



Diocese of Chelmsford Independent Safeguarding Audit

We welcome the independent audit report by SCIE into safeguarding in the Diocese of Chelmsford.

The report notes many positives. It acknowledges the rapid journey that this diocese has made over the last five years particularly. It recognises our desire and determination for genuine culture change at every level in the Church. It evidences the practical commitments made through increased resourcing. It affirms our plans for continued development. A number of our development plans are adopted as ‘considerations’ in the report. The report also sets out helpful further ‘considerations’ which we will take forward into our plans.

The report includes some very positive comments about our safeguarding team, the “uniformly high standard” of casework, the development of training materials, and “excellent” risk assessment tools. It acknowledges that the diocese has “developed good solutions which are now national practice”.

Nonetheless we are not, and cannot be, complacent. As our own safeguarding policy states: *“it is the joy and responsibility of the Church to welcome children and people of all ages who are vulnerable and to ensure that the community of the Church is a place where they can develop and flourish, and remain safe from harm.... We must be uncompromising in our resolve to keep everyone safe from harm within the Church. The gospel demands this of us. To do less, even a tiny bit less, will turn people away from the Church and from Jesus.”*

There can be no denying that the Church has not acted as it should in the past. Our practices now, while much better, can still be improved. We are resolved to continue on the journey of culture change, to learn from best practice, to adopt best practice, to respond well, and to promote a safer Church.

Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell
and the Bishop’s Council of the Diocese of Chelmsford

The report was considered by the Bishop’s Council at its meeting on 25 July 2017

If you have any concerns about a child or adult at risk in the Diocese of Chelmsford please contact our safeguarding team on 01245 294444 or safeguarding@chelmsford.anglican.org