

ARCHDIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference for an audit of Governance of Safeguarding in the Archdiocese

Introduction

Governance deals with the safeguarding infrastructure that underpins safeguarding work in the Archdiocese. The Elliott Review gave considerable scope to the governance of safeguarding at the highest level of the national Church and most of the recommendations made and accepted by the hierarchy were concerning the governance arrangements of safeguarding nationally. The new Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency also gives a significant priority and profile to the importance of both internal and external audit of safeguarding standards within the Church community.

The purpose of the audit is to measure the extent that the governance of the Archdiocese ensure the implementation of safeguarding standards.

This element of the internal audit programme for Westminster focuses on the arrangements for the management of safeguarding; i.e. the protocols, oversight and accountability of the safeguarding structures within the Archdiocese. It should examine the leadership's ownership of the culture of safeguarding and of its establishment throughout the archdiocese.

An audit will examine and inspect the diocesan structures and processes and measure them against the existing national standards, the procedures manual and any diocesan approved official guidance or policy from the Trustees or directives of the Safeguarding Committee. It should also look at the tools of oversight used by the Trustees and senior leadership, ie data, reports, reviews and analysis.

Timescale:

The Audit subgroup recommends that Governance should be audited in the first half of 2022.

Audit Methodology:

The audit should involve:

1. The identification by the auditors and by the Archdiocese of all relevant management documentation including terms of reference, published papers and policy documents, both national and diocesan. Analysis and review of the documentation for evidence of quality of governance.

A checklist of the minimum documentation is provided below. Others may be added as required by the auditors.

2. Access to case files and data reports from the Safeguarding Team.
3. Interviews with key people identified by the auditors, and as a minimum; the Archbishop, the COO of the archdiocese, the chair and vice chair and members of the safeguarding committee, members of the safeguarding team, chair of trustees, and relevant staff at CSSA.
4. The audit will be expected to take account of the work of the Archdiocese within the broader context of safeguarding in England and Wales and the changes at national level following the Elliott Report
5. A written report will be produced by the auditors detailing their findings as to how the governance structures and processes were working in the archdiocese. Among other issues, this would report back on the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, i.e. its fitness for purpose and make any recommendations as to improvements required.

List of Documentation:

- Terms of Reference for Safeguarding Committee and Trustees.
- Letters of appointment to Safeguarding Committee.
- Minutes of Trustees Meetings (safeguarding items).
- Minutes of Safeguarding Committee meetings.
- Work plan for Safeguarding Team and Committee.
- Induction programmes for Safeguarding Team and Committee.
- Training Records/registers.
- Appraisal records.
- Case Reviews and decisions and advice.
- Process for managing blemished DBS records.
- Process for review, closure and transfer of safeguarding cases.

The Approach to Audit:

The key questions to be applied can be summarised as follows:

1. How well is the Archdiocese achieving the standards set out in the Audit framework and against the procedures manual?
2. How can this be evidenced?
3. What is the Archdiocese doing well?
4. What areas require further development?

Audit Framework

A) Governance standards

Overarching standards to be evidenced:

1. That the trustees and bishops exercise governance over the safeguarding functions of the archdiocese.
2. That the governance arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose and regularly reviewed.
3. Evidence throughout all levels of the Archdiocese of the creation of a “culture of safeguarding”.
4. Engagement with the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency.
5. That the safeguarding function is supported in its work by having access to the leadership and key people in the archdiocese.
6. That the financial resources available, enable the safeguarding function to fulfil its role.
7. That safer recruitment policies are implemented throughout the diocese.
8. Clarity in the safeguarding responsibilities of Bishops, priests, deacons and other leaders.
9. That good communication and transparency is a hallmark of safeguarding in the diocese.
10. Confirmation that the safeguarding coordinator and the safeguarding team feel supported and has access to people with the appropriate professional knowledge, skill and experience.
11. Confirmation that the safeguarding coordinator and team benefit from professional casework supervision.

B) Trustees & Senior Management:

1. That the trustees and senior management actively engage with safeguarding issues.
2. That the trustees evidence that safeguarding is a key priority.
3. That the trustees and senior management all have an appropriate knowledge of the safeguarding obligations laid down by the Charity Commission.
4. That trustees and senior management receive regular formal reports and briefings on safeguarding from the Safeguarding Team and Safeguarding Committee.
5. That the trustees formally approve the adoption of national catholic safeguarding policies for the Archdiocese.

6. Evidence that the trustees have completed the relevant safeguarding training including e-learning.
7. That the trustees have access to and have completed the necessary induction programme on their appointment to the committee.

C) Safeguarding Committee

1. That the Chair is a trustee of the Archdiocese.
2. If the Chair is not a safeguarding professional, a deputy chair is appointed with appropriate qualifications and expertise
3. That sufficient members with relevant professional expertise/qualifications are appointed.
4. That members are appointed for set terms and after interviews and references.
5. That members attend regularly, prepare and participate.
6. Membership is in accordance with the standards set out in *“Towards a Culture of Safeguarding”* and/or its successor document *“The Safeguarding Standards to be agreed by the Church”* (from the Elliott Review) .
7. That the Safeguarding Committee has a work plan that is cogent, achievable and approved by the trustees.
8. That the Safeguarding Committee provides a formal annual report (including fulfilment of the work plan) to the Trustees.
9. Evidence that the chair & vice chair have access to the Archbishop on safeguarding matters.
10. Evidence that support services of the archdiocese function to effectively support the work of the Safeguarding Team (Curia, HR, Finance and IT)
11. Evidence that all members of the safeguarding committee have completed all e-learning modules.
12. Evidence that the Safeguarding Committee have an appropriate knowledge of and apply the relevant elements of canon, criminal and civil law.

D. Staff and Management Oversight

1. Individuals appointed to safeguarding roles are properly inducted into the Church context and the expectation of their roles.

2. An induction programme is in place for all safeguarding committee members and key safeguarding staff.
3. Appropriate arrangements for the line management, professional supervision and support for all Safeguarding Team members.
4. Annual appraisal for all Safeguarding Team members.
5. Appropriate in-service training is provided to the Safeguarding team

Wider national context

Does Westminster have a formal contract between the diocese and the CSSA as recommended by the Elliott Review?

Are the trustees satisfied with the contract and the relationship between the diocese and CSSA?

Do the trustees/diocese subscribe to the "One Church" principle of safeguarding?

Are there any conflicts between CSSA and the diocese and how are these resolved?

Is there evidence of awareness of the obligations laid on the archdiocese as a charity by the Charity Commission?

Documentation

One of the signs of effective Safeguarding governance arrangements is the existence of underpinning documentation that is clear, professional, up to date and accessible.

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