

## Executive Summary for the Pilot Safeguarding Audit of the Diocese of Salford

In February 2023 the Diocese of Salford volunteered to undertake a pilot audit of its safeguarding function. The audit was completed by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).

The CSSA was established in October 2019 following an independent review of the safeguarding structures in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Its purpose is to advise on and audit the work of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to help develop the highest standard of safeguarding.

As part of the new CSSA remit they will be undertaking regular audits of the 22 dioceses of England and Wales. Salford was one of the dioceses that volunteered to be audited during the pilot period.

### How did the Audit work?

This pilot baseline audit was undertaken using a hybrid approach including both on-site and remote activities. The Lead Auditor was on-site for two working days and remote for three. The second auditor and support case auditor were remote for the audit week.

An initial set up meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022, twelve weeks prior to the Audit. The self-assessment form was shared on the same date with an expected completion date by Salford Diocese of 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

A final pre-audit meeting was held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 prior to audit commencing on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Salford Diocese completed and submitted their self-assessment on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 with the majority of supporting documentary evidence provided on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Additional supporting evidence was requested by the CSSA Quality Assurance Team on 6<sup>th</sup> February with a response on 7<sup>th</sup> February and completion of sharing of the available evidence by 10<sup>th</sup> February.

Information provided within the self-assessment was analysed by the CSSA alongside key documentation received. **The CSSA measure safeguarding across the diocese using 8 standards.** All eight safeguarding standards (listed in the table below) were considered within the scope of the baseline audit. Potential audit ratings against each standard, and the final overall rating, are: Basic, Early Progress, Firm Progress, Results Being Achieved, Comprehensive Assurance and Exemplary.

The following methods of audit were employed:

- Case work audits – The cases audited were selected at random by CSSA.
- Surveys – Electronic surveys were issued to both clergy and parish safeguarding reps.
- Interviews – 14 senior leaders representing each department of the diocese were interviewed by CSSA, these including Bishop John and a representative panel of diocesan trustees.
- Focus Groups – 3 separate focus groups took place with clergy, PSR's and Trustees.
- Document review – CSSA requested a large number of key strategic documents relating to safeguarding to review in advance of the auditors arriving on site. These included policies, procedures, training records, meeting minutes and more.

## Audit Judgement

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| <b>OVERALL GRADING FOR SALFORD DIOCESE</b> | <b>Firm Progress</b> |
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### Summary of Key Findings

Auditors were impressed by the consistent evidence that the Bishop and Trustees are leading from the front in promoting Safeguarding and that departments across the diocese make safeguarding a key consideration from the start of all new activities. The provision of support services for victims in cooperation with Survivors Manchester and Greater Manchester Rape Crisis is a strength.

**The overall rating was that Salford Diocese was making Firm Progress against the Safeguarding Standards.**

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| <b>Standard 1</b> - Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body's leadership, governance, ministry and culture  | <b>Grading - Results Being Achieved</b> |
| <b>Summary of Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear culture of safeguarding underpinning all activity</li><li>• Evidence of a determination to improve safeguarding practice throughout the diocese</li><li>• Clear evidence of leadership and ownership of safeguarding (Bishop and Trustees)</li><li>• In practice everyone we spoke to have a consistent understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and spoke of the leadership owning safeguarding messages</li></ul> |   |
| <b>Summary of Areas of Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing consistent record creation policies and practice</li><li>• Developing practice standards around contact with CSSA</li></ul>   |   |

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| <b>Standard 2</b> - Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message | <b>Grading – Firm Progress</b> |
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**Summary of Strengths**

- Communication via a range of means – website, newsletters etc.
- Internal communications ensure that safeguarding is actively covered in wider diocesan activities

**Summary of Areas of Development**

- Engaging with stakeholders to develop safeguarding messages
- Evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding communications

**Standard 3** - Engaging with and Caring for those who report having been harmed

**Grading –**  
Firm  
Progress

**Summary of Strengths**

- Clear support and point of access for victims outside of church structures, with bespoke provision on a needs led basis
- Some evidence of learning from cases through the Safeguarding Advisory Panel (SAP)
- Senior leaders clearly willing to meet with victims

**Summary of Areas of Development**

- Formalise mechanisms for learning from disclosures
- Develop clear procedures for anyone who might receive a disclosure to ensure that they are aware of available support

**Standard 4** - Effective Management of Allegations and Concerns

**Grading –**  
Firm  
Progress

**Summary of Strengths**

- In practice allegations are responded to and reported externally appropriately
- Clear mechanism for reporting within diocesan structures.
- Cases where a canonical response is required were referred to the appropriate church body
- Risk assessment and safeguarding plan templates promote good practice

**Summary of Areas of Development**

- Develop local policies for the handling of allegations
- Improve recording practice and the case management system

- Develop a robust tracking systems for cases and concerns

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| <b>Standard 5 - Management and Support of Subjects of Allegations and Concerns (respondents)</b>  | <b>Grading – Firm Progress</b> |
| <p><b>Summary of Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canonical investigations take place as required.</li> <li>• Trained personnel available to respond as required</li> <li>• Evidence in case audits of respondents being well supported</li> </ul>                  |                                |
| <p><b>Summary of Areas of Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how best to address past deficiencies in the case management system</li> <li>• Formalise expectations for when contact will be made with CSSA</li> <li>• Learning from allegations</li> </ul> |                                |

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| <b>Standard 6 - Robust Human Resource Management</b>   | <b>Grading – Early Progress</b> |
| <p><b>Summary of Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of deficiencies identified in the DBS checking system and actions implemented</li> <li>• Plans in place to review all diocesan policies including complaints procedure</li> <li>• Arrangements for incoming priests from outside the diocese.</li> </ul>   |                                 |
| <p><b>Summary of Areas of Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop policies and guidance</li> <li>• Effective mechanisms for ensuring safeguarding plans are reviewed within timescales.</li> <li>• Include a confidentiality section/ agreement within the safeguarding plan template</li> <li>• Resolving DBS backlog and developing systems for the future</li> <li>• Ensure complaints and whistleblowing policies are publicly available</li> </ul> |                                 |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop systems to ensure that records are available of those who have committed offences</li> <li>• Development of systems within the curia to ensure that the SGT are aware of all incoming priests (also training element)</li> </ul> |
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| <b>Standard 7- Training and Support for Safeguarding</b>  | <b>Grading –<br/>Early<br/>Progress</b> |
| <b>Summary of Strengths</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current review of whole training provision with a view to establishing an effective programme for all levels and roles within the diocese</li> <li>• Greater Manchester Rape Crisis training was very well received.</li> <li>• Evidence of the leadership promoting and mandating training through Bishop John and escalation by the committee</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Summary of Areas of Development</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of effective record keeping regarding PSR training completion</li> <li>• Clergy compliance for training needs to be strengthened</li> <li>• Completion of training needs analysis as part of review of provision</li> </ul>   |   |

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| <b>Standard 8 - Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement</b>  | <b>Grading –<br/>Early<br/>Progress</b> |
| <b>Summary of Strengths</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to review overall delivery of safeguarding within the diocese</li> <li>• Safeguarding development plan clearly based on CSSA standards</li> <li>• Safeguarding Annual reports produced routinely</li> <li>• Active oversight of safeguarding by the trustees</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Summary of Areas of Development</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of an internal case audit programme and learning from survivors</li> <li>• Agree a suite of KPIs to monitor safeguarding</li> </ul>  |   |

**To support improvement in the identified areas CCSA make the following recommendations:**

- The Diocese and/or the Interim Safeguarding Coordinator to review the available safeguarding related policies and introduce local policies to fill identified gaps. These will include on record keeping and liaison with the CSSA. Consideration to be given to a Safeguarding Service complaints policy with reference to CSSA as the final point of appeal
- Create a local procedure to formalise expectations around learning from allegations, concerns and the experience of victims
- Diocese to identify and implement a case management system that is fit for purpose
- DBS backlog to be addressed and kept under constant review with reports on progress to the Safeguarding Committee, Trustees and the CSSA
- A process to be created for receiving all clergy into the diocese with an expected timescale for notifying the Safeguarding Team. Clergy to be trained in the process
- Interim Safeguarding Coordinator to finalise a Training Needs Analysis
- Safeguarding Committee and Interim Safeguarding Coordinator to decide on a system of internal audit to ensure progress against the standards is maintained
- Cases managed prior to the arrival of the Interim Safeguarding Coordinator to be considered for a historic case review
- Key Performance Indicators for the Safeguarding Team to be agreed and consistently reported upon to the Safeguarding Committee and Trustees

**April 2023**