

Child protection survey: statement from the Peterborough Diocese

The Church of England's Diocese of Peterborough complied fully with the national guidelines for an independent and comprehensive review of child protection during 2008-2009.

A fully qualified independent reviewer from outside the church examined 1188 personnel files of current and former clergy, staff and lay volunteers who hold a bishop's licence for authorised ministry. The reviewer also contacted current and former senior staff who might be aware of relevant concerns.

Any matters of concern arising from that review were passed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser for appropriate follow-up in accordance with current best practice.

Nationally, out of 40,747 files reviewed, only 13 cases were found to require formal action. Given such small numbers, the Church nationally has taken the view that the release of any further local figures would not contribute to the protection of vulnerable children.

"I am pleased to say that any allegations on file in this diocese or elsewhere have been thoroughly re-examined and acted on as necessary," said the Bishop of Brixworth, the Rt Revd Frank White. "We regard the safeguarding of children and other vulnerable people as an absolute priority and continue to maintain high standards of practice.

"All clergy and licensed lay ministers are (and have been for a decade) subject to CRB checks. We encourage parishes to maintain high standards of practice in their work with children. The diocese supports them in maintaining vigilance, and in the training and checking of volunteer helpers."

Notes

The Peterborough diocese oversees the work of some 360 parishes in all Northamptonshire, Rutland, and the city of Peterborough north of the river Nene. It has some 180 licensed clergy, 130 retired clergy, and about 280 licensed volunteer lay ministers.

The Bishop of Brixworth has been acting Bishop of Peterborough since the death in May 2009 of the Rt Revd Ian Cundy. The next Bishop of Peterborough, the Ven. Donald Allister, took on the legal responsibilities of the bishop at a ceremony in London last week. However, he will not be consecrated (ordained) as a bishop until 25 March (at St Paul's Cathedral in London), and he will be installed in (and welcomed to) Peterborough Cathedral and Diocese on April 17th.

24 February 2010