



# Safeguarding Guideline (Short Form)

## Engaging with Children

The Catholic Archdiocese of Perth is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all, especially its children and adults at risk. This document is a summary of guidance and best practice guidance for those engaging with children in Church Community Activities.



Practices when engaging with children (under 18 years old) include, but are not limited to:

### **Conduct**

- Comply with the Archdiocese Code of Conduct
- Always consider what is in the best interest of the child
- Maintain professional boundaries and ethical conduct
- Avoid over-familiarity or actions that may be perceived as grooming
- Be mindful of power imbalance when engaging with children
- Use appropriate language (no swearing or offensive language)
- Never provide or permit alcohol (excluding sacramental wine administered during Mass), tobacco or other drugs to a child
- Do not engage with children outside of the children's event or activity unless in the presence of their parent or carer
- If a child altar server requires assistance to robe or de-robe, they are to seek assistance from their parent or carer
- Respond to and report all concerns, suspicions, and allegations of abuse
- Display in areas where children's activities or events are held a child-friendly children's code of behaviour

### **Supervision**

- There should be no situations where adults engaging in children's activities are alone with a child. Use a 2:1 ratio (2 adults to 1 child or 2 children to 1 adult)
- For group activities or events, it is recommended that two supervisors are present. Where this is not possible, invite a parent/carer of a child in the activity to stay
- Do not leave a child unattended while in your care
- If a child needs to leave the event or activity early ensure a parent or carer collects them
- If a child needs to use the bathroom and it is not within the proximity of the event or activity, ensure they are escorted by an adult or a 'buddy' system is used
- Endeavour to be in a space within clear view (clear glass) or within earshot of others or leave the door of the room open with a clear line of sight of another adult when engaging with children
- The sacrament of reconciliation with a child should be conducted in an open or visible space where possible or within clear line of sight of another adult





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### **Communication and Records**

- Obtain parent/carer consent to engage with children in church activities when the parent or carer is not present (see Annexure 1 – [Parent/Carer Consent Form](#)).
- Keep an attendance record or Sign In/Sign Out record of activities when engaging with children
- Seek feedback from children on safeguarding practices
- Do not contact (in person, online or via online social networks) a child outside of the set event or activity unless in the presence of another supervisor in a group setting or in the presence of the parent/carer
- Keep accurate records of communication as part of church records
- Do not take or share images of children without parent/carer consent
- Report all concerns, suspicions, and allegations of abuse ensuring legislative compliance such as Mandatory Reporting if applicable

### **Transportation**

- No transporting a child alone who is engaged in church activities
- If transporting a child in an emergency situation is the only option:
  - Obtain parent/carer consent
  - Use a 2:1 ratio
  - Record the trip start and finish time
  - take the most direct route
  - Seat the child/ren in the rear of the vehicle

### **Trips Away**

- Obtain parent/carer consent
- Conduct a full Risk Assessment
- Designate a safeguarding officer
- Ensure all screening protocols and legislative requirements are followed – all overnight stay church events involving children, requires all adults attending to hold a valid WA WWCC.

### **Information & Advice**

For additional information please seek guidance from:

**Safeguarding Program Office**  
safeguarding@perthcatholic.org.au  
**or your supervisor**

