

SAFEGUARDING COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Agreed at DSAP 09/08/2020

1. Introduction

The aims of the Diocese of Peterborough Safeguarding Communication and Engagement Strategy are:

1. We want to improve and strengthen how we communicate and engage with service users¹, partner organisations and statutory partners², and the wider public.
2. Through good communication, we want to raise awareness and promote key messages about safeguarding children, young people³ and adults at risk⁴ in the Diocese of Peterborough.
3. Through good communication, we want to equip communities, enabling them to build resilience so that our church communities are better prepared to keep themselves safe from harm.
4. We want to improve and strengthen engagement and communication with victims / survivors of any form of abuse, or those who have been affected by such abuse. In all of our communication, consideration is to be given to directing people to appropriate partner agencies who can provide expert support, guidance and advice.

The strategy provides information about:

- (a) Why we want to communicate and engage
- (b) Who we want to communicate and engage with

¹ Service users – those who have a key role to play with children, young people and adults at risk in parishes, and others volunteering or attending in parishes

² Partner organisations and statutory partners – includes: ecclesiastical insurers; charity commissioners, police, local authorities, voluntary organisations offering victim / survivor support; voluntary organisations such as Scouts, Girl Guides, Cadets

³ A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18

⁴ In their policies and procedures, our statutory partners have moved away from the terminology of 'vulnerable adults' towards 'adults at risk of harm', usually shortened to 'adults at risk'

- (c) What our key communication messages are
- (d) How we will communicate and engage
- (e) Our communication and engagement principles and outcomes
- (f) A clear protocol for working with the media
- (g) Implementation, monitoring and review

2. Why we want to communicate and engage

Good, open and effective communication and engagement regarding safeguarding is an essential tool in:

- (a) Raising awareness about safeguarding
- (b) Taking preventative measures to reduce safeguarding risks from happening
- (c) Responding well when safeguarding concerns are raised

By investing time and energy into delivering clear lines of communication and engagement, responding to feedback and changing processes where necessary, we will build trust.

People will have a greater understanding in the safeguarding work that the Diocese of Peterborough are undertaking, and that safeguarding is taken seriously. It will provide reassurance that we have effective safeguarding systems, structures and processes in place to improve outcomes and experience in the context of safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

Risk to children, young people, adults at risk and church officers is managed most effectively when information is shared lawfully and proactively, enabling agencies to join up and intervene earlier.

It is important to prioritise our key messages, sending information out at the right time to the right people, to maximise impact. By listening to feedback we can improve the way in which we manage safeguarding in the Diocese of Peterborough and strengthen our understanding of what support our communities need from us.

Our primary key message for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk is **'Safeguarding is everyone's business'**.

3. Who do we want to communicate and engage with?

The main target audiences for this strategy are the following:

- Church officers⁵ and church communities
- Carers / advocates / family members
- Partner organisations and statutory partners
- Voluntary / community sector
- Staff
- The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)
- General public
- Partnership Boards for children, young people and adults at risk
- Other dioceses, other denominations and the National Safeguarding Team

4. What are our key communication messages?

It is important to prioritise our key messages to maximise impact. As stated above, our primary key message is **'Safeguarding is everyone's business'**.

Here are the other key messages we aim to communicate:

- The definition of a child, young person or adult experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect will be clearly defined and consistent across the diocese
- Information on how to report a safeguarding concern or disclose safeguarding information
- The definition of parish roles and responsibilities will be well understood across the diocese
- We will consistently reinforce the importance of [Safer Recruitment](#)
- We will consistently reinforce the importance of safeguarding training

⁵ A 'Church officer' is anyone appointed / elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid

- Caring pastorally for victims and survivors of abuse – detailing appropriate agencies who can provide expert support, guidance and advice – is central to our mission
- We aim to provide understanding of how to respond to those who may present a risk to children, young people and adults at risk within a church congregation
- We will proactively encourage the sharing of good news stories and areas for improvement

5. How will we communicate?

- See the 'How will we communicate' table in Excel.

6. Communication and engagement principles and outcomes

The following principles will be adopted by the Diocese of Peterborough whilst undertaking communication and engagement activities on behalf of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory (DSA) team:

Principles

- Diocese of Peterborough branding will be used for all safeguarding communications
- We will take opportunities to share good news stories about safeguarding, and to distribute relevant information from safeguarding partners more widely. This will include support services that are available for victims / survivors of abuse
- We will invite feedback and use this to improve our communications and processes. This will be through feedback received from diocesan safeguarding training and through invited feedback from our messages
- We will communicate messages clearly in plain language, which is easy to understand for all
- We will communicate messages that are relevant and timely for the audience to whom they are addressed
- We will encourage two-way communication and engagement activities at all times
- We will ensure that information is kept up-to-date and accurate

The communication and engagement strategy aims to achieve the following outcomes:

Outcomes

- Church officers, church communities and local residents will know what safeguarding is, how to protect themselves and how to report abuse or raise concerns
- Church officers, church communities and local residents will understand the work of the DSA team, and will have access to the service the DSAs provide when needed
- We will use people's experiences of safeguarding to inform future communications, thus improving the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk
- Church officers, through safeguarding training, will understand their respective roles and responsibilities, leading to improvements in safeguarding practices, and improving the outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk who are safeguarded

7. Media protocol

Proactive use of the media to promote good safeguarding messages will be a routine part of any public awareness campaign. Responsive media statements may be required when there is a case issue involving a specific person, or where there is negative media coverage of key safeguarding matters which needs to be addressed.

Any communication with the media in the name of the Diocese of Peterborough will be undertaken by either the communications team for the Diocese of Peterborough or the communications team for Peterborough Cathedral, or a nominated substitute where appropriate. In appropriate⁶ circumstances, communication will be directed to the National Safeguarding Team before any press releases are made.

For any cases where there is an ongoing criminal investigation or a local authority enquiry, liaison must take place between the communication lead for the Diocese of Peterborough, the DSA team and the relevant statutory partner. Communication leads for the Diocese will respond to media requests in collaboration with the DSA.

Dealing with media enquiries

From time to time, issues may arise that are of interest to the media. Much of the safeguarding work undertaken by the Diocese of Peterborough is confidential, and this

⁶ For those cases involving high media interest or which will impact on the Church of England (as examples)

confidentiality is fundamental. We will be open and transparent about our work, whilst protecting personal information.

If you receive an enquiry relating to safeguarding, your communications team and the DSA team should be notified immediately.

Proactive media / communications activity

The communications team for the Diocese of Peterborough will issue proactive information to the media, as well as to staff, the public and other stakeholders. Any news releases will be drafted by the communications team in collaboration with the DSA team. Where appropriate, this will be in collaboration with communications officers from relevant agencies.

Communication leads for the Diocese will be responsible for issuing such communication, in collaboration with the DSA.

8. Implementation, monitoring and review

The Safeguarding Communication and Engagement Strategy will be monitored and reviewed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel⁷ (DSAP), with six-monthly updates provided to the panel or on a more regular basis upon request.

Impact may be measured by the following mechanisms (not exhaustive):

- Volume of website hits
- Number of actions achieved from delivery plan
- Volume of Safeguarding concerns raised
- Numbers in attendance at training / workshops / events
- Training evaluations
- Number of press releases / media statements
- Number of newsletters
- Number of complaints made about the Diocesan safeguarding processes

⁷ *The purpose of DSAP is to provide strategy, scrutiny, challenge, quality assurance, and monitoring of safeguarding policy and practice. The Cathedral acts as a full and equal partner of the group*

- Feedback from DSA meetings with alleged respondents⁸
- Feedback and learning from the DSAP sub-groups⁹

⁸ An Alleged respondent is referred to in the 'CofE Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers' – it means: people against whom safeguarding complaints have been made

⁹ Quality Assurance and Review Group and the Victim / Survivor Communication and Engagement Sub-Group