



Catholic Archdiocese
of Perth

POLICY



POLICY: Safeguarding

Approved: 14-11-2022

Effective: 14-11-2022

Policy Category: Governance

Sub-category: Safety of Children and Adults at Risk

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13



Our policies communicate our Catholic Social Teachings and Values and uphold our commitment to good governance and stewardship

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Name of Policy:	Safeguarding
Description:	This document sets out the commitments of the Archdiocese to the safety of children, young people and adults at risk, and provides the governing framework for standards and accountability
Policy applies to/scope:	All members of the Church Community
Policy Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy, or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of Existing Policy
Policy Category:	Governance
Policy Sub-category:	Safety of Children and Adults at Risk
Approval Authority:	Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth
Governing Authority:	Executive Team
Responsible Officer:	Safeguarding Director
Approval Date:	14-11-2022
Date of Policy review¹:	01-12-2025

Assistance:	Questions related to the <i>Policy: Safeguarding</i> can be directed to the Safeguarding Director by email to: director.safeguarding@perthcatholic.org.au .
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¹ Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the review date.



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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy is to support the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth (**Archdiocese**) in meeting its commitment to the safety of children, young people, and adults at risk whilst participating in activities, or services provided by the Archdiocese.
- 1.2 To fulfil this responsibility the Archdiocese draws on the principle that all children, young people, and adults have an absolute right to physical, spiritual, and psychological safety at all times.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
 - a) Clergy, Religious Brothers and Sisters, Seminarians, Employees, Church Workers, Volunteers; and
 - b) Consultants, Contractors, and Third-Party Users of Church Property, where appropriate as determined by an Executive Director, Director, Senior Manager or Parish Priest.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The Archdiocese is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all, especially, its children, young people, and adults at risk.
- 3.2 By providing a safe physical and online environment, actively identifying, and managing risk, and complying with this policy and legal obligations, we serve Jesus and uphold human dignity as the foundation of our faith.
- 3.3 Our principles are underpinned by the knowledge that safeguarding is a shared responsibility that prioritises the protection and best interests of children, young people, and adults at risk. As such, this policy puts first the needs and welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk in ensuring they are protected from harm whilst engaging in activities and services for the Archdiocese.
- 3.4 The Archdiocese is committed to the development and maintenance of robust policy and practice which reflect zero tolerance for child abuse



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and abuse of adults at risk.

- 3.5 Definitions of **Child**, **Child Abuse** and **Adults at Risk** are provided in clause 8. These should be read alongside extended definitions provided in the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Edition 2.

4. VALUES

- 4.1 Our values are central to the core of who we are and what we do. We strive to embed our values through our decisions and actions:
- **Courage** – *to be strong, act responsively and persist through adversity.*
 - **Compassion** – *to work with understanding, empathy, respect, and care.*
 - **Honesty** – *to reflect truthfulness, transparency, integrity, fairness, and constancy.*

5. GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

5.1 Commitment Statement

The Archdiocese is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all, especially, its children, young people, and adults at risk. The care, safety and welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk is a collective responsibility, embedded in robust policy and practice which reflect its zero tolerance for abuse.

5.2 Standards

This policy is guided by the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and provides a framework on which the Archdiocese has built a culture of safety. The standards promote accountability and transparency and are the standards with which the Archdiocese complies.

5.3 Safeguarding Procedures & Guidelines

The Archdiocese Safeguarding procedures and guidelines provide the protocols and procedures that shall be followed when working with children, young people, and adults at risk.



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5.4 Screening & Training

- a) All Clergy and Religious Brothers and Sisters, Seminarians, Employees, Church Workers, and Volunteers will be screened as a protective practice and undertake Safeguarding training.
- b) The screening will (where applicable - refer to the *Screening Matrix*) include compliance with the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*, National Police Criminal History Checks, Reference checks and Personal Declarations.

5.5 Reporting

This policy commits to an open and accessible reporting system where disclosures and concerns of abuse are taken seriously, and dealt with promptly, confidentially and with integrity.

6. BREACH OF POLICY

- 6.1 The Archdiocese shall take all breaches of this policy seriously and shall ensure they are dealt with promptly, sensitively, and confidentially. Disciplinary action may be taken against a person who is found to be in breach of this policy, in accordance with legislation, Canonical Law, and Archdiocesan policies. Matters may be escalated to the Executive.

7. REFERENCES & RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*
- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Edition 2), ACSL 2022*
- *Policy: Screening and Monitoring*
- *Screening Matrix*
- *Safeguarding Guidelines*
 - *Continuous Improvement Guideline*
 - *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Guideline*
 - *Engaging with Adults at Risk Guideline*
 - *Engaging with Children Guideline*
 - *Engaging with Families and Communities Guideline*
 - *Recruiting, Screening and Training Guideline*
 - *Responding, Reporting and Recording Abuse Guideline*
 - *Safe Online Environments Guideline*
 - *Safe Physical Environments Guideline*
 - *Safeguarding Induction and Training Guideline*



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- *Safeguarding Risk Assessment Guideline*
- *Policy: Grievance Resolution*
- *Policy: Records Retention & Disposal*
- *Safeguarding Commitment Statement September 2023*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Safeguarding Officer Position Description*

8. DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For the purposes of this Policy and any related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Adults at Risk means any person aged 18 years and over who is at increased risk of experiencing abuse, such as people:

- who are elderly
- with a disability
- who suffer from mental illness
- who have diminished capacity
- who have cognitive impairment
- who have suffered previous abuse
- who are experiencing transient risks
- who in receiving a ministry or service are subject to a power imbalance
- who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- who are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- who are of diverse sexuality
- who have any other impairment or adversity that makes it difficult for them to protect themselves from abuse.

(Refer to extended definition within the NCSS – Edition 2)

Agency means one that is formally mandated by the Archbishop to undertake a work of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Perth.

Archbishop means the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth or his Delegate.

Archdiocese means the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth.

Archdiocesan Organisation means a canonical organisation established by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth including but not limited to St Charles' Seminary, Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary, Archives Office, Archdiocesan Tribunal Office.

Child means a person who is under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who is apparently under 18 years of age.

Child Abuse - there are different legal definitions of child abuse in Australia. This definition of Child Abuse is sourced from the Australian Institute of Family



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Studies²: Child abuse refers to any behaviour or treatment by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child. Such behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e., neglect) and commission. Child abuse and neglect is commonly divided into five subtypes:

- physical abuse
- emotional/psychological abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse
- exposure to family violence

Church Community means all members of the Church community including but not limited to Clergy, Religious Brothers and Sisters, Seminarians, Employees, Church Workers, Volunteers and Parishioners.

Church Worker means and includes Paid and Unpaid Church Workers.

Church Property means property owned or controlled by the Archdiocese, including Parishes and Agencies.

Clergy means all those ordained - Archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons - Who administer the rites of the church and includes appointed and *Visiting Clergy*.

Consultant means a person who provides advice and other purposeful activities in an area of specialisation for the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth.

Contractor means and includes a third-party contractor and/or subcontractor who provides goods and/or services for the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth.

Employee is a person employed by the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth whether permanent, continuing, fixed term, maximum term, seconded, full time, part time or casual.

May means discretionary.

Organisation refers to an Archdiocesan Organisation.

Paid Church Worker means and includes paid parish staff and/or any other person who serves the Church in a paid capacity.

Parish means a parish of the Archdiocese.

Priest means a priest incardinated in the Archdiocese.

RCAP means the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth.

Religious Brothers and Sisters means members of a religious congregation or order who have been appointed by the Archbishop to an official role within the Archdiocese and includes appointed and *Visiting Religious*.

² <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reportingabuse-and-neglect>



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Seminarian means a student who is a member of, or educated in, a seminary and who is preparing for the priesthood. For the purposes of this Policy, Seminarian also includes a Seminarian on placement within the Archdiocese.

Shall means mandatory.

Third Party User means a person or entity with whom the Archdiocese has given permission to use Church Property, by contractual agreement or otherwise.

Unpaid Church Worker is an individual who willingly gives time to the church and parish life but receives no financial reward or remuneration. Unpaid Church Workers may also be referred to as Volunteers.

Visiting Clergy means Clergy from another diocese including from intrastate, interstate or overseas.

Visiting Religious members of a religious congregation or order who are visiting the Archdiocese from intrastate, interstate or overseas.

Visitor means any person visiting the Diocese from another diocese, including from intrastate, interstate or overseas and is not limited to Visiting Clergy or Visiting Religious.

Volunteer is an individual who willingly gives time to the mission of the church, its services and Agencies, but receives no financial reward or remuneration. Volunteers may also be referred to as Unpaid Church Workers. For the purposes of this Policy, Volunteer includes an individual on Work Experience Placement.

Work Experience Placement is where an individual, as part of a vocational requirement for a registered educational institution, agrees to perform unpaid work experience within an office, organisation, agency, or parish of the Archdiocese.

9. REVISIONS MADE TO THIS POLICY

Date of Approval	Editorial ³ , Minor or Major Amendment	Approved By	Description
14-11-2022	N/A	Executive Team	New Policy
20-09-2023	Major	+AB	Amendments to incorporate revisions to the NCSS (Edition 2)

³ Refer to the Policy Framework for definitions of Editorial, Minor and Major amendments.



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18-11-2024	Editorial	Responsible Officer with approval of senior staff	Amendment to clause 5.4(b) to refer to 'Screening Matrix'
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This policy is scheduled for review every three (3) years or more frequently, if appropriate.