

Diocesan Accountability and Responsibilities for Safeguarding

Document Overview

Purpose This paper summarises accountability and responsibilities for safeguarding at a diocesan level

Confidentiality Not confidential

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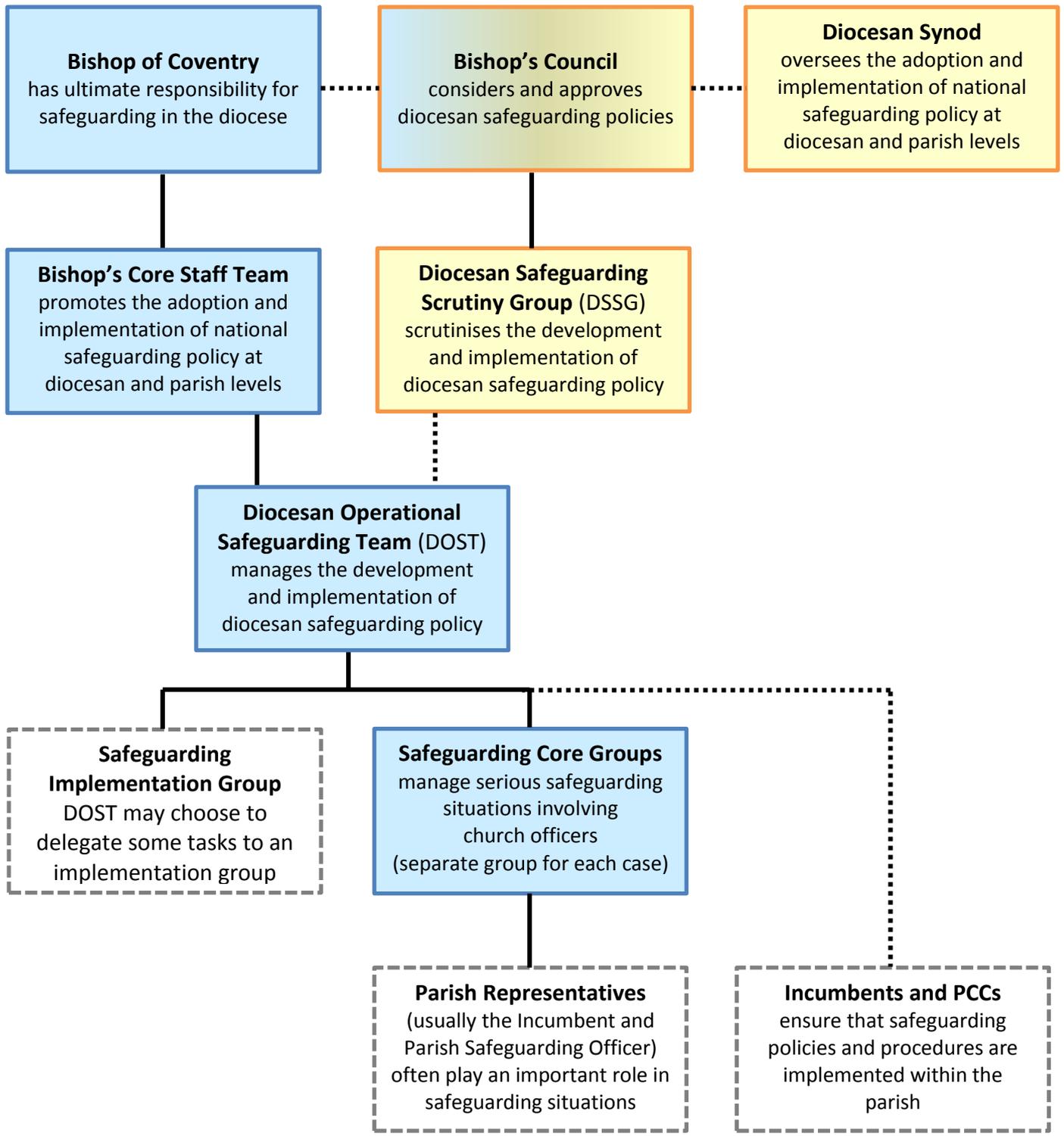
Status note Approved by the Bishop's Core Staff Team

Next Required Action For discussion by Bishop's Council

Version History

Version	Date	Status Note
Issue 1	05/12/2016	Approved by the DOST
Issue 2	28/02/2017	Approved by the Bishop's Core Staff

Accountability of Diocesan Bodies for Safeguarding

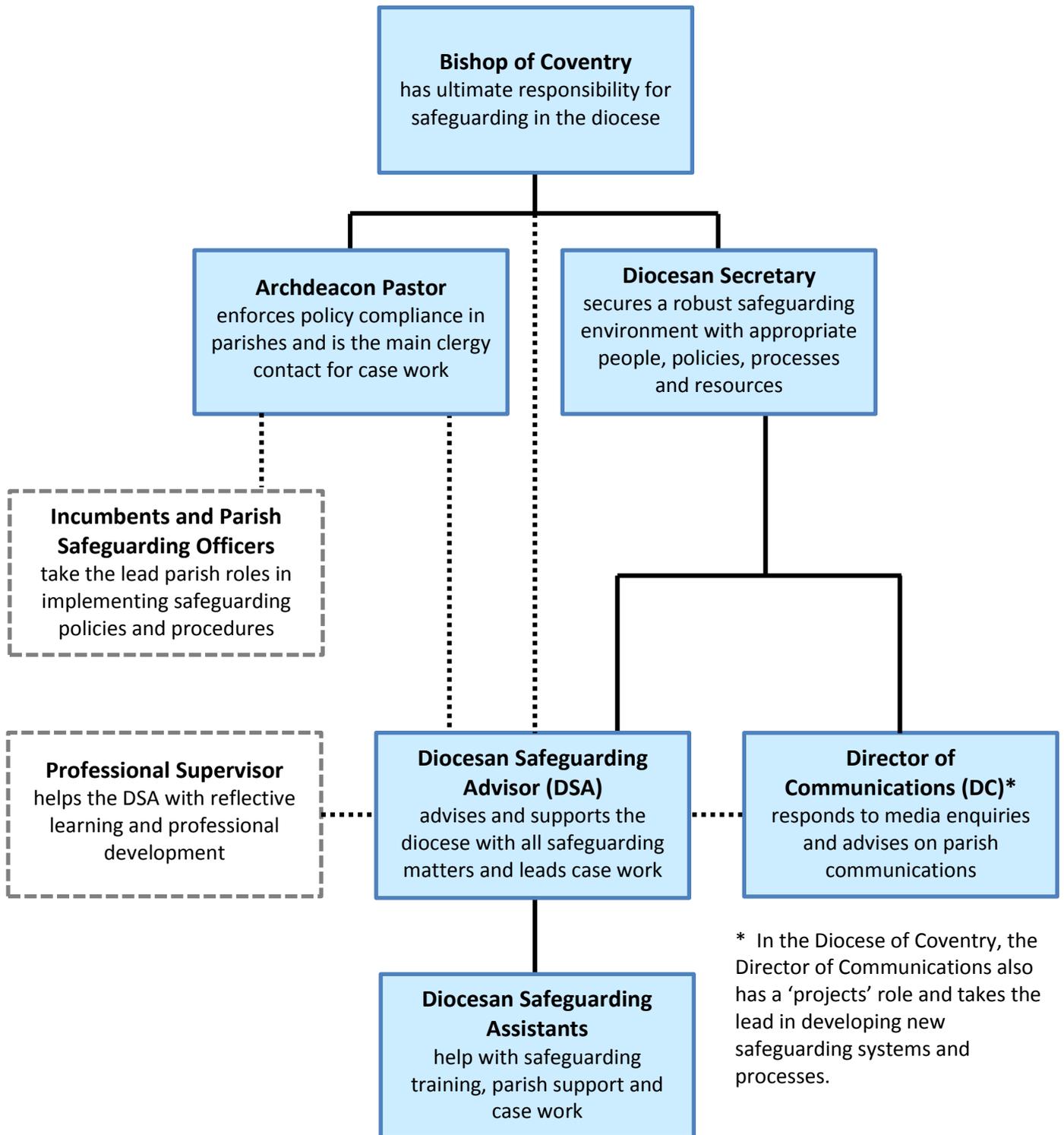


Key: Executive responsibility Non-executive overview

— Main accountability

..... Other relationship

Line Management of Individuals for Safeguarding



Key: — Line management
 Other relationship

Safeguarding Responsibilities of Diocesan Bodies

Diocesan Synod

Diocesan Synod oversees the adoption and implementation of national safeguarding policy at diocesan and parish levels.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Adopting national safeguarding policies.
- Considering and approving the Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Coventry.

Bishop's Council

Bishop's Council considers and approves diocesan safeguarding policies.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Reviewing annually the *Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Coventry*, and approving minor changes.
- Referring to Diocesan Synod any major changes to the *Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Coventry*.
- Receiving an annual report from the Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Group.
- Considering and approving any other policies referred by the Bishop's Core Staff Team.

Bishop's Core Staff Team (BCST)

Accountable to the Bishop of Coventry, the Bishop's Core Staff Team promotes the adoption and implementation of national safeguarding policy at diocesan and parish levels.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Considering and approving diocesan policies and practice guidance, and deciding if any need to be referred to the Bishop's Council.
- Considering the DOST Monthly Report.

Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Group (DSSG)

Accountable to Bishop's Council, the DSSG scrutinises the development and implementation of diocesan safeguarding policy.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Providing expert external scrutiny.
- Having a quality assurance role in checking that the DOST and the central administration of the diocese follow diocesan and national policy.
- Checking that the diocesan safeguarding procedures are compliant with legislation, best practice in the safeguarding sector, governmental statutory guidance, and the Church's own practice guidance and models of good practice.
- Reporting in writing to the Bishop of Coventry any significant areas of concern arising from the above areas of responsibility.
- Writing an annual report for the consideration of Bishop's Council.

The DSSG will be assisted in discharging its responsibilities in the following ways:

- Receiving draft safeguarding policies and procedures for comment.
- Receiving a DOST Monthly Report.
- Receiving a monthly *Safeguarding Cases Report* for cases which are priority 'red'.

Terms of Reference of the DSSG can be found in Appendix A.

Diocesan Operational Safeguarding Team (DOST)

Accountable to the Bishop's Core Staff, the DOST manages the development and implementation of diocesan safeguarding policy.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the management of serious safeguarding situations.
- Managing the implementation of safeguarding developments. This includes:
 - Creating and updating diocesan policies, processes and resources in line with national policies and practice guidance.
 - Ensuring compliance at a diocesan level with national and diocesan policies and practice guidance.
 - Monitoring compliance in parishes with national and diocesan policies and practice guidance.
 - Considering how best to improve compliance in parishes.

Where appropriate, some tasks may be delegated to a small implementation group.

Terms of Reference of the DOST can be found in Appendix B.

Safeguarding Core Groups

Accountable to the DOST, Safeguarding Core Groups manage serious safeguarding situations involving church officers. A separate group is established for each case.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Establishing and maintaining boundaries of confidentiality.
- Sharing accurate information with the other members of the group and communicating regularly with external agencies.
- Identifying specific roles and responsibilities through the management of the case.
- Considering whether other church bodies should be informed of the situation, and invited to join the Core Group.
- Ensuring and regularly reviewing support for all parties.
- Advising responsible officers, including the bishop, on risk management and disciplinary action, including suspension, at every stage.
- Managing internal communications and actual or potential media coverage locally and nationally.
- Reviewing the process, when completed, against relevant policy and practice guidance, and ensure learning from the case is communicated to relevant bodies and informs future practice.

Terms of Reference of Safeguarding Core Groups can be found in Appendix C.

Safeguarding Responsibilities of Individuals

The Bishop of Coventry

Accountable to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Coventry has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding in the diocese.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Promoting a culture of best practice at diocesan, deanery and parish levels.
- Appointing a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.
- Appointing an independent Chair of the DSSG, and to meet annually with him/her.
- Appoint the other members of the DSSG after consulting the Chair.

Diocesan Secretary

Accountable to the Bishop of Coventry, the Diocesan Secretary secures a robust safeguarding environment with appropriate people, policies, processes and resources.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensuring appropriate governance arrangements are in place.
- Recruiting diocesan staff with the relevant skills and experience, and ensuring their professional development.
- Managing of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor and the Director of Communications.
- Ensuring the diocesan safeguarding team is adequately resourced.

Archdeacon Pastor

Accountable to the Bishop of Coventry, the Archdeacon Pastor enforces policy compliance in parishes and is the main clergy contact for case work.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Assisting the Bishop of Coventry in promoting a culture of best practice within deaneries and parishes.
- Initiating disciplinary proceedings if clergy or church officers refuse to comply with safeguarding policy.

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA)

Accountable to the Bishop of Coventry (and line-managed by the Diocesan Secretary), the DSA advises and supports the diocese with all safeguarding matters and leads case work.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Supporting the diocese in the development of local policy, good practice and training.
- Ensuring that allegations of abuse are appropriately referred to the statutory authorities ensuring the provision of appropriate advice and support to survivors and victims of abuse.
- Making sure that offenders returning to the community are appropriately supported and managed.
- Advising the diocese on safeguarding matters; ensuring that all advice is in line with the law, government guidance and national guidance from the House of Bishops and National Safeguarding Adviser.
- Bringing any urgent safeguarding matter to the immediate attention of the Bishop of Coventry and the Diocesan Secretary.
- Progressing all open cases, and bringing them to an appropriate conclusion.
- Ensuring that record keeping is maintained in accordance with national guidance.

- Drafting the *DOST Monthly Report* prior to each DOST meeting.

Director of Communications (DC)

Accountable to the Diocesan Secretary, the DC responds to media enquiries and advises on parish communications.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Advising Safeguarding Core Group meetings regarding to appropriate communications.
- Working with the Incumbent and DSA in preparing proactive statements that can be read to church congregations.
- Working with the Incumbent and DSA in preparing reactive statements that can be used in response to media enquiries or questions from church members.

In the Diocese of Coventry, the Director of Communications also has a 'projects' role and takes a lead in developing new safeguarding systems and processes.

Professional Supervisor

The Professional Supervisor helps the DSA with reflective learning and professional development.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Encouraging the DSA to reflect and learn from recent cases and experiences.
- Suggesting relevant professional development.
- Escalating any issue of significant concern, using the same sequence as defined for 'Whistleblowing' (see below).

Diocesan Safeguarding Assistants

Accountable to the DSA, Diocesan Safeguarding Assistants help with safeguarding training, parish support and case work.

The specific responsibilities of each assistant are determined by the DSA.

Whistleblowing

If any individual feels that they have been incorrectly instructed by anyone to keep information from those who should know it, they should escalate the situation as follows:

- Inform the Diocesan Secretary;
- If that action is ineffective, inform the Diocesan Bishop;
- If that action is ineffective, inform the Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Group;
- If that action is ineffective, inform the National Safeguarding Advisor;
- If that action is ineffective, inform the lead Bishop for safeguarding.

Appendix A - Terms of Reference of the DSSG

Members

The members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Group (DSSG) are expected to be independent of influence by or on the safeguarding operation within the Diocese and will comprise:

- **A Chair** – nominated by the Bishop of Coventry and appointed by Bishop's Council;
- **Up to seven other members** – appointed by the Bishop's Council following consultation with the Chair;
- Up to two members co-opted by the group to provide on a time limited basis specialist support.

All members of the group are appointed for fixed terms of three years and will be eligible for re-appointment.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor will be in attendance at meetings of the group.

Meetings

The group meets at least three times a year.

The Group is accountable to the Bishop's Council. The Chair of the DSSG meets with the Diocesan Bishop at least once a year and with the Diocesan Secretary at least twice a year.

The meetings of the group are minuted with copies being circulated to members of the group, the Bishop of Coventry, the Archdeacon Pastor, the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

Quorum

The quorum is three appointed members.

Confidentiality

All full and co-opted members of the Group are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Responsibilities

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Appendix B - Terms of Reference of the DOST

Members

The members of the Diocesan Operational Safeguarding Team (DOST) are:

- The Archdeacon Pastor;
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor;
- The Diocesan Secretary.

Scheduled Meetings

DOST meetings are scheduled to take place monthly, and are divided into three parts:

- **Part 1** – The DSA and Archdeacon Pastor discuss the *Safeguarding Cases Report*. A document entitled *RAG Rating for Safeguarding Cases* explains how these cases are prioritised, with:
 - Red cases reviewed every month;
 - Amber cases reviewed three times a year (for the January, May and September monthly reports);
 - Green cases reviewed annually (for the March monthly report).
- **Part 2** – The Diocesan Secretary joins the meeting:
 - To receive an executive summary of all red cases;
 - To approve the closure of any red or amber cases.
- **Part 3** – Managing the implementation of safeguarding developments.

The meeting then approves the *DOST Monthly Report* which has been drafted by the DSA prior to the meeting.

Non-scheduled meetings

Both the Diocesan Secretary and the Archdeacon Pastor have full-time PA support and smart phones which give them access to e-mails when away from the office. Both PAs have been asked to ensure that the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor can contact either of them at very short notice with the PAs interrupting other meetings if necessary.

DOST Monthly Report

Following each meeting, the *DOST Monthly Report* is sent to BCST and the DSSG.

Members of the DSSG also receive a copy of the *Safeguarding Cases Report* for cases which are priority 'red'.

Responsibilities

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Appendix C - Terms of Reference of Core Groups

Accountable to the DOST, Safeguarding Core Groups manage serious safeguarding situations involving church officers. A separate group is established for each case.

Members

The members of a Core Group usually comprise:

- The Diocesan Secretary (Chair);
- The Archdeacon Pastor (Vice Chair);
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor;
- The Director of Communications;
- The Incumbent or Priest-in-Charge;
- The Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The Group may also co-opt other members who bring relevant knowledge or experience.

Meetings

A Core Group aims to meet within two days of a referral about a serious safeguarding situation. Core Group members may need to cancel existing commitments in order to attend the meeting.

Subsequent Core Group meetings may be required after any significant developments. These are called at the discretion of the DSA.

It sometimes happens that, following a meeting, a Core Group member changes their mind about an agreed action. In such an event:

1. The member shares their concern with the DSA.
2. If the DSA agrees that the action needs to be reviewed, they share the concern with the other members of the Core Group.
3. A review meeting is convened to consider this single issue. All Core Group members are welcome to attend this meeting, but it is acceptable for them to submit their views via email. A quorum of three members is required for the review meeting.
4. The outcome of the review meeting is shared with all members of the Core Group.

Responsibilities

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