



Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency

Diocese of Wrexham

Inspection Report

March 2026

Possible Grades

Exemplary

Substantial assurance

Exceeding expectations

Meeting expectations

Requires attention

Significant improvement needed

Serious concerns

Overall Grading



Exceeding expectations

Standard 1

Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body's leadership, governance, ministry and culture



Exceeding expectations

Standard 2

Communicating the Church's safeguarding message



Exceeding expectations

Standard 3

Engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed



Exceeding expectations

Standard 4

Effective management of allegations and concerns



Meeting expectations

Standard 5

Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns (repondents)



Exceeding expectations

Standard 6

Robust human resource management



Exceeding expectations

Standard 7

Training and support for safeguarding



Exceeding expectations

Standard 8

Quality assurance and continuous improvement



Exceeding expectations



Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency

Possible Grades

Exemplary

Safeguarding practice is exceptional, innovative, and influential. The organisation demonstrates a deeply embedded safeguarding culture with consistently excellent outcomes. Learning is shared, and the body serves as a model of best practice for others in the Church.

Substantial Assurance

Safeguarding arrangements provide a high level of confidence in both practice and governance. Evidence shows sustained excellence, continuous improvement, and well-coordinated oversight. Policies and culture reinforce safe practice, delivering assurance at a strategic level. There is evidence of continuous improvements and quality assurance activity.

Exceeding Expectations

Safeguarding practice is consistently strong and often goes beyond minimum requirements. There is evidence of positive outcomes, proactive risk management, and well-embedded systems. Leadership demonstrates a strong commitment to safeguarding, and practice is robust and forward-looking.

Meeting Expectations

Safeguarding arrangements are sound, consistent, and compliant with expected standards. Key processes, policies, and oversight mechanisms are in place and functioning effectively. Practice is reliable, and safeguarding responsibilities are understood and fulfilled across the organisation.

Requires Attention

Safeguarding practice is partially effective but contains notable gaps or inconsistencies. Some processes work well, but others need targeted improvement to ensure reliability and compliance. Risks are being managed, but not always proactively or systematically.

Significant Improvement Needed

Core safeguarding structures exist but are not functioning reliably or consistently. Weaknesses in policy, implementation, or oversight significantly undermine safe practice. Improvements are achievable but require substantial effort and focused leadership to reach an acceptable standard.

Serious Concerns

Safeguarding arrangements show serious and immediate failings. Children or adults at risk may be exposed to harm due to significant gaps in practice, governance, or culture. Urgent corrective action is recommended to ensure safety and compliance. Leadership oversight is insufficient or ineffective.

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1. Summary of findings

1.1 This is an inspection report of the safeguarding arrangements for the Diocese of Wrexham, carried out by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) as part of its national inspection programme for dioceses in England and Wales. The Diocese of Wrexham has been graded overall as Exceeding Expectations, with seven of the eight safeguarding standards achieving this rating. The inspection assessed safeguarding practice against the eight National Safeguarding Standards using a revised maturity matrix that places greater emphasis on the quality of safeguarding practice, leadership and continuous improvement. The casework audited as part of this inspection was graded overall as Good.

1.2 Safeguarding practice within the Diocese is supported by engaged leadership, effective governance arrangements and a safeguarding team that is well regarded across the Diocese. The Safeguarding Subcommittee provides experienced oversight and includes professionals from a range of relevant disciplines, and safeguarding is routinely considered at trustee level. Feedback from clergy, parish safeguarding representatives and other stakeholders indicated strong confidence in the safeguarding team and the Diocese's commitment to protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults. Case audits demonstrated that those reporting harm are treated with compassion and dignity and that timely contact and regular communication are maintained throughout safeguarding processes. The Diocese has also demonstrated a willingness to learn and improve safeguarding practice, including commissioning independent reviews following complaints and reflecting on their findings to strengthen services.

1.3 The inspection also identified areas where further development would strengthen safeguarding arrangements. These include that risk assessments are completed and inform safeguarding plans, strengthening systems for evaluating safeguarding communications and training, and developing more structured approaches to internal quality assurance activity such as case sampling and learning from parish self-audits. Addressing these areas will support the Diocese in building on its existing strengths and ensuring that safeguarding practice continues to develop and improve over time.

2. Introduction

2.1 This is an inspection of the safeguarding arrangements for Wrexham Diocese, undertaken as part of the CSSA's programme of inspections of all 21 Dioceses in England and Wales. The inspection was undertaken in accordance with the contractual agreement between the Wrexham Diocese and the CSSA. Public accountability and transparency are provided by the publication of this full inspection report on the CSSA website.

2.2 The diocesan inspection programme will run from 2025 until 2028 and represents a second phase of the CSSA's quality assurance of diocesan safeguarding arrangements, following the baseline audit programme that ran from 2022 to 2024. Having primarily focussed on compliance with safeguarding expectations in the baseline audit phase, inspections will concentrate on the quality of safeguarding arrangements and practice, together with the means by which dioceses quality assure and continuously improve their own practice. The revised maturity matrix that is used to grade dioceses during the inspection programme includes more stringent expectations than during the baseline audit programme. Grades should therefore not be taken to be equivalent, with a higher standard of practice being required to achieve the same grade than was previously the case.

2.3 Bishop Peter Brignall has been the Bishop of Wrexham since September 2012. The Diocese itself covers the North of Wales including the areas surrounding Wrexham, Caernarfon, Dolgellau, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl and Flint and contains 27 Parishes and six Deaneries. Geographically, the Diocese is of average size but it covers a rural area with a small population density and limited travel network. There are 26 Priests, including supply and assistant priests, and eight deacons, and four curial paid employees consisting of one full-time and three part-time staff members. The curial offices are located at Bishop's House, Sontley Road, Wrexham where the Safeguarding team, which consists of a part-time Safeguarding Coordinator and a part-time Safeguarding Administrator, is based.

2.4 In line with the contractual agreement of 15 weeks' notice, formal notification of the CSSA's intention to undertake the inspection was given to the Diocese on 12 June 2025 and the self-assessment form (an assessment tool which provides background information on the Diocese of Wrexham's adherence to the eight individual National Safeguarding Standards¹), accompanying guidance and other supporting documentation was shared. An agreed date of 1 September 2025 was set for completion of the self-assessment form. An inspection set-up meeting was held on 23 June and attended by the lead analyst from the CSSA, the Safeguarding Coordinator, the Safeguarding Administrator and the Business Manager. A thorough and comprehensive self-assessment was completed and submitted to the lead analyst on 29 August 2025 along with some of the supporting evidence. The remainder of the evidence was provided the following week. All evidence considered during the inspection is listed in the appendix to this report. A pre-inspection meeting was held on 9 September 2025 with the lead analyst and the Safeguarding team.

2.5 The inspection occurred between 29 September and the 17 October 2025 and was completed partially remotely through case audits and focus groups, and partially in-person through interviews and Parish visits. Two CSSA analysts completed the inspection.

3. Methodology

3.1 This inspection assesses the progress of the Diocese of Wrexham against all eight national safeguarding standards of the Catholic church in England and Wales. Wrexham Diocese provided their self-assessment alongside documentary evidence of their adherence to the eight standards, and these have been reviewed by the CSSA Quality Assurance Analysts alongside additional evidence provided during the inspection.

¹ A description and full details of the Standards can be found on the CSSA website [here](#)

3.2 The Diocese of Wrexham Safeguarding team have recently transferred their case files to a new digital case recording system and temporary access was permitted to the CSSA analysts to facilitate auditing. The two cases that have been active over the previous 12 months were both audited by the CSSA analysts using the CSSA case audit tool. Therefore 100% of the open cases were examined.

3.3 Links to online surveys created by the CSSA Analysts were distributed by the Safeguarding team to 34 Priests and Deacons and 46 Parish Safeguarding Representatives² (PSRs) across the Diocese to seek the views of a wide audience of clergy and volunteers within the Diocese. A public call for information was also circulated regarding Wrexham Diocese's safeguarding arrangements, with a focus on the last 12 months. The call for information was placed on the CSSA website and posters with a QR code taking the reader to the online survey were placed on Parish noticeboards. All survey responses were received anonymously and any self-identifying information included within free text answers were removed prior to the clergy and PSR surveys being shared with the Diocese.

3.4 Surveys for both clergy and PSR groups were available to complete and submit between 29th August and 3rd October 2025. The Diocese sent the surveys to their clergy and PSRs and updates were offered as time went on as to how many completed surveys had been submitted. The Diocese sent reminder e-mails to prompt completions. However, responses were received from 10 clergy, which is a response rate of only 29%, and 18 PSRs, which is a response rate of 39%. For both sets of results a degree of caution should be exercised as lower response returns cannot be assumed to be representative. However, there were 77 responses received from the public call for information about the Diocese which represents a high number of completions for a diocese of this size.

3.5 Virtual PSR and clergy focus groups were held online during the inspection period. The PSR focus group was attended by a group of ten PSRs who volunteered to meet with the CSSA Analysts and join in a discussion focussed on safeguarding

² A Parish Safeguarding Representative is a volunteer who supports their Parish in Safeguarding matters such as Safer Recruitment of volunteers and liaison with Diocesan safeguarding teams.

within their Parishes. The ten attendees for the clergy focus group were selected by the CSSA Analysts to reflect a broad range of representative clergy from across the Diocese. Responses to questions asked in both meetings were anonymously recorded.

3.6 Three Parish visits were arranged for the CSSA analysts to observe practical safeguarding activity within the Diocesan Parishes. These included meetings with the resident clergy and PSRs and the inspection of premises in order to assess how safe environments are created. In one Parish visit a tour of a small cluster of neighbouring Parishes was also organised to enable the visiting analyst to glean a wider understanding of safeguarding processes in the area.

3.7 In-person and virtual interviews took place with the following key individuals within the Diocese:

- Bishop Peter Brignall who is also a Trustee
- Vicar General who is also a Trustee, the Finance Committee Chair and the Judicial Vicar
- Business Manager
- Communications Lead who is also a Deacon
- Lay Chair of the Trustees who is also a member of the finance secretariat
- Safeguarding Subcommittee Chair
- Safeguarding Subcommittee member
- Safeguarding Coordinator
- Safeguarding Administrator

4. Inspection grading

4.1 Safeguarding practice was assessed against the eight National Safeguarding Standards adopted by the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Evidence gathered during the inspection was evaluated using the CSSA Diocesan Maturity Matrix.

4.2 Each standard is graded on a seven-point scale ranging from Serious Concerns to Exemplary. Individual assessments against the sub-standards are aggregated to determine the overall grade for each standard. These standard grades are then considered collectively to determine the overall inspection grading for the diocese.

4.3 The full set of grading descriptors used by the CSSA inspection framework is set out on the opening pages of this report.

5. Inspection findings against each standard

5.1 Standard 1 Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body's leadership, governance, ministry and culture

Strengths

5.1.1 Those interviewed individually and as part of the focus groups during the course of the inspection spoke highly of the Diocesan leadership and senior leaders in general terms and more specifically described the Bishop as being a strong advocate of safeguarding, understanding its importance and role in the Church and felt they were well supported by their Bishop. Supervision notes for the Safeguarding team also record that the Safeguarding team felt that the Bishop and the Trustee Subcommittee are supportive, offering advice and guidance when needed.

5.1.2 All of the respondents to the clergy survey felt that safeguarding was fully embedded into the culture of the diocese and that the church leadership was very involved in promoting safeguarding practices. This rating was slightly lower in the PSR survey returns with 89% feeling a safeguarding culture is fully embedded and the remaining 11% feeling it is partially embedded, and 83% of responses feeling the church leadership is fully involved in promoting safeguarding practice and the remaining 17% feeling they are somewhat involved. No respondents felt the leadership were not involved in promoting safeguarding practice.

5.1.3 The safeguarding section of the website is easy to locate with a prominently positioned link on the home page. A clear statement of intent regarding the promotion of a culture of safeguarding is posted in the Safeguarding section of the diocesan website³. In addition, the Creating a Safer Environment section of the website⁴ describes the safeguarding values of the Diocese, commits to safer recruitment and advertises Caring Safely for Others⁵ and the Whistleblowing policy as well as explaining the Code of Conduct and Photograph and Social Media policy. As seen during parish visits, posters promoting safeguarding, encouraging people to report abuse and advising where to find support are posted on Parish noticeboards and provided in different languages to reflect the diverse populations. Checks are made by the Bishop, Safeguarding team and Communications Lead during their visits to ensure these appear in Parishes and churches. The Diocese have a Mission Statement which outlines the safeguarding aims of the Diocese and their promise to the people within it.

5.1.4 The Safeguarding team has created a Zero Tolerance poster which outlines that the Diocese will tolerate no forms of abuse, that the Diocese is committed to safeguarding everyone involved in its activities, ministries and services and that the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. These are displayed on church noticeboards and on the website. The cases chosen for case audits illustrate that prompt action is taken by the Safeguarding team, and by staff and clergy outside of the safeguarding team, when complaints and disclosures are made.

5.1.5 A Safeguarding Subcommittee has been established by the Diocese of Wrexham composed of professionals with significant safeguarding experience in order to drive the Safeguarding Implementation Plan, oversee safeguarding practices and offer guidance and support to the Safeguarding team if required. It is chaired by a Trustee. Lay Safeguarding Subcommittee members provide expertise from police, the legal profession, education, the justice sector, mental

³ [Promoting a Culture of Safeguarding | Diocese of Wrexham](#)

⁴ [Creating A Safer Environment | Diocese of Wrexham](#)

⁵ [Caring-Safely-For-Others.pdf](#)

health, social care, health, and health and safety backgrounds. The Chair of the Subcommittee has safeguarding experience through their roles as a magistrate, a Trustee of a community hub and a school governor for several Catholic schools. There is also the facility to bring in specialised knowledge if required and the Subcommittee Chair advised that they have recently engaged with a doctor willing to provide expertise on an ad hoc basis. The Trustee Subcommittee meets twice per year with additional Risk Assessment Group meetings when required by the Safeguarding team. The Terms of Reference for the Subcommittee are published on the website and outline the core membership with names, specialism roles performed, and that a safeguarding risk register will be reviewed and will form part of the overall risk register for the charity. The Diocesan risk register is RAG-rated and covers safeguarding elements and is reviewed at Trustee meetings.

5.1.6 The Chair of Trustees for the charity is a lay person and the Board of Trustees is composed of five clergy and four lay members. Evidence of redacted minutes from Trustee meetings shows that safeguarding is discussed at every meeting as per Charity Commission requirements and that meetings are held at least quarterly. Reports from the Safeguarding Coordinator are prepared for the Trustee meetings and are relayed in person by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

5.1.7 The Diocese of Wrexham maintains a Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan which spans a four-year period and currently runs from 2022 to 2025. The plan is broken down into actions according to the eight national safeguarding standards and owners are allocated with assignment and completion dates columns and each one is RAG-rated. The plan has been reviewed over time and the next review is due by the Trustee Subcommittee in December 2025.

5.1.8 Volunteer role descriptors, including that of the PSR, are available. Whilst the roles and responsibilities of safeguarding leadership are not explicitly set out in a dedicated document, they are covered in other documents such as the Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee terms of reference.

5.1.9 The Diocese of Wrexham does not have a standalone Safeguarding Policy. The reasons stated for this during interview with the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Administrator is that all policies and procedures which would

normally make up such a policy exist in their own right. Published on their website is the DBS Privacy policy, Management of Allegations and Concerns policy and Safeguarding Whistleblowing policy. It is accepted that the current suite of separate policies available negates the need for a single combined Safeguarding policy. All of these policies are easily accessible, are clear and comprehensive and are current with dates and review dates incorporated. Therefore, although there is no central point to consolidate all of these policies the detail and information does exist separately. The Safeguarding pages on the website have a separate tab designated to guidance on creating a safer environment which is applicable for Parishes across the Diocese. It contains links to relevant documents and practice guidance on the CSSA website, Caring Safely for Others and the Whistleblowing policy. Parish visits, the PSR and clergy focus groups and survey results demonstrated that there is good understanding from individuals of their role in creating a safer environment in Parishes. This includes ensuring safe recruitment of volunteers, with references and vetting checks, ratios of adults to children in groups, the storing of data and maintaining protection and privacy. The Diocese have published the results of the previous CSSA audit on their website and therefore demonstrate a commitment to transparency of safeguarding practice.

5.1.10 The Bishop reports that other Catholic organisations operating within the Diocese are very few and there are no international pilgrimages, no specific youth provision and no care homes operated by the Diocese. The Bishop advised that if he was approached by an organisation who wished to offer some form of provision of ministry in the Diocese he would first ask to see their constitutional plans in terms of safeguarding and ensure they have suitable insurances, arrangement for relevant DBS and safer recruitment, a Safeguarding Lead and suitable safeguarding plans in place. The Diocese has four retreat centres within its boundaries; three of which are operated by Religious Life Groups (RLGs). The National Catholic Shrine of St Winefride is also located within the boundaries of the Diocese but falls under the responsibility of a separate charity.

5.1.11 The Safeguarding team and their work is well-known and relied upon through the Diocese as evidenced through the survey responses, PSR and clergy focus groups. The close-knit nature of the leadership team means that the Safeguarding

team are involved in relevant meetings and their expertise is sought in decision making.

5.1.12 The Diocese actively promotes the Caring Safely for Others pastoral standards produced by the Bishop's Conference. Copies have been distributed in training events and meetings and clergy have been required to sign to acknowledge they have read and understand the document. All new Priests coming into the Diocese are given the document as part of their induction.

5.1.13 The evidence provided for this inspection, together with the information gleaned through interviews and Parish visits, indicated that a positive culture of safeguarding exists in the Diocese in all areas. Those spoken to presented as keen to receive feedback and to learn and improve their safeguarding practice. For instance, the Safeguarding team and Bishop commented that they will look to learn from the feedback of this inspection in order to continuously develop safeguarding practices in the Diocese. The Safeguarding Subcommittee member interviewed also stated that the Trustees, Safeguarding Subcommittee and Safeguarding team want to constantly develop and look for ways to improve services in between inspections. In their separate interviews the lay chair of trustees and the Trustee Subcommittee member said that they are proud of the work they have been doing in safeguarding. The lay chair of Trustees also said that the Bishop always wants to talk about safeguarding because he seems interested in the work, understands the implications of it and is always ready to engage. During the parish visits those met with were keen to showcase their services and spoke positively about safeguarding provision in their parishes.

Areas for development

5.1.14 The Vicar General is also the Judicial Vicar for the Diocese. Usually, these two roles would not be held by the same person but the Vicar General explained during interview that because the Diocese is short of clergy it is necessary to share roles and double-up in some instances. There are several people occupying essential roles within the Diocese that have expressed plans to leave the post in the coming years and when they do so a great deal of skills and experience will depart, potentially leaving some expansive gaps to fill. While this is a wider Diocesan issue,

it could also have significant implications for safeguarding services, especially given the part-time nature of both roles within the Safeguarding team. Leaders should keep resourcing levels under review to ensure that key roles are filled and vital tasks are undertaken. The Diocese needs to have suitable succession and contingency plans in place to enable them to continue performing tasks and fill vacancies for crucial roles as they arise and enable a smooth transition and recruitment process and make sure no gaps in safeguarding provision are created. This is something that has been identified by the Vicar General who plans to have discussions with the Bishop in due course.

5.1.15 It is acknowledged that the Diocese has previously advised that it is awaiting the publication of national policies before they publicise them themselves. However, in the meantime, for additional transparency all the safeguarding policies, and the Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan, should be published on the website.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

5.2 Standard 2 Communicating the Church's safeguarding message

Strengths

5.2.1 As covered in Standard 1, the Bishop is viewed as being a positive advocate of safeguarding and regularly promotes safeguarding. Wrexham Diocese has a Communications Lead in post who is also a Deacon of the Diocese. During interview they discussed how they keep the website and social media communications up to date. Regular contact and close working with the Safeguarding team was described with meetings occurring close to every week with a WhatsApp group chat used as an additional means of communication. The Communications Lead is also the Press Officer and works with local and national television and radio. Informal plans for adverse media coverage are in place whereby in the event of a

safeguarding-related incident that was likely to draw media attention, the Communications Lead, Bishop and Safeguarding team would, following any immediate action to address the safeguarding risk, meet to discuss forming a response for the attention of the public with support from the Bishops' Conference.

5.2.2 A particularly strong piece of safeguarding practice was identified during the inspection where the Communications Lead identified through their monitoring of usage that there had been a spike in people accessing Domestic Violence resources on the website. They advised the Safeguarding team and the Safeguarding Coordinator was then able to develop a bespoke programme to address this. The Communications Lead continues to examine traffic on their website and social media pages and track what items are in demand and pass this information to the Safeguarding team.

5.2.3 The Communications Lead has recently devised a leaflet in consultation with the Safeguarding team aimed at clergy that covers how to keep safe and professional boundaries. The Communications Lead has examined the best ways of delivering this message and has sought the views of the target audience to ensure that it is pitched at the right level and provides sufficient detail. As part of their role they also complete surveillance for appropriate use of accounts and website access, ensure that private and ministry pages are kept separate and also make daily checks of the website and social media to ensure the content is appropriate.

5.2.4 There is a Safeguarding Communications Plan in place which is published on the safeguarding pages of the website under a dedicated tab. The plan outlines the intended audiences for communications, objectives and key messages and methods of communication committed to. The plan notes that the Trustees and Safeguarding Subcommittee are responsible for its content and that it will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant. The last review was in 2024 and a next review date for March 2027 is set. However, the Communications Lead states that if it needed adapting in the meantime they would do so and present it to the Trustees for approval.

5.2.5 The Safeguarding pages of the Diocesan website contain Support Services for Survivors tab which has links to services that support survivors of abuse including New Pathways⁶, the Survivor's Trust⁷ and Ministry and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors⁸, National Association for People Abused in Childhood⁹, Replenished Life¹⁰, Grief to Grace UK¹¹, One in Four¹², Immigration Counselling and Psychotherapy¹³ and Live Fear Free¹⁴. Safe Spaces¹⁵ has its own designated tab on the website.

5.2.6 The Safe Spaces provision is promoted via posters on Parish noticeboards which have a QR code included on them and some have tear-off slips for the contact number on the bottom. As mentioned in Standard 1, posters have been translated into three other languages of the Diocese's most numerous non-English speaking communities – Welsh, Polish and Malayalam. Where space limitations prevent numerous versions of the same poster being placed on the noticeboard, plans are being explored to have a QR code on posters that will take the reader to a version in an alternative language.

5.2.7 The Diocesan safeguarding posters have recently been revised to incorporate more colour in order for them to stand out more. Publications on noticeboards seen during the Parish visits and in photographic evidence include CSSA posters, posters

⁶ New Pathways is a registered charity providing specialist counselling and advocacy for those affected by rape or sexual abuse.

⁷ The Survivor's Trust is an agency for specialist rape and sexual abuse services providing advice, support and therapy to survivors.

⁸ MACSAS supports those who have been sexually abused by ministers, clergy or others under the guise of the church.

⁹ NAPAC offers support to adult survivors of childhood abuse.

¹⁰ Replenished Life is an independent charity which supports those who have experienced trauma within faith.

¹¹ Grief to Grace is a specialised five-day programme of spiritual and psychological healing to survivors of abuse by a member of the clergy.

¹² One in Four specialise in supporting survivors of abuse and trauma.

¹³ ICAP is a charity providing counselling and psychotherapy for the Irish community in Britain.

¹⁴ Live Fear Free is a free hotline for those suffering abuse.

¹⁵ Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal, and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church of England, the Catholic Church in England and Wales or the Church in Wales.

reminding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, identifying abuse, PSR identification, safeguarding posters, zero tolerance for abuse, modern day slavery and the volunteer code of conduct. The Diocese's own safeguarding support posters identify who the PSR is with contact details, has contact details for the Safeguarding team, the police, Childline and other support services, and feature a QR code that brings the user to the support pages of the Diocese website.

5.2.8 The Safeguarding team is currently developing "Alpha cards" with an external company. These are safeguarding prompt cards with various folds and flaps revealing safeguarding tips and instructions and will be available for clergy, PSRs and all members of congregations and public spaces as another way to reach people with safeguarding messages.

5.2.9 In October 2024 the Safeguarding team e-mailed a script to parishes within the diocese which could be read out by PSRs after Mass to introduce themselves and their role, give a brief overview of the forms of abuse and how to report it, and reinforce the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Although no formal assurance was sought from parishes as to whether this was delivered to parishioners, the Safeguarding Coordinator advised that this was given verbally during a PSR training session in the spring of 2026.

Areas for development

5.2.10 To ensure that the Communications Plan is working effectively the Diocese should seek the feedback from the communities it communicates with to gain their views on how safeguarding messages are disseminated. At present there is no clear mechanism for understanding how effective communications are. The Communications Lead is able to measure usage to see how many people have accessed the website pages and social media as well as some demographic information which is useful but there is no evidence that audiences have been asked to see what methods of communication they find most helpful. In interview the Bishop acknowledged the difficulties of knowing that IT messaging regarding safeguarding are being delivered effectively without asking the intended audience.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

5.3 Standard 3 Engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed

Strengths

5.3.1 The Diocese of Wrexham has made a public commitment to support survivors of abuse and to this end has published a Commitment to Survivors in the Reporting a Concern tab of their website¹⁶. The vast majority of the feedback received in the public call for information was favourable of the engagement received from the Diocesan leadership and Safeguarding team and any intervention that was taken. However, the feedback in the public call for information from the CSSA is not solely from survivors. Therefore, the Diocese has identified that further work in scrutinising the results of their own recent Victim Survivor survey will be beneficial in determining how their service is received by those affected by abuse.

5.3.2 During the course of the inspection the CSSA Analyst spoke with a person with survivor experience who had raised a complaint regarding the service they had received from the Diocese of Wrexham and remains unhappy with the way that their concerns and experience were addressed. In contrast to this, the evidence gleaned from the public call for information and the Case Audits completed as part of the inspection suggest that those with more recently contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding team have spoken more positively about their experiences. All accounts are important when forming overall findings.

5.3.3 In the case audits undertaken, the Person-Centred Practice domain received grades of Good and Outstanding, indicating that complainants, respondents and others involved were treated with compassion and understanding. In both audits initial contact with the complainant was timely and face-to-face meetings with the Safeguarding team were swiftly arranged. Complainants were offered regular and frequent updates and were treated with dignity. The Bishop offers in-person meetings to anyone complaining of abuse related to the Church as is evidenced in the case audits where meetings were offered and arranged in good time. The case

¹⁶ [Reporting A Concern | Diocese of Wrexham](#)

audits also evidence that the views of the complainants are sought prior to Safeguarding Plans being finalised and agreed. Anonymised emails to survivors provided as evidence also illustrate collaboration with other organisations and empathetic communications with survivors.

5.3.4 The Safeguarding section of the Diocesan website contains a tab for the published Victim's Charter. This simple flow chart outlines the process for making a complaint and what the complainant can expect at each stage. This, together with the Reporting a Concern tab of the safeguarding section of the website, explicitly sets out the Diocese's aims for survivors. As referenced in paragraph 5.2.5, there is also a separate tab publicising support services for survivors with links to services that support survivors of abuse. The Our Commitment to Survivors section is compassionate and understanding and seeks to encourage people to make a complaint in their own time.

Areas for development

5.3.5 The Diocese of Wrexham is currently working on developing a Welfare Support team to help engage with survivors and potential survivors and to support those who report abuse. The establishment of the team has been ratified by the Trustees and the intention is to have volunteers and clergy with suitable experience from across the Diocese within the team. First Light has been consulted but no further progress has been made. More work needs to be done in establishing this group and a Terms of Reference should be devised. This is something that the Safeguarding Coordinator acknowledges and states they will work with the Communications lead in devising.

5.3.6 A Victim Survivor survey has been devised with the intention to issue to complainants once cases are concluded. It is in the form of a questionnaire to determine whether the service provided is satisfactory and whether improvements can be made. The Safeguarding team will collate the responses but have yet to determine the best form of interpreting the data into solid action points. Further work with complainants should now occur to develop the response and ensure learning is drawn to improve safeguarding practice. In interview the Bishop

commented that he wishes to evaluate whether complainants are satisfied with the service that they received.

5.3.7 The Bishop has completed all the episcopal training that has been offered and attended a plenary specific to safeguarding as well as some survivor-specific training. However, he would also benefit from training in trauma-informed practice in view of the meetings that he has with survivors.

5.3.8 The external review recommendations demonstrate the Diocese has had the opportunity to receive feedback, reflect and learn from their practice, leading to an action plan being established to put in place recommendations. When cases have been concluded and the survey issued, further learning from survivors themselves should be examined and any potential improvements in practice made as a result.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

5.4 Standard 4 Effective management of allegations and concerns

Strengths

5.4.1 The majority of both the clergy and the PSRs who completed the surveys – over 96% – felt confident or very confident they knew what needs to be reported, to whom and when in the event of an allegation of abuse coming to light. The clergy and PSR focus groups also evidenced the confidence that participants felt when responding to an allegation. In both groups participants commented that they felt equipped to respond to a complaint and supported by the leadership in doing so. It was also evident that PSRs were confident in the process of recording, storing and appropriately sharing information.

5.4.2 The case audits showed that those within, and outside of, the Safeguarding team responded quickly to allegations. This was evidenced in the response times from the Safeguarding team in engaging with the complainants, offering support, in-person contact and sharing concerns with leadership and via the member of

staff not within the Safeguarding team taking appropriate action when they received a complaint. In both case audits referrals to support services for the complainants and partnership working with statutory agencies evidenced good partnership working. Investigations were instigated swiftly and were of good quality in their scope and depth with actions being set upon the receipt of new information. As soon as the police become involved following a report to them from a complainant, the case audits shows that the Diocesan investigation is placed on hold so as not to conflict with the investigations of statutory authorities.

5.4.3 The Judicial Vicar advises the Safeguarding team and supports them by ensuring that responses to allegations and concerns related to clergy are compliant with canon law. The case audits provided evidence of Wrexham Diocese appropriately referring a case to the National Tribunal Service¹⁷ for canonical investigation. In this instance they have liaised with the service for guidance on the process and fed this detail back to the complainant and respondent.

5.4.4 The Safeguarding Coordinator and the Safeguarding Administrator are both former police officers and have relevant training and experience in managing those accused of abuse. Due to the small size of the Diocese and its staffing numbers, the Safeguarding Coordinator is personally involved in managing the safeguarding cases and hence has a close oversight of developments for all cases. There is evidence that the Trustee Subcommittee also has oversight and is able to offer advice and guidance on risk management through extraordinary meetings. There is also evidence in the case audits to show that the CSSA have been consulted and a member of staff in another Diocese with relevant safeguarding experience was asked for their feedback on an anonymised Safeguarding Plan prior to its implementation.

5.4.5 In both case audits there is evidence that referrals to the Charity Commission took place. These were timely and appropriate and updates were offered and documented when new information was received by the Diocese. Although contact

¹⁷ [National Tribunal Service \(NTS\) – Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)

was made with the CSSA for advice, formal notifications of these referrals were not made to the CSSA, as would be expected.

5.4.6 All concerns are logged on the electronic case management system. Case audits demonstrated that recording practice using this system generally met expectations and that records were stored with appropriate regard for confidentiality and only made available to those who needed to access them. Decision making as to the opening of cases rests with the Safeguarding team but case closure is decided by the Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee.

Areas for development

5.4.7 Whilst management of allegations and concerns generally met expected practice standards there were occasions when they did not. This included the failure to electronically store on file the most up-to-date version of a Safeguarding Plan and record when touchpoints have been made with a respondent when delays with National Tribunal Service occurred.

5.4.8 Further progress against this standard will be made if the Diocese instigates quality assurance processes of its case management. This may be through internal audits or, as has been considered, peer case audits with a neighbouring diocese. Where relevant, these should include compliance with Canon Law, governance over casework, record keeping and confidentiality, responses to survivors and respondents, referral to the CSSA of any safeguarding concern which requires a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission and learning from casework.

Graded: Meeting Expectations

5.5 Standard 5 Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)

Strengths

5.5.1 The case audits showed that respondents were respectfully informed of allegations against them with regular progress updates being given and contact from the Diocesan leadership taking place. In both instances those facing allegations have been offered support, allocated a pastoral support clergy member and encouraged to receive canonical and civil law advice. In the absence of a risk assessment being completed it is not possible to say with certainty that the Safeguarding Plans themselves were proportionate. However, based solely on the information provided in the case files it appears that the plans balanced the needs of the respondent with the risks posed and were reviewed at expected intervals. There is evidence that the clergy who were subjects of allegations were asked about their views prior to drawing up the plan in regard to what support they believe they would need if they faced an allegation.

5.5.2 Respondents to allegations have been supported by the Safeguarding team and Diocesan leadership through the provision of alternative accommodation. The Safeguarding team have been responsive in adapting to requests made by the respondents if able to do so and reviewing all new information provided. The Diocese has two active lay safeguarding plans but these were not selected for audit.

5.5.3 As previously mentioned a Welfare/Support team is currently being developed part of whose role will be to offer additional support to clergy facing allegations; its terms of reference is being developed. The provision of such a support team is seen as positive and the concluding work on this is encouraged.

5.5.4 At the Clergy Conference organised by the Diocese for all their clergy, the views of the clergy in attendance were sought and they were asked what they thought would need in the event of an allegation against them. Their responses

were collated and considered and subsequent actions taken to facilitate an improved process for those facing allegations and being stood down from ministry.

Areas for development

5.5.5 No risk assessment documents were completed to inform the Safeguarding Plans reviewed in the case audits. The Safeguarding Coordinator explained that an outcome is awaited for a national risk assessment template to be produced. Whilst the formal risk assessment is awaiting agreement, Wrexham Diocese should have a risk assessment process in place for the interim in order to evaluate risks and put in place mitigating actions. Safeguarding plans being agreed before a risk assessment has taken place is contrary to CSSA guidance on management of concerns and allegations¹⁸. In interview the Safeguarding Coordinator voiced a desire to complete training on risk assessment and said that they have relied heavily on the Probation Service or other statutory service if they are involved for an assessment of risk.

5.5.6 Although the views of clergy have been sought at the Clergy Conference and, in the case audit, the respondent's views were sought prior to finalising the Safeguarding Plans, those managing the allegations should ask respondents for feedback. The findings should then be evaluated and reflected upon to see how services can be improved in the future.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

5.6 Standard 6 Robust human resource management

Strengths

5.6.1 To ensure Safer Recruitment of staff and volunteers, the Diocese of Wrexham has adopted the CSSA Safer Recruitment Policy. This policy and associated forms

¹⁸ [Practice Guidance](#)

for DBS processing are contained within the Safer Recruitment and DBS page of the website. The Safeguarding team sends out monthly prompts to PSRs for volunteers who require DBS renewals. The Diocese has a Safeguarding Code of Conduct which all volunteers are given at the induction stage. The recruitment of volunteers for Parishes is done in conjunction with the relevant PSRs with guidance from the Safeguarding team. All new volunteers are required to provide two satisfactory references in support of their DBS application which are not processed until the references have been received.

5.6.2 The Diocese has an Overseas checklist for clergy who arrive from overseas to minister in the Diocese. The checklist mandates that the Testimonial of Suitability is checked, contact is made with the originating Diocese if applicable, DBS forms are completed face-to-face by the Safeguarding team and that the clergy member completes Caring Safely for Others refresher, Responding to a Disclosure training, the CSSA training workbook, Level 1 leaflet and Learning Management System¹⁹ (LMS) modules one, two and three and produces any of their safeguarding training certificates.

5.6.3 The Diocese maintains a record of DBS checks for clergy, lay employees and volunteer roles with regulated activity with an expectation that checks are renewed a maximum of three-yearly in line with national guidance. Records show that all clergy and employee DBS checks are within their renewal dates. PSRs are given reminders when the volunteers are approaching three years since their last check to ensure that applications are made in sufficient time and DBS surgeries and drop-in centres are offered by the Safeguarding team to assist in completions. The Safeguarding team has a record of each parish and their volunteers' names, roles and dates of DBS certificate. This shows that, despite reminders to PSRs from the Safeguarding team, some volunteers have not had their DBS renewed. Reasons for this have been described as being the personal choice of the volunteer or unforeseen delays in processing the application as opposed to a Diocesan DBS system fault. Nonetheless, volunteers without a DBS check are not permitted to

¹⁹ The Learning Management System is a software application providing safeguarding training programmes.

perform their voluntary roles in the parishes and require a fresh check before they are permitted to volunteer.

5.6.4 The process for blemished DBS returns is recorded and in the event of information received the Safeguarding Coordinator will speak to the applicant and consider the details before making a decision regarding appointment suitability. All blemished DBS returns are referred to the Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee for ratification of recommendations for appointment to ensure leadership oversight.

5.6.5 The Safeguarding Subcommittee routinely receive information regarding DBS checks completed for their meetings, and any issues regarding Safer Recruitment. Trustees are also sighted on any risks in relation to this information through the reports the Safeguarding Coordinator prepares for their quarterly meetings. One of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) the Safeguarding team are obliged to report to the Trustees on is DBS statistics. A list of compliant parishes and those who need interventions via e-mail and/or telephone is provided.

5.6.6 The Diocese has considered two complaints in respect of their safeguarding services and commissioned independent reviews for each. An Action Plan was formed following the receipt of recommendations from one investigation and all action points for the Diocese of Wrexham have been recorded as addressed and concluded. In the other, the investigator was asked to set out whether the conclusion reached in the Stage 1 element of the complaint should be upheld and to make recommendations if the enquiries or investigation should have been managed differently. The recommendations from this independent review were received in August 2025 and, at the time of writing, the complaint is still ongoing. The evidence shows the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Subcommittee have considered the findings of these reviews and looked at adjusting practice accordingly. For example, the Safeguarding Coordinator explained that they have found that their Complaints policy is fit for purpose but there is a small section that will need to be brought to the attention of the Trustees for ratifying as no time limit is stated at the end of the Stage 2 complaint process for responding to the Stage 3 request.

5.6.7 Supervision notes show that supervision for the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Administrator occurs twice yearly. The former Chair of the Trustee Subcommittee, who has an extensive background in safeguarding, has been appointed by the Bishop to provide formal and regular supervision. This covers staff welfare, workload management, resources, self-development and any other business. All meetings have minutes taken and agreed.

5.6.8 Featuring on the website at the foot of the safeguarding pages is the Diocese's Data Protection policy which outlines an overall statement, introduction, data security section, Subject Access Request section and glossary of terms. The document is dated June 2025 and is signed by the Bishop and the Chair of Trustees and reports that the policy will be updated every three years or on receipt of legislation changes.

5.6.9 Volunteer role descriptors are published on the website. These include Catechist, Child Liturgist, Children and Young Helper, Eucharistic Minister, Parish Visitor, Parish Youth Worker, Sacristan and PSR roles.

5.6.10 The Diocese of Wrexham has a Whistleblowing policy which is published on their website with an accompanying introduction that it is made available to everybody to encourage anyone with serious concerns to raise them without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is comprehensive and was approved by the Trustees in July 2023 with a next review date set for July 2026.

5.6.11 A Safeguarding Service Complaints Policy and Procedures document has been agreed by the Trustees. The document was ratified in December 2023 and has a next review date of December 2026 included. It contains introduction, purpose and scope sections and a flow chart of the complaints process which explains all stages of the process. The policy is considered to be thorough and also includes a definitions list of terms used for clarity.

5.6.12 Another notable piece of work is the development of digital ID badges for clergy. The new badges have QR codes incorporated so that, when scanned, the enquirer can view the clergy's up-to-date faculties and ensure that they have a celebret, the required levels of training and appropriate DBS check in situ. If a

member of clergy no longer ministers in the Diocese then they are removed from the database.

Areas for development

5.6.13 At present the process for assessing a blemished DBS return is outlined in four bullet points on a word document showing the steps to take are to conduct an interview with the applicant, complete the National *Blemished DBS Disclosure Risk Assessment Form*, present the form to the Trustee Subcommittee for ratification of the Safeguarding Coordinator's recommendations and to inform the applicant of the outcome. The process should be formalised, agreed by Trustees and stored in an accessible location for staff and volunteers to view.

5.6.14 A more robust system of quality assuring Safer Recruitment processes would help to drive standards and improve grades in this standard. Safer Recruitment processes should be continually reviewed and any learning used to improve performance.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

5.7 Standard 7 Training and support for safeguarding

Strengths

5.7.1 The Diocese has determined that annual safeguarding training is mandatory for all clergy and necessary for the issuing of a celebret²⁰. The Bishop is clear that any member of clergy not fulfilling their training obligations will not have the celebret issued. During interview with the Bishop he estimated that approximately 80% of clergy do their mandatory safeguarding training in formal training sessions but there is always a small number who are unable to and so mop-up sessions are

²⁰ Can. 903 A priest is to be permitted to celebrate even if the rector of the church does not know him, provided that either he presents a letter of introduction from his ordinary or superior, issued at least within the year, or it can be judged prudently that he is not impeded from celebrating.

required. A tracking system is in place via a spreadsheet linked to the renewal of celebret which was seen by the CSSA Analyst in person during the inspection. It allows the Bishop to determine if a clergy member has not completed their training and on the rare occasions this has not been done and their celebret renewal date is approaching they are told that they must complete the training beforehand. The Bishop also commented that during formation of clergy he emphasises the importance of safeguarding and of keeping up-to-date with training. This system has been effective to date and the Bishop has never needed to withdraw a celebret due to non-completion of safeguarding training. Furthermore he promotes training within meetings and is due to remind clergy again of the importance of safeguarding training at the forthcoming Clergy Conference.

5.7.2 The Diocese has also determined that all volunteers in DBS eligible roles, including PSRs, should complete Level 3 Safeguarding for Volunteers in the Catholic Church through the Church's online learning management system (LMS). All PSRs have been given the LMS Level 1 leaflet and completed Levels 2 and 3 training and records have been seen to evidence this. The PSRs maintain a list at Parish level of all the volunteers who have received the training from the PSRs. For those without internet access or with IT challenges, group training has been offered which the Safeguarding team have assisted in the delivery of. In addition to this, the Safeguarding team has delivered joint clergy and PSR in-person training days which, according to those interviewed for this inspection, were very well received. PSRs return their training logs to the Safeguarding Coordinator who, in turn, collates figures for the Diocese and reports back to the Trustees as part her team's KPIs. If, after prompts from the Safeguarding team, there remain shortfalls in compliance or adverse patterns in particular parishes, this is escalated and addressed by the leadership team if needed.

5.7.3 Training delivered and organised by the Safeguarding team to PSRs and clergy emphasises that no forms of abuse will be tolerated within the Diocese and that any signs or reports of abuse must be reported. Joint clergy and PSR training has been delivered and was well-received as indicated in the feedback and in interviews during the inspection.

5.7.4 All Trustees have received training specific to their roles and the Bishop has completed all the episcopal training that has been offered to the Bishops, including one plenary specifically dedicated to safeguarding, and attends the annual half-day safeguarding refresher training. The Safeguarding Coordinator attends the National Safeguarding conferences for Diocese Safeguarding leads. She reports attending safeguarding courses in the past and is confident she can locate suitable training if a need is identified and that this will be funded by the Diocese. Email evidence confirms attendance at these events. In addition, the Safeguarding Coordinator has volunteered to be part of a working group for the national policy review with the Social Care Institute for Excellence.

5.7.5 In responding to an identified need for neurodiversity training, the Safeguarding Coordinator secured the assistance of specialists for delivery of in-person training on the subject. As covered in Standard 2 of this report the Safeguarding team has already delivered Domestic Violence training as a result of a need being identified. The Safeguarding Coordinator stated that the team is responsive to what the Diocese needs and will develop a training programme to meet emerging needs. She states that the Diocese is geographically relatively large and rural and so training is usually offered in four different locations around the Diocese to accommodate those in more remote areas.

Areas for Development

5.7.6 Although those spoken to regarding training during the inspection spoke highly of the neurodiversity training organised by the Safeguarding team, there is no evidence that this training has been formally evaluated. Seeking feedback from attendees following training has occurred but this has been ad hoc with no formal structure in place for its evaluation and therefore no way of quality assuring the training that is delivered. Following training the Safeguarding Coordinator sent out an email to all attendees asking if they found the training worthwhile, how they found the format of the training and for any other subjects they may wish to have covered in the future. Clergy and PSRs spoken to during the inspection verified that this occurred. Developing a more structured way of gathering feedback would

facilitate the Safeguarding team and Safeguarding Subcommittee to have a more standardised method of quality assurance.

5.7.7 The Safeguarding team have issued two questionnaires to inform a Training Needs Analysis to date. Unfortunately, both of these have received very poor response rates. At the time of the inspection, the Bishop and Safeguarding team plan to hand physical copies of the questionnaire out at the forthcoming Clergy Conference and to promote the importance of completing it so that sufficient details can be obtained in order to create an analysis. This piece of work should be continued, the data analysed and a plan put in place to address any areas of need.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

5.8 Standard 8 Quality assurance and continuous improvement

Strengths

5.8.1 Following the baseline safeguarding audit in 2023 a presentation package was put together by the Safeguarding Coordinator and delivered to the Parish Priests. This highlighted the areas for development within the audit report and identified actions to take. Minutes from Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee meetings show that the baseline audit recommendations, and subsequently identified action points, are revisited by the Subcommittee to check progress. The Safeguarding team provided interim self-assessments reports to the CSSA in annual check-in meetings which further illustrated progress against the recommendations from the baseline audit. These reports showed that the Diocese responded to the recommendations by improving the system for responding to out-of-hours Safeguarding enquiries, taking actions to review a Safeguarding Plan, agreeing a Communications Plan, distributing and publishing the Victim's Charter, sharing Caring Safely for Others more widely during training events and online, provision of professional supervision for the Safeguarding team and the preparation of an annual Safeguarding report from the Safeguarding team for the attention of the Trustees.

5.8.2 The Safeguarding Coordinator completes an Annual Safeguarding report which is submitted to the Trustees. The report contains a summary of the previous year's KPIs and is broken down into the eight national safeguarding standards. It allows for reflection on feedback from the baseline safeguarding audit and the interim annual self-assessment for the CSSA and summarises progress. Performance in relation to KPIs and against the eight national safeguarding standards is concluded and remedial actions are identified for improvements required. Whilst the Annual Safeguarding Report is a useful summary tool to provide assurance, the Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan created and updated by the Safeguarding Coordinator is a working document and RAG ratings update on recommendations with remaining actions.

5.8.3 Wrexham Diocese distributed a safeguarding survey to parishioners and stakeholders earlier in 2025 and collated the returns. In total there were 172 online responses and 28 paper responses which contained 78 suggestions as to how safeguarding in parishes could be improved and 72 suggestions as to how safeguarding in the Diocese might be improved. Whilst a statistical breakdown of responses has occurred the Safeguarding team understands that further analysis of what this means for the Diocese is required and a plan of the action to be taken in response should be concluded. The initial summary report has been submitted to the Trustees for their consideration and once conclusions have been elicited, Parish Priests and PSRs will be informed.

5.8.4 The Safeguarding Coordinator has recently contacted the Church in Wales and some mosques and is looking to convene an informal meeting with a view to establishing an interfaith group in the near future. The idea of these groups would be to share best safeguarding practice and introduce an extra element of feedback regarding safeguarding processes. Improved links with other faith groups would also have the effect of improving communications around any concerning behaviours or individuals.

5.8.5 Email evidence between the Safeguarding Coordinator and the CSSA shows that the Safeguarding Coordinator has sought practice advice and is prepared to receive feedback from different sources. In 2024 an external review was conducted

into the Diocese's management of a historical safeguarding case. The findings of this review were accepted by the Trustees and an action plan was put in place to address them. The Diocese of Wrexham has funded two recent independent reviews of their handling of complaints. The evidence provided illustrates that the findings have been reflected on and acted upon. Learning from these reviews was shared at the joint Clergy/PSR training day in May 2025.

5.8.6 There is no cultural element to the induction process for overseas Priests. However, as per the Overseas Checklist the Safeguarding Coordinator meets with new Priests in person for a one-to-one meeting where she can assess their presentation. Additionally, the Bishop meets with overseas Priests to discuss cultural experiences and, at the time of the inspection, had a further meeting arranged for the following month. The majority of overseas Priests are received from other Diocese in England and Wales and so have been immersed in the culture for some time.

5.8.7 In July 2025 an e-mail was sent by the Safeguarding team to all parishes in the diocese that contained a checklist of what information should be contained within their parish safeguarding noticeboards in an attempt to standardise communications and reinforce safeguarding messaging.

Areas for Development

5.8.8 Unless of an extremely minor nature, all cases are fed back to the Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee for overview and guidance. To add an element of an audit-style approach to working it would be beneficial for the Trustees to choose a case to dip sample and receive an update on. Not only would this provide a more open overview of cases but would act as a tool for reflection on case work activity.

5.8.9 Some positive steps have been made in relation to self-audit activity of safeguarding processes within the diocese. In order to identify good practice for sharing with other Parishes in the Diocese and find any areas for development, feedback from these activities should be actively sought and the data scrutinised.

5.8.10 A system for peer support and learning outside of the national Safeguarding Coordinator's conferences would be beneficial. The Safeguarding Coordinator has

evidenced that they can seek the advice of skilled people outside of the team in relation to Safeguarding Plans and some form of interaction with peers in neighbouring Diocese would help support improvements in practice for all those involved.

Graded: Exceeding Expectations

6. Recommendations

6.1 To support improvement, the following recommendations are made:

Within 3 months

- Provision for the completion of risk assessments should be established in the interim period whilst a national template and training is devised. Risk assessments should then be completed retrospectively on case work to ensure that all risks have been covered in Safeguarding Plans
- The Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan is published on the website

Within 6 months

- A system for seeking structured feedback from respondents should be devised and any feedback evaluated for future improvements to services
- Role descriptions should be created for safeguarding leadership roles
- The process for assessing blemished DBS returns should be formalised or cross referenced with existing policies
- A more robust system for evaluating bespoke training offered by the Diocese if reinstated
- Continued meetings are held at a senior level to discuss succession planning and ensure that critical safeguarding roles in the Diocese are not left vacant

- A Training Needs Analysis is undertaken to help inform training provision within the Diocese
- Greater use of peer support is made in sharing good safeguarding practice and learning experiences

Within 12 months

- The data from the Victim Survivor survey is analysed and clear conclusions for appropriate action are elicited
- In time for the next review of the Communications plan stakeholders' views are sought to receive feedback on safeguarding messaging and inform actions
- Those in senior safeguarding roles, including the Bishop, should complete trauma-informed practice training
- Develop a process for internal audit of case work and/or peer reviews
- The information from parish self-audit should be scrutinised in order to identify areas of strengths and actions taken to address any areas for development

7. Arrangements for follow-up

7.1 In line with an overall rating of Exceeding Expectations, the earliest potential date of re-inspection of the Diocese of Wrexham is within two to three years. In the intervening period there will be check in meetings every six months and the Diocese will be asked to complete an annual self-assessment. If the CSSA becomes aware of a significant safeguarding concern or allegation before the anticipated next inspection, then an earlier inspection will be required.

8. Appendix

Evidence submitted by the Diocese of Wrexham

1. PSR induction folder and notes
2. Clergy induction pack contents
3. PSR contract
4. PSR list of skills
5. PSR message to congregations
6. Wrexham Diocese website (www.rcdwxm.org.uk)
7. E-mails to/from CSSA for advice on professional boundaries
8. Clergy and PSR training agenda
9. Clergy Conference training agenda
10. Volunteers Code of Conduct
11. Annual Safeguarding report
12. Children and Young People involved in Church activities Code of Conduct
13. Leaders and Helpers Code of Conduct
14. Altar Server role descriptor
15. Catechist role descriptor
16. Child Liturgist role descriptor
17. Eucharistic Minister role descriptor
18. PSR role descriptor
19. Parish Visitor role descriptor
20. Sacristan role descriptor
21. Parish Youth Worker role descriptor
22. Children and Young Person Helper role descriptor
23. E-mail responses from priest regarding conveying safeguarding messages
24. Clergy and Parish list
25. Mandatory training list for volunteers
26. DBS ID checklist
27. Overseas checklist
28. Parish safeguarding checklist
29. DBS Statistics for 2025

30. Wrexham Diocese blemished DBS process
31. E-mails between the Safeguarding team and the CSSA training department
32. E-mails to evidence participation in the SCIE policy review
33. Extracts from the Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee meetings
34. Extracts from case files
35. Parish safeguarding notice board contents
36. Safeguarding posters
37. Information sharing form template
38. Minutes from welfare supervision meeting
39. Risk Assessment policy
40. Clergy and Religious TNA questionnaire
41. PSR TNA
42. PowerPoint presentation of 2023 audit
43. CSSA Photograph consent form DBS processing policy, Management of allegations policy and Safer Recruitment policy
44. CSSA practice guidance for planning and organising parish events, arranging pilgrimages, planning overnight accommodation, responsibilities towards clergy and religious against whom allegations have been made and recording a disclosure
45. Persistent, serial and vexatious complaints policy
46. Whistleblowing policy
47. Privacy policy
48. Safeguarding complaints policy and procedures
49. Redacted RAG meeting notes
50. Police referrals
51. Safeguarding Communications plan
52. Safeguarding mission statement
53. Safeguarding policy statement
54. Safeguarding report to Trustees
55. Survivor satisfaction survey
56. E-mail reminder to clergy from Safeguarding team that training is mandatory
57. Trustees meeting minutes

- 58. Safeguarding Implementation and Action plan
- 59. Victims charter
- 60. Zero tolerance poster
- 61. Volunteer reference questionnaire
- 62. Modern Slavery Provider's forum agenda
- 63. Safeguarding survey
- 64. Safeguarding survey poster
- 65. Analysis of Safeguarding survey
- 66. DBS Regional Outreach advisor e-mail contact
- 67. E-mails between Safeguarding Coordinator and interfaith group
- 68. Potential scam alert e-mail
- 69. Stages of a canonical investigation document
- 70. Anonymised case studies and scenarios for training
- 71. External review recommendations and response
- 72. Flowchart of process to follow in absence of safeguarding team
- 73. E-mails to evidence engagement with CSSA thematic audit
- 74. E-mail regarding formation of a support/welfare group
- 75. Victim Support referral e-mail
- 76. Welfare support content offer e-mail
- 77. Alpha card template
- 78. Trustee Safeguarding Subcommittee member Confidentiality agreement
- 79. E-mails regarding advice for Safeguarding Plan