

Lichfield Diocese - Training Strategy 2025

Introduction

Safeguarding is at the center of our faith, in our practice, in our worship, in our praying, and in our believing. The safeguarding learning pathways support participants in developing and maintaining the necessary values, beliefs, knowledge and skills to safeguard and protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults. A healthy Christian community is one which ensures and nurtures the wellbeing of all. Safeguarding needs therefore to be embedded in all aspects of the life and ministry of the Church, and safeguarding training and development is seen in this context.

The Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework 2024 ([safe](#)) sets out details of the Church's safeguarding learning pathways to enable Church officers¹ to explore this theological imperative further and gain a greater understanding and awareness of their responsibility to work with others to create a safer, healthier Christian culture in their setting. The framework continues the transition to transformative learning incorporating self-reflexivity, dialogue and theological awareness.

This strategy outlines how the 2024 Framework will be implemented in the Diocese of Lichfield from January 2025 to January 2026

Content

Training will be focused on building healthy communities with a culture of safety, in which the wellbeing of all is ensured and nurtured. Learning and Development pathways reflect the national requirements across all dioceses for ensuring healthy safeguarding practice and responding well to victims and survivors of abuse in the church context. They emphasise the need to work in co-operation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and with statutory agencies in all safeguarding matters. Training for all church roles will include safer working practices which emphasise the importance of maintaining proper boundaries and a culture of "respectful uncertainty".

¹ A 'Church officer' is anyone appointed or elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid. Please note under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016/17 all authorised clergy, Bishops, Archdeacons, Licensed Readers and Lay Workers, Churchwardens and PCCs must have 'due regard' to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practice guidance). A duty to have 'due regard' to guidance means that the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow it unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so. ('Cogent' for this purpose means clear, logical and convincing.) Failure by clergy to comply with the duty imposed by the 2016 Measure may result in disciplinary action.

Although in the past, “safeguarding” was considered very much in the light of “Child Protection” it is now seen to have a much wider remit, addressing the needs not only of children and young people, but also of adults. In the church context, adult vulnerability may be identified through specific conditions, such as disability or ill health, or because of specific situations, for example because of the power imbalance between a priest and people for whom he or she has a duty of care. Within the Church, all are welcomed, including those who pose risk; and in most situations, church officers will be unaware of any risks posed. The Church is therefore uniquely challenged to provide a safe environment for all who attend, especially children and those who are vulnerable.

Participants in training also need some opportunity to reflect on the relationship between safeguarding issues and their beliefs as articulated in theological language if safeguarding learning is to become thoroughly integrated with their behaviour, relationships and culture in the life of the church.

The training delivered is part of the national safeguarding teams pathways and the diocese commits to maintaining fidelity to these pathways. Where significant alterations are made/alternative materials used consultation will take place with the national safeguarding team.

Learning and Development Arrangements

Safeguarding learning must be facilitated by experienced and skilled people who understand safeguarding in respect of children and adults in a Church context and have the requisite training and facilitation expertise.

Participants need the opportunity to explore with the trainer and one another the particular and complex challenges which they face in their work with children and adults who may be vulnerable. Participants may also have vulnerabilities due to having experienced abuse in the past, and trainers will need to take this into consideration and make provision for any attendee who may become distressed.

In recognition of this Leadership and PTO (Permission to officiate) pathway modules will be delivered face to face (online or in person), by the Diocesan Safeguarding training officer with a co-facilitator available. Other face to face training sessions delivered should include two people in a leadership role: either two trainers, or one trainer and one experienced and skilled co-worker. Co-facilitators are available to respond to any immediate needs of participants and in order that the needs of participants can be fully addressed.

Training in the Diocese of Lichfield is delivered according to the National safeguarding teams Learning and Development framework, which contains information about what roles make the training required and where it may be recommended. Training is either delivered via online modules (through the national portal), online face to face training using zoom, and on occasion in person face to face training is offered to meet the needs of those who cannot access the online platforms. Should a candidate have specific needs relating to disability, long term illness or other issues that limit their attendance and present specific needs and access to training, they should make these known to the Diocesan Safeguarding training officer and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. There is a form available on the diocesan website to facilitate with these requests [safer-recruitment-and-training-policy-v41-2022.pdf](#). We will

attempt to make all reasonable readjustments feasible to permit those with legitimate needs to engage with training. When invitations for training are sent there will also be opportunity for participants to make known any accessibility and vulnerability requirements, all reasonable steps will be taken to make provision for these, within available resources.

In the Diocese of Lichfield we recognise that safeguarding training can be difficult for some. The courses challenge people to reflect on values and beliefs and we recognise that we aren't always aware of people's personal and professional experiences prior to their attendance. The facilitator and co facilitator will be available to support should anyone need it; signposting will be available to services such as the "listening ear service" and "Safe spaces". Care will be taken in delivery of materials to ensure they are inclusive and sensitive to the needs of all. To support this, we request that all those attending the training commit to always maintain a polite and respectful attitude to fellow participants and trainers.

Minimal requirements

The Bishop of Lichfield through acceptance of the Learning and Development Framework, has set minimum requirements for safeguarding training for ordained, licensed and other church officers.

Those requiring core training include:

- Anyone holding the bishop's licence, commission, authorisation, or permission to officiate (including clergy, PtO, Readers, LLMs (Local Lay Ministers)).
- All Diocesan Board of Finance and Cathedral staff/volunteers
- Parish Safeguarding Officers
- Churchwardens/PCC (Parochial Church Council) members
- All other church officers appointed or elected to a role as a volunteer, office holder, trustee or employee by or on behalf of a PCC.

The Bishop of Lichfield may not license an ordained person, Deacon, Reader, lay worker/minister nor commission a pastoral team member unless they are satisfied that the candidate has undergone learning and development relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Permission to Officiate will also only be granted by the Bishop of Lichfield once they are satisfied that the applicant has undergone learning and development in line with the guidelines set out in the national learning and development framework.

In addition, all new parish safeguarding officers should attend a diocesan lead parish safeguarding officer induction via zoom. Other voluntary/employed roles in the parish, the responsibility to provide adequate and supportive induction is of the PCC/recruiting body. There is a series of induction videos covering a broad range of topics available on the national safeguarding training portal. Whilst the materials have been prepared with safeguarding team members in

mind, some will be of use to other colleagues and so the videos are accessible to anyone volunteering or working within the church who needs or wants an understanding of how safeguarding works in the Church of England.

Failure by a member of the clergy to comply with a training requirement is an act or omission which may constitute misconduct under the Clergy Discipline Measure. Failure by a Reader or lay worker to comply with a training requirement would be grounds for the revocation of that Reader's or lay worker's license by the bishop, and failure by a churchwarden, parochial church council or cathedral chapter could result in an investigation being conducted by the Charity Commission and the person being disqualified as a charity trustee. If a volunteer is in a role that requires them to undertake safeguarding learning, they should not be allowed to continue in that role if they refuse to complete the required learning.

Safeguarding training provided by an alternative employer or voluntary/charitable organisation is not accepted by the church - all people working with vulnerable adults or children must complete the relevant church training modules relating to their role - as stated in the learning and development framework:

No accreditation is given against the core safeguarding learning pathways for prior learning, including in other denominations (except for the Methodist Church Foundation and Advanced modules which are seen as equivalent to the Church of England Foundation and Leadership Pathways). This is due to Church core safeguarding learning pathways situating safeguarding practice within the unique context of the Church of England and providing participants with the opportunity to relate their learning to their faith or the faith context in which they are working.

Promotion of Learning and development pathways.

Safeguarding learning and development is a key component of healthy safeguarding culture and as such the Diocese of Lichfield aims to ensure that not only minimum requirements are met but that safeguarding learning and development is promoted to all across the diocese. The diocese will use a range of strategies to achieve this goal including:

- The Safeguarding Training section of the website will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure up to date information is provided and training is easy and accessible to all.
- Basic information in relation to Safeguarding training will be included in the Diocesan digital training brochure
- Information pertaining to safeguarding training will be included in the Diocesan Bulletin (at least annually)
- PSO's (Parish Safeguarding Officers) will be encouraged to promote and advertise basic training to all in their parishes
- Use of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard which is being rolled out across the diocese in 2024/2025 to help parishes locally identify where their training needs are and where there is non-compliance.

- The diocese will consider in 2025 Completion of an annual parish safeguarding training needs analysis to inform the next strategy and establish resources that may be required.

Recording, Evaluation and Review

For leadership, PTO and PSO induction a record of completion of these pathways will be kept by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and recorded on the Diocesan Contact Management System (once all requirements of the course are completed). In addition, for Clergy, attendance/completion of the Leadership/PTO pathway will be reported to the Bishop of Lichfield's office and recorded on their 'blue' personnel file.

For modules completed through the online portal records will be kept on the portal and individuals will be able to save a certificate as evidence. Records of completion of basic and foundation modules completed face to face should be kept by the parish.

There is an expectation that parishes and Diocesan departments will work together to ensure that the appropriate level and type of training is delivered to all of those that need it, and feedback will be taken from both those attending pathways and delivering to enable review of this strategy.

This Strategy will be evaluated, reviewed and adjusted annually in response to new legislation, policies and guidance as advised by the National Safeguarding Team, and feedback from previous training sessions. The progress in implementing this strategy will be reviewed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Panel

The Learning & Development Pathways

The following modules are all available online through the National Safeguarding Team and can be accessed here: [Home | Safeguarding: Training Portal \(cofeportal.org\)](https://www.cofeportal.org)

- Basic Awareness
- Foundation
- Domestic Abuse
- Safer Recruitment and People Management
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

The delivery of Basic and foundation modules, in person face to face can be facilitated where there is a need. Parish safeguarding officers, or individuals with an appropriate level of safeguarding knowledge and experience (who have completed leadership training within the last 3 years), may apply to the diocesan safeguarding team to lead a face-to-face session and use the national training materials to deliver the pathways to individuals in their church or oversight

area who are unable to complete the pathways online. Application must be made to the Diocesan safeguarding training advisor whenever training is to be delivered in this way even if they have previously been provided with materials. The parish safeguarding officer (or other identified person) will be responsible for assessing the understanding of each participant and notifying the diocesan safeguarding team of participants who have completed the pathway so that certificates can be produced. Where a parish or oversight area is unable to identify an appropriately trained individual to lead these face-to-face sessions the PCC is responsible for providing and enabling access to the online modules for individual church officers.

Over the next 12 months the diocesan safeguarding training officer intends to develop a support and training package for those who assist in leading modules face to face (either as co-facilitator to the diocesan training officer or as facilitator in their own parishes/benefices/deanery's). Work regarding this development will be reported to the DSO (Diocesan Safeguarding Officer) and DSSP (Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Panel) and will ensure consistency in delivery and fidelity to national modules. Where volunteers are recruited for training delivery it is essential that they are provided with full training by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in training delivery principles and the module materials. Ongoing oversight and support should be offered to volunteer trainers to ensure that they are resourced for the important work they are undertaking and that training standards are maintained – oversight and support may include observations of training delivery

Leadership and PTO pathways for clergy, readers and PSO's will be by invitation. Invitations to cohorts being sent 4-6 weeks in advance of the dates. Requests for leadership training for other roles will be added to a waiting list and invitations sent as soon as practically possible. Where churchwardens in vacancy require leadership training it is the responsibility of the warden/PSO to inform the diocesan training officer so that they can be added to the waiting list.

Reminders will be sent to those who hold licences, authorisations or commission who have not met minimum requirements and where non engagement is identified this will be escalated to the bishop's office or other appropriate person. For other roles it is the responsibility of the Parish and PCC.

The following table lists courses available as part of the Diocesan Training Strategy for 2025.

Summary of courses:

Module	Learning Aims	Who for	Estimated number required	Maximum number of attendees per course	Number of courses required ²
Basic Awareness (online)	This course aims to provide learners with a basic awareness of safeguarding and enable them to integrate this into their Christian faith and the Church's ministry. This module is available via Home Safeguarding: Training Portal (cofeportal.org)	Required for all church officers, staff in church bodies and bell ringers and anyone going on to complete any other safeguarding learning pathway. Recommended for anyone wanting or needing a basic level of awareness of safeguarding.	N/A The numbers of those worshipping in our communities for 2023/2024 was 28,000 adults	N/A Online learning	N/A Online learning
Basic Awareness (Face to Face – in person delivery)	This course aims to provide learners with a basic awareness of safeguarding and enable them to integrate this into their Christian faith and the Church's ministry. This module can be facilitated In-person by exception using the material provided by the NST (National Safeguarding Team).	For those above who are unable to access online materials.	<i>In future: To identify how many parishes on average request this per annum.</i>	32	

² The simplest (and therefore most easily adoptable) format to calculate the numbers requiring training and the number of courses required for each module is to apply some simple rules to each parish and calculate numbers from there – for example in a diocese containing 200 parishes working on the assumption that each parish has 2 Churchwardens would indicate that there were 400 Churchwardens requiring training.

This assumption could then be replicated for each role and would give a baseline number of each role requiring training.

If the baseline numbers for each role are then split by the core modules that they require training in this would provide a total number of participants for each module. The total numbers for each module should then be divided by the maximum number of participants which will give an indicative number of each course required. This indicative number of courses could then be split across 3 years giving an outline training programme.

<p>Foundation (online)</p>	<p>This course aims to enable learners to contribute to, and implement, good safeguarding practice within church and community contexts. This module is available via Home Safeguarding: Training Portal (cofeportal.org)</p>	<p>Anyone holding the bishop’s licence, commission, authorisation, or permission (including clergy, PtO, Readers, LLMs). • Anyone (volunteers and employees) in a role which involves work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, including Tower Captains and ringing teachers. • Churchwardens. • Pre-ordination or licence students, prior to Stage 1 Panel. • Vergers. • PCC Members / Lay Chapter Members / DBF Trustees. • Members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel.</p>	<p><i>Information in future to be gathered either from dashboard/parish training audits</i></p>	<p>N/A Online learning</p>	<p>N/A Online learning</p>
<p>Foundation (Face to Face – in person delivery)</p>	<p>This course aims to enable learners to contribute to, and implement, good safeguarding practice within church and community contexts</p> <p>This module can be facilitated In-person by exception using the material provided by the NST.</p>	<p>For those above who are unable to access online materials.</p>	<p><i>In future: To identify how many parishes on average request this per annum.</i></p>	<p>32</p>	
<p>Leadership</p>	<p>The course aims to enable learners to understand how safeguarding concerns and abuse can be prevented within their context, how healthy culture, and safe and effective leadership, shape Christian communities that are healthy, safe, and have the capacity to deliver high quality safeguarding practices. ,</p>	<p>This is designed for those people who play a lead role in shaping the culture of the Church body concerned.</p> <p>All clergy holding the bishop’s licence, commission, authorisation, or permission including</p>	<p>Required in 2025: 406</p> <p>Estimated carry over from 2024: 35</p> <p>Waiting list: 50</p>	<p>20 (ideally 16)</p>	<p>30</p>

	<p>recognise when risk assessment and management processes are required, understanding when, why and how they must be utilised. Understand more of the impact that abuse and trauma have on individuals' lives, relationships, and interactions in a community setting, leading to better responses to victims and survivors.</p>	<p>Honorary/Assistant Bishops and Chaplains.</p> <p>All Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers holding the bishop's licence (under Canons E6 & E8), together with all others who hold the bishop's commission, authorisation, or permission to carry out similar ministerial functions</p> <p>Those in training for ministry: Ordinands need to have completed the Leadership Pathway before their diaconal ordination and lay ministers in training before they are licenced, authorised or commissioned.)</p> <p>Non-executive members of Chapter (unless their role in the diocese requires a higher level).</p> <p>Safeguarding Officers / Leads in all Church bodies.</p>	<p>Approx 100 wardens for parishes in Vacancy</p>		
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		<p>Churchwardens – where there is a vacancy (Minimum 1 in each church best practice for all to complete)</p> <p>Tower captains at prominent towers (including cathedrals, towers with frequent visitors or people learning) and the district chair/district safeguarding lead of bellringing guilds/councils should complete the Leadership pathway</p> <p>Person who significantly influence the culture of the relevant church body e.g. Children/youth/adults workers, lay ministry staff employed by a PCC/BMO, locally appointed leaders of new worshipping communities etc</p>	<p><i>The leadership pathway will be open to individuals appointed to these roles if resources are available</i></p>		
Permission to Officiate (PTO)	To explore and reflect on the safeguarding dimensions involved in the ministry of these roles.	This pathway is for all ordained clergy, Readers and LLMs with PTO who are not required to attend the Leadership training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required in 2025: 186 • Estimated carry over from 2024: 8 	20 (ideally 16)	10
Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction	Aims to equip learners with an understanding of their role and induct them into key working practices and relationships	<p>Required for Persons taking on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer.</p> <p>Recommended for Existing PSO's</p>	Last 3 Years 2021 - 2024 there were 223 new PSOs	20	4 (1 a quarter)

			appointed averages out at 75 newly appointed PSOs a year (2021-2024)		
Domestic Abuse (Face to Face)	Aim is to equip participants to engage thoughtfully and proactively with the issue of domestic abuse and those affected – there are a series of videos available with discussion points for afterwards – Best practice is this module is delivered in groups face to face	Required for Anyone holding the bishop’s licence, commission, authorisation, or permission (including clergy, PtO, Readers, LLMs) or serving as an officer of the bishop • Anyone (volunteers and employees) working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, including Bishops Visitors and Pastoral Visitors • Safeguarding Officers / Safeguarding Leads including Designated Safeguarding Person in a Religious Community • Pre-ordination or licence students, prior to BAP or selection Panel Recommended for All Church Officers • PCC and Chapter members • Members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel	<i>Unable to ascertain – work ongoing for 2025</i>	<i>Unable to ascertain – work ongoing for 2025</i>	<i>Unable to ascertain – work ongoing for 2025</i>
Domestic Abuse (online)	Aim is to equip participants to engage thoughtfully and proactively with the	For those above who cannot attend face to face training or wish to		N/A Online learning	N/A Online learning

	issue of domestic abuse and those affected	maintain a record on the national portal following Face to Face sessions			
Safer Recruitment and People Management (online)	To equip participants with an understanding of safer recruitment, including why it is important and when it should be used, and the skills and practices necessary to promote positive safeguarding behaviour (and detect safeguarding risk) once a person is in role	<p>Recruiting managers and anyone involved in the recruitment of Church Officers (employees, elected members, and volunteers).</p> <p>Those with responsibility for administering DBS.</p> <p>Safeguarding Officers in all Church bodies</p>		N/A Online learning	N/A Online learning
Foundation + for spiritual directors	A foundation course for those who have the role as SD applying learning specific to their role.	New Spiritual directors undergoing the course for the diocese and existing SD	Approximately 60 SD's in the diocese	32 in person 16 via zoom	1 for those new to the course 1 for existing SD's