touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.
- avoid any physical activity which is, or could be construed as, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- allow the child to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention);
- ensure that workers take responsibility for one another in the area of physical contact with children. They should be encouraged to challenge another worker if necessary.

Further Dos and Don'ts in Working with Children:

- do treat all children and young people with respect.
- do watch your speech, tone of voice and body language.
- do not use any form of physical punishment.

- do not play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- do not be sexually suggestive about, or to a young person, even in fun.
- do not show favouritism to any one child.
- do not allow unknown adults access to children under your responsibility.
- a known person should accompany visitors.

e-Safety

In the context of children and young people:

- ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- if using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- do not make any relationships with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site.
- maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.

7. Known offenders as Members of the Congregation

It is not always possible to know whether an individual in the congregation has offended against children or adults, especially with the large number of visitors to the Cathedral. In the case of an individual acting suspiciously in relation to children or vulnerable adults, either inside the Cathedral or within the Precincts, the Security Office should be contacted immediately.

When it is known that a member of the Cathedral congregation has offended against a child or vulnerable adult, the advice of the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer must be sought so that risks posed in the congregation, and around the Cathedral, may be considered and clear boundaries drawn up in a written contract. Any known sexual offender in the Cathedral should never be alone with children/vulnerable adults not only for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, but also to lessen the possibility of the person concerned being wrongly suspected of any form of abuse in the future.

If an individual who is on the sex offenders register, subject to MAPPA (multi agency public protection authority) regulations or who is on Licence, wishes to worship in the Cathedral, a detailed discussion will always be held with the CSL and Cathedral Safeguarding Officer and the relevant responsible agencies. A contract, setting out worship and other arrangements will be put in place in discussion with the CSL and CSO.

King's School should be consulted if anyone is to be the subject of a contract. In exceptional circumstances, for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, an individual may be deemed of such high risk that there might be a ban from entering the Cathedral and its Precincts.

In addition to sexual offenders, there may be individuals within the congregation who have committed other offences against children or adults, such as offences of serious violence.

A sexual offender should not accept any official role or office in the church which gives him or her status or authority; a child may deem that person to be trustworthy. Sexual offending is often addictive, and it is naïve to assume that an offender has reformed, making it possible to 'forgive and forget'. There may well be temptation to re-offend, to fantasize about abuse, and attempts to gain access to children and young people by befriending parents. There may be attempts at manipulation and control, attending church specifically to come into contact with children. Sex offenders tend to be highly manipulative people.

Advice from the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer must be sought when it is thought that an individual might pose a risk to children.

8. Disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

DBS Disclosures

An enhanced disclosure lists any criminal convictions, including cautions. This may include 'spent' convictions and cautions not under the DBS filtering rules introduced in 2013. The list might also include police information about an individual which did not result in a conviction, but which has been disclosed because of the relevance of the information to the safeguarding of a child or vulnerable adult. The Cathedral applies for Basic or Enhanced with barring disclosures depending on the role, if a DBS is required for that role.

DBS Arrangements for the Cathedral

The Cathedral is registered with the DBS to enable access to the disclosure service in relation to its paid staff and volunteers. Disclosures should be renewed every three years. Disclosure arrangements for the Cathedral are managed by the Safeguarding Team with oversight by the Diocese. Advice about the disclosure process may be obtained from the Safeguarding Team.

Disclosures and Safeguarding

DBS disclosures are now an expectation for those working with children and vulnerable adults in the statutory and voluntary fields, not only to help to reduce the risk to children and adults but also as protection for the employee or volunteer.

A clear DBS disclosure does not guarantee that a risk is not posed:

- the disclosure becomes out of date almost immediately as an individual may commit an offence against a child after the disclosure has been made.
- an offender may never have been caught.
- a false name and identification details may have been supplied.

The Disclosure process is one of a number of measures to help ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults. In addition, a structured recruitment policy, clear safeguarding procedures and staff training help to ensure greater protection. Evidence from Thirtyone:eight (formerly the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) has, however, shown that offenders are less likely to join church communities with a robustly managed DBS disclosure policy.

Policy on those requiring DBS checking

The Chapter policy is that all those who regularly work with children and/or vulnerable adults, including those on a rota, should have enhanced with barring DBS checks. DBS checks are

also required of people who manage or supervise those who work with vulnerable groups, and of those in a leadership or training capacity with responsibility for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

The Protection of Freedom Act, 2012 allows fewer people to be DBS checked within a church context. For example, in some mixed age activities involving children, such as bell ringers, the expectation is for leaders, and those responsible for the supervision and/or teaching of children in the group to be DBS checked. This puts greater responsibility on the leaders/supervisors and has implications for their training. It also demands high standards in safe recruitment.

9. Safer Recruitment Process

Safer Recruitment Process for Staff

Careful recruitment is essential in helping to protect children from harm. The HOB documents on recruitment, particularly 'Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance', 2021, reflect the significance of safe recruitment to the Church of England.

The recruitment of paid staff is the responsibility of the Head of HR and is subject to employment law.

Stage 1: Role Assessment

- Hiring manager and HR work together to draft the job description and person specification.
- Every job description includes the following safeguarding statement: *"Canterbury Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment."*
- Level of DBS check decided.

Stage 2: Approval to Recruit

- An Approval to Recruit form is sent to SLT for approval.

Stage 3: Advertising

- The role is advertised on our platforms and includes the safeguarding statement: *"Canterbury Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment."*
- The advert will clearly state whether the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Stage 4: Application

- All applicants must submit a full application form; we do not accept CVs on their own.
- Applicants provide personal details, employment history, qualifications, references and a personal statement.
- If the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, applicants will be required to declare all spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings not protected by filtering rules.

Stage 5: Shortlisting

- At least two people will shortlist. For enhanced DBS roles, at least one person will have completed the Church of England Safer Recruitment training.
- For enhanced DBS roles, shortlisted applicants will complete a self-declaration form to declare any criminal record/information that would make them unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Stage 6: Interview

- Always at least two people sit on an interview panel with at least one of them safer recruitment trained.
- For enhanced DBS role the panel includes the above plus someone from HR or the Safeguarding team.
- For Safeguarding roles, the panel comprises the above plus someone from the NST.
- Safeguarding questions are always included in interviews.

Stage 7: Pre-employment Checks

No member of staff can start work until all paperwork and appropriate safeguarding training is completed. If there are concerns (e.g. a blemish on a DBS certificate), the safeguarding team will complete a risk assessment before proceeding. Pre-employment checks include:

- 2 references, one being from the most recent employer (referees must be 18 or over and not a relative of the candidate)
- DBS check to be completed (if required)
- Right to work in the UK checked
- Verification of qualifications and identity
- Signing of the Cathedral's Code of Conduct and GDPR notice
- Basic/Enhanced confidential declaration
- Where an applicant has lived, worked or volunteered outside of the UK for a period of 6 months in the past 10 years, an overseas check will be requested
- Appropriate level of the Church of England safeguarding training

Stage 8: Onboarding

- A written contract is provided.
- New starters attend a welcome session/induction that covers relevant policies, including safeguarding.

The Head of HR must approve all work experience placement of any young person under 18, not least so that advice may be given on health and safety arrangements.

The Cathedral's policy for employing people with a criminal record is available on the policy section of the Cathedral intranet.

Safer Recruitment Process for Volunteers

The recruitment of volunteers is the responsibility of the Volunteer Experience Manager (VEM).

Stage 1: Role Assessment

- Volunteer manager and VEM work together to define the role, responsibilities and safeguarding expectations.
- Every job description includes the following safeguarding statement: *"Canterbury Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment."*
- Level of DBS check decided.

Stage 2: Approval to Recruit

- An Approval to Recruit form is sent to SLT for approval.

Stage 3: Advertising

- The role is advertised on the volunteer page of the Cathedral website, and includes the safeguarding statement: *"Canterbury Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment."*
- The advert will clearly state whether the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Stage 4: Application

- All applicants must submit a full application form; we do not accept CVs on their own.
- Applicants provide personal details, employment history, qualifications, references and a personal statement.
- If the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, applicants will be required to declare all spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings not protected by filtering rules.

Stage 5: Shortlisting

- At least two people will shortlist. For enhanced DBS roles, at least one person will have completed the Church of England Safer Recruitment training.
- For enhanced DBS roles, shortlisted applicants will complete a self-declaration form to declare any criminal record/information that would make them unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Stage 6: Interview

- Always at least two people sit on an interview panel with at least one of them safer recruitment trained.
- Safeguarding questions are always included in interviews and are agreed between the VEM and Safeguarding Team prior.

Stage 7: Pre-employment Checks
No volunteer can start work until all paperwork and appropriate safeguarding training is completed. If there are concerns (e.g. a blemish on a DBS certificate), the safeguarding team will complete a risk assessment before proceeding. Pre-employment checks include:

- 2 references, one being from the most recent employer, recent volunteer role or professional (at least one reference must be outside of the current church body, and one must comment on the applicant's ability to work with the group they will be volunteering with/for)
- DBS check to be completed (if required)
- Right to volunteer in the UK checked
- Verification of qualifications and identity
- Signing of the Cathedral's Code of Conduct and GDPR notice
- Basic/Enhanced confidential declaration
- Where an applicant has lived, worked or volunteered outside of the UK for a period of 6 months in the past 10 years, an overseas check will be requested
- Appropriate level of the Church of England safeguarding training

Stage 8: Onboarding

- A written volunteer agreement is provided.
- New starters attend a welcome session/induction that covers relevant policies, including safeguarding.

Applicants with Permission to Officiate (PtO)
For applicants with the above, the following additional steps will be taken to the stages outlined above:

1. Verification of PtO and DBS checks
2. National Safeguarding Case Management System check

Chapter and Committee Member Recruitment
The following process is followed for the recruitment of Chapter and Committee Members:

1. Terms of reference and recruitment pack made available for all roles prior to advertisement, with approval is sought from the Nominations Committee or Chapter.
2. All vacancies are advertised on our website, and recruitment agencies may be used at times. Application forms must be received for all applicants, not just CVs.

3. Shortlisting is undertaken by the chair of the Nominations Committee, supported by members of the Committee.
4. Shortlisted candidates are invited for a panel interview selected from members of the Nominations Committee. Occasionally, technical experts will be invited to join the panel.
5. Recommendations from Nominations go to Chapter for approval.
6. Safer recruitment checks are then completed, including DBS (all Chapter members are required to have at least a Basic DBS), two references, eligibility verifications and the Church of England safeguarding training (all Chapter members are required to complete Senior Leadership level).
7. Documents are signed and returned, including the Code of Conduct and declaration of interests.
8. Role description clearly defined for each post, including the term of office, confidentiality requirements and code of conduct expectations.
9. Conflicts must be declared in line with the Conflict of Interest Policy.
10. All members are offered inductions periodically, or alternatively are invited to join the induction programme.

10. Confidentiality

General

If a child or adult is judged to be at risk of significant harm, and in need of protection, it will normally be necessary to share all relevant information with the statutory agencies.
All safeguarding concerns must be discussed with the CSO.

Confession
A particular issue regarding confidentiality is raised by the practice of formal confession which is available to visitors to the Cathedral from duty chaplains. The HoB Safeguarding Children Policy offers guidance.

Although the national church guidance specifies issues of concern relating to children it applies equally to adults.

The Bishop of Dover states that for all clergy who hold a licence:

'No *priest should hear confession on a regular basis unless he/she is under the discipline of the confessional themselves, and confession is part of his/her spiritual practice;*

Any priest hearing a confession, regularly or otherwise, must say prior to hearing the confession, the following: "If you touch on any matter in your confession that raises a concern about the well-being or safeguarding of another person or yourself, I am duty bound to pass that information on to the relevant agencies, which means that I am unable to keep such information confidential".

11. Listening to and Caring for People Who Have Suffered Abuse

Church communities, including Cathedrals, are likely to have among them adults who have experienced abuse as children. If such abuse is disclosed, great sensitivity will be required. It is likely to have been a major step of trust for the individual to have disclosed information.

There is no single, correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of historical abuse by an adult. The wishes of the individual disclosing the abuse must be central. For some adults, merely being able to talk to a trusted person about such experiences may be a powerful healing event. The pastoral care of the person who has been abused should be a priority.

It may be helpful to remind those who disclose historic abuse that people who have committed historic abuse against someone many years previously might well be continuing to abuse children. A survivor should be encouraged, and supported, in reporting the matter to the police if this has not already happened. The Cathedral Safeguarding Advisers will assist in doing this. A survivor's details should not be given to the police without their agreement. In most cases, however, it will be necessary for the details of the alleged perpetrator to be passed to the police.

A survivor needs to be aware that if the alleged abuser is still known to be working with children in either a paid or voluntary capacity, a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and to the police, must be made. The Cathedral Safeguarding Officer would normally make this referral.

If the Cathedral was involved in any capacity with the alleged perpetrator, even if the individual has since died, the Cathedral must examine its actions when the abuse was reported and consider whether or not the actions were appropriate in what was known good practice at that time.

Any serious safeguarding allegation made against a member of the church who is dead must be reported to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer who will then pass on the details to the National Safeguarding Adviser at Church House as well as to the police. This is to ensure that any information is formally logged on the individual's data base should others make allegations against the same person in the future. The name of the individual making the allegation may be withheld if desired.

No pressure or encouragement should be given to the survivor to forgive the perpetrator. This would be abusive in itself. It is for God to forgive the perpetrator, not the victim. Advice may be sought from the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisers or HR on counselling services available for victims of abuse and their families, including specialist Church counselling services.

The Church is committed to caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons and to continuing to learn how to respond in a supportive and healing way to the needs of those who have suffered abuse. Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously.

+ Survivor Support Services

Safe Spaces

Safe Spaces is a free support service, independent from the Diocese of Canterbury, for anyone who has experienced abuse in relation to the Church of England, the Church in Wales or the Catholic Church of England and Wales. This could be abuse by someone who holds any role at the church or is linked to participating in a church-led activity or group. Although the churches have funded the service, it is run independently by the charity Victim Support, who are one of the leading charities providing specialist support to survivors of abuse in England and Wales.

If you have been affected, however long ago, Safe Spaces can provide you with support. You do not have to have told the police or the church authorities, and you do not have to still be involved with the church. Your information will not be shared without your consent unless you or someone else is in immediate danger

Tel: 0300 303 1056

Email: SafeSpaces@Firstlight.org.uk

Website: www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk including a link to a live chat service

Survivors Voices

The Church of England National Safeguarding Team has worked with Survivors Voices to consult survivors on how to improve practice in responding well to survivors of abuse. Download the published report here.

12. Associated Procedures and Supporting Documents

The Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Procedures are supported by a number of operational procedures, guidance documents and supporting resources. These should be read alongside this policy.

Appendices of Additional Information

- Appendix A Theological approach
- Appendix B Definitions of Children and Vulnerable Adults
- Appendix C Definitions of Child Abuse
- Appendix D Vulnerable Adults
- Appendix E Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Contact Details and Safeguarding information

- Safeguarding Contacts
- Safeguarding leaflet and posters
- Next Steps for Welfare Cases
- Next Steps for Disclosure Cases
- Case management systems for recording safeguarding and welfare cases
- Staff Handbook
- Volunteer Handbook

Well-being and Pastoral Documents

- Living Directory
- Pastoral Care Team Introduction

Cathedral Policies and Procedures

- Staff Policy and Procedures Handbook
- Safer Recruitment Policy and Guidance for Staff
- Safer Recruitment Policy and Guidance for Volunteers
- Behaviour Framework

Safeguarding Audits and Action Plans

- SCIE report
- SCIE Action Plan

All safeguarding concerns must be reported in accordance with Canterbury Cathedral Safeguarding Policy and Guidance and the relevant Cathedral safeguarding procedures.

Future Procedures and Guidance

Additional safeguarding procedures, operational procedures and guidance documents may be added to this section as required and approved.

If you have any concerns or worries, or just want to discuss a situation generally, do not hesitate to contact the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, who is there to help.

Procedure Review

This procedure 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: March 2027