

# Parish of Port Melbourne and Middle Park (St Joseph's and Our Lady of Mount Carmel)

## Safeguarding – An Overview for Volunteers



The Parish of Port Melbourne and Middle Park is committed to the safety, wellbeing and human dignity of children, young people and adults.



## Acknowledgement of country

We acknowledge the Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan, the traditional owners and custodians of this land. We pay our respects to them. May we walk gently here.

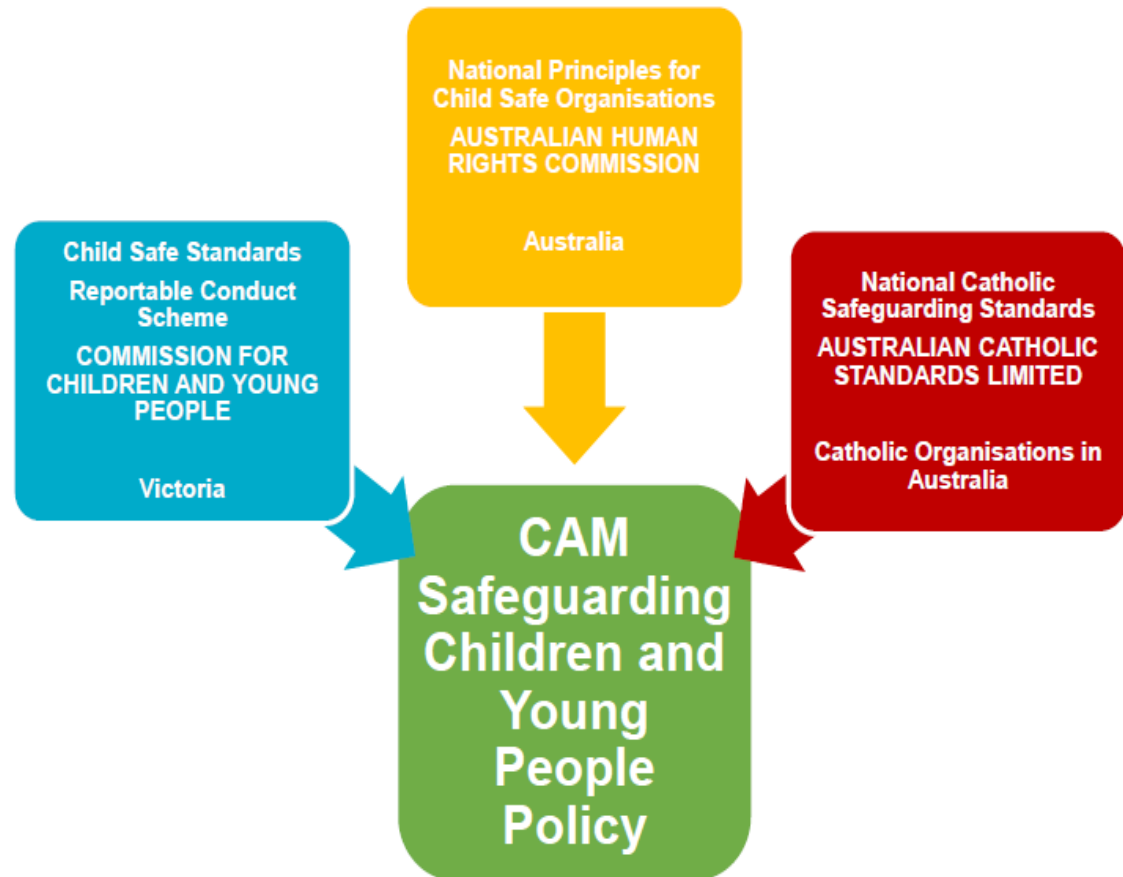
## Why Is Safeguarding Important?

- The Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Victorian Betrayal of Trust Inquiry focussed on exploring organisational safety for children and young people.
- These inquiries found that all types of organisations have been impacted by abuse e.g. sporting, youth, music/drama/dance, religious and non-religious, out of home care, early childhood, disability.
- It highlighted the need to implement a set of standards for all organizations, in order to ensure children and young people's safety.



## What has the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne (CAM) done to address this issue?

- Formulated the CAM Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy which incorporates the national, state and Catholic child safe standards which need all Catholic parishes to comply with to ensure the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is a legal requirement in all organisations that have children and young people.



- To build a culture of safety all clergy, employees and volunteers have an obligation to comply with this policy.
- Compliance requirements for volunteers are:
  - Reading and signing the Code of Conduct
  - Have a current Working with Children Check
  - Undertake training required
  - Have a Police Check for a few ministries
- A Safeguarding Committee is appointed to help implement this policy in each parish.

## Statement of Commitment and Building a Culture of Safety in the parish

- Our parish has a Statement of Commitment which communicates our mission to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. We want to create a culture of safety so the well being of all in the parish is protected.
- A culture of safety ensures that all in the community including children, young and vulnerable people can actively and fully participate in parish life and realise their full potential.
- Our aim is to build a culture of safety for all in the community with the support and help of all our clergy, employees, volunteers, parishioners, parents and care givers.
- Effective child safety requires parental involvement and seeks to engage parents as critical partners in promoting child safety.
- Children and Young people can be empowered by providing them with opportunities to be involved in decision making about programs, activities and events that affect them.



# Safeguarding Responsibilities

- The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a fundamental responsibility of the Church. This commitment is drawn from, and central to, the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the dignity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel. Caring for and protecting others is at the heart of our values and mission.
- Through safeguarding, parishes aim to prevent abuse occurring and reduce opportunities for it to occur.
- Within the parish, safeguarding is **EVERYBODY'S** responsibility.



# Safeguarding Responsibilities

## Parish

## CAM

### Parish Priest and Parish Leadership

- To ensure compliance with the Framework
- Supports the work of the Safeguarding Committee
- Works to create and foster a culture of safeguarding in the parish

### Safeguarding Committee

- Actively embed child safety within the parish
- Assisting the parish priest, with implementation of the requirements of Safeguarding Framework
- Work towards compliance with the requirements of the safeguarding framework (self-assessment tool)
- Serves as an advisory body

### Other Clergy (Assistant Priests, Deacons etc.), Employees and Volunteers

- Moral, legal and ethical responsibility to care for, and promote the well-being of children and young people
- Compliance with parish Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

### Safeguarding Unit

- Development of policy and resources
- Support and advice
- Refer complaints received to Pathways Victoria for investigation

# Our Parish Safeguarding Contacts

- Safeguarding Leader – Fr. Paul Cahill, Parish Priest
- Safeguarding Officer – Frances Correa
- Safeguarding Committee Members  
Elaine Chaffer, Aoife Ling, Toni Stuart, Kelly McEnhill, Lillian Giuliani  
Ken Becker, Tris Tanumihardjo and Fr Paul Cahill.

# Code of Conduct and Declaration

- Outlines the expected behaviours of all clergy, staff and volunteers in the Archdiocese
- Covers:
  - Keeping children and young people safe from abuse and harm
  - Creating safe physical and online environments
  - Supporting cultural safety and inclusion
  - Promoting respectful relationships
  - Taking action to safeguard children and young people
  - The ongoing commitment of all clergy, staff and volunteers to the protection, wellbeing and safe participation of children and young people
- The code of conduct along with role descriptions help to set clear boundaries for work within groups and ministries

The Archdiocesan Child Safety Code of Conduct helps to create a positive, respectful and safe environment by setting expectations in relation to the appropriate behaviour of clergy, employees and volunteers in their interactions with children and young people engaged in programs, activities and events.

This Child Safety Code of Conduct reflects our acceptance that each child or young person 'has a unique worth created in the image and likeness of God' and deserves protection (Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors 2016).

When participating in parish, agency or entity activities, clergy, employees and volunteers are required to act in a manner that safeguards children and young people from abuse and harm at all times.

Clergy, employees and volunteers in ministry or working with children and young people within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne have a responsibility to understand the important role they play individually and collectively to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people.

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION**

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Declaration is an acknowledgement that clergy, employees and volunteers have read and understood the behaviours and conduct expected of them and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Clergy, employees and volunteers are required to sign the **Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Declaration** upon their commencement.

Volunteers are required to re-sign the Declaration every three years.

Clergy and employees are required to re-sign the Declaration annually.

Child safety training (see the 'Safeguarding Training' section of this policy) is required annually for all clergy, volunteers and employees.

**EXPECTATIONS**

**Never alone rule**

Clergy, employees and volunteers should avoid one-to-one, unsupervised situations with children and young people. Activities and/or discussions with children and young people are to be conducted in view of others.

**Supervision**

Where children and young people attend without their parents or guardians, clergy, employees and volunteers who are conducting programs, activities and events for children and young people are responsible for actively supervising children and young people.

**Sexual abuse/misconduct**

Any form of sexual activity with or in the presence of children and young people participating in Archdiocesan parish, agency or entity activities is prohibited. Sexual abuse occurs when a person uses power, force or authority to involve or expose a child or young person to any form of sexual activity.

Sexual behaviour encompasses the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:





# Impact of Abuse

The impacts of abuse can change the entire direction of someone's life. Child abuse and trauma can have far reaching and ongoing impacts that extend into adulthood. Some of those impacts include:



**Trauma**



**Mental health  
issues including  
depression and  
anxiety**



**Learning  
difficulties**



**Drug  
and alcohol  
misuse**



**Post  
traumatic  
stress  
disorder**



**Aggression  
and violent  
behaviour**



**Cognitive  
and  
behavioural  
issues**

# Responding and Reporting to Abuse

- All child safety concerns, allegations, complaints must be taken seriously and reported.
- As per the Safeguarding Policy all clergy, employees and volunteers have a **legal responsibility** to report, if they have a **reasonable belief** that a child has experienced abuse, is experiencing abuse or at risk of harm.
- Legal Action cannot be taken against a person if a report is made in good faith and in compliance with the expectations set out in the Safeguarding policy.

## Types of Abuse

Emotional/ Psychological Abuse	• e.g. Bullying, shaming, threatening language, intentional ignoring and isolating
Physical Abuse	• e.g. Physical punishment, pushing, hitting, shoving, slapping etc.
Grooming	• e.g. Predatory behaviour with the intention of engaging a child in sexual activity. May occur in person, or virtually via mobile phones or social media
Sexual Abuse	• e.g. When a person uses their power or authority to involve or expose a child to sexual activity. Can occur in person or online, and be perpetrated in a family, organisational or community context
Neglect	• e.g. Failure to provide a child or young person with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, education, shelter or supervision
Spiritual/Cultural Abuse	• e.g. Racial or cultural discrimination, the use of spiritual or religious beliefs and practices to control and dominate a person
Bullying	• e.g. A person or a group of people, repeatedly use words or actions to harass someone in person or online (cyber bullying)
Family Violence	• e.g. A pattern of abusive behaviour which may involve physical, sexual, emotional abuse and/or neglect within a family context.

# Responding and Reporting Abuse

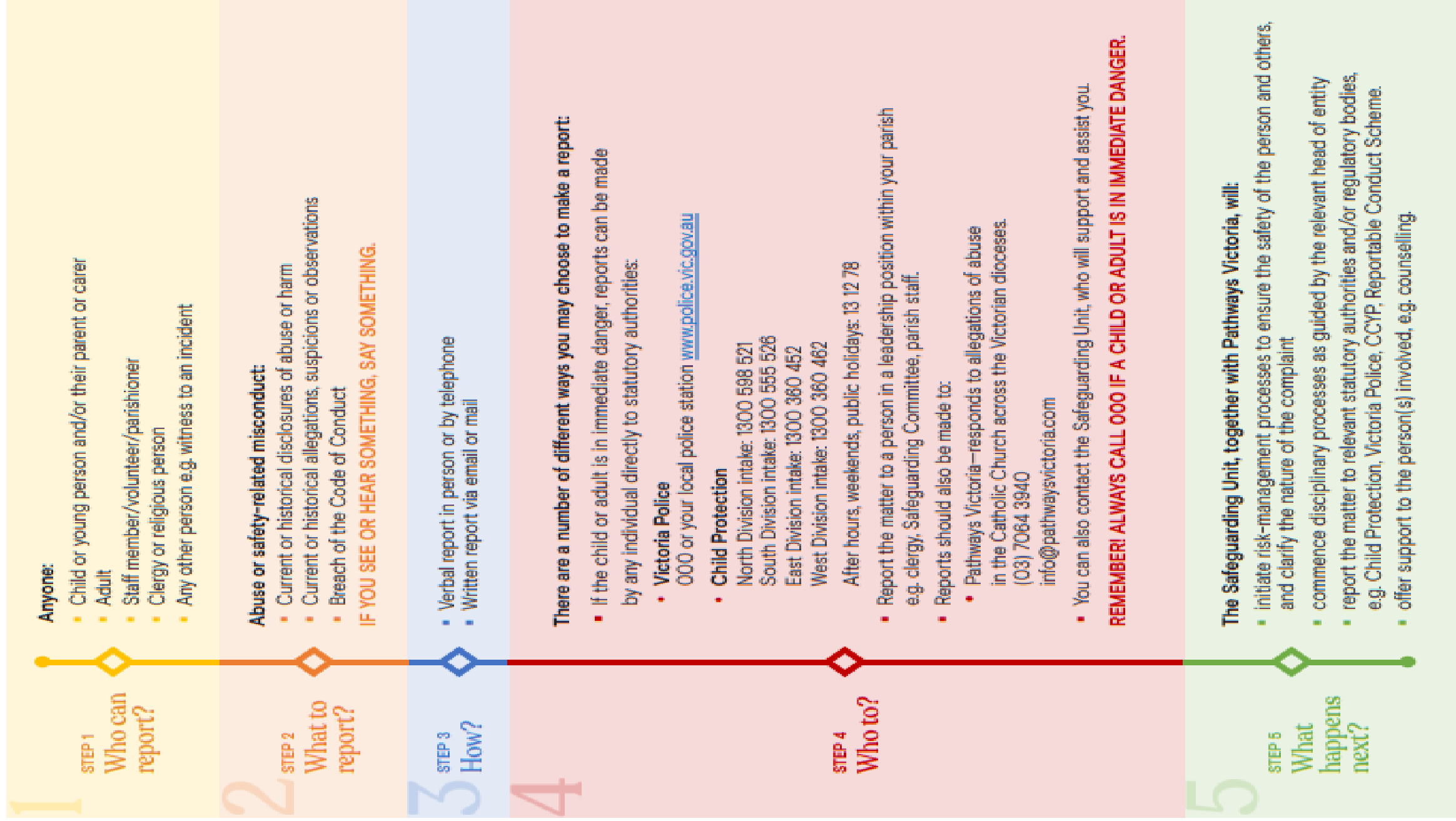
## Reporting Process

- The flowchart outlines the process that must be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or misconduct.
- It is important to note that the Safeguarding unit at CAM must be notified of any reports of abuse and they will support the parish through the process.
- Pathways Victoria will handle all the investigations of complaints.

The flowchart detailing the reporting process can be found at our parish website at <https://sj-mc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Reporting-abuse.pdf>

Videos defining abuse, reporting abuse and responding to a disclosure are available at <https://sj-mc.org.au/reporting-abuse-2/>

# REPORTING ABUSE OR SAFETY-RELATED MISCONDUCT



## How to report abuse?

There are a number of different ways you may choose to make a report:

- If the child or adult is in immediate danger, reports can be made by any individual directly to statutory authorities:
  - **Victoria Police**  
000 or your local police station [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au)
  - **Child Protection**  
North Division intake: 1300 598 521  
South Division intake: 1300 555 526  
East Division intake: 1300 360 452  
West Division intake: 1300 360 462  
After hours, weekends, public holidays: 13 12 78
- Report the matter to a person in a leadership position within your parish e.g. clergy, Safeguarding Committee, parish staff.
- Reports should also be made to:
  - Pathways Victoria—responds to allegations of abuse in the Catholic Church across the Victorian dioceses.  
(03) 7064 3940  
[info@pathwaysvictoria.com](mailto:info@pathwaysvictoria.com)
- You can also contact the Safeguarding Unit, who will support and assist you.

**REMEMBER! ALWAYS CALL 000 IF A CHILD OR ADULT IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER.**

## Safeguarding Resources

There are many resources and information in relation to safeguarding.

- These are available on the **parish website**, see link <https://sj-mc.org.au/> Safeguarding Tab
- **Safeguarding Boards** at the back of St Joseph's church and OLMC's Church
- **Safeguarding Stands** at the back of St Joseph's church and OLMC's Church

## Safeguarding Contact

There are various ways you can contact the safeguarding committee if you have any concerns, feedback or suggestions.

- **Talk** to any of the members of our safeguarding committee.
- There is also an **Online form** you can find at the link on our parish website <https://sj-mc.org.au/contact-safeguarding-committee/>
- You can also **email** the safeguarding email: [sj-mc.safeguarding@cam.org.au](mailto:sj-mc.safeguarding@cam.org.au)
- **Phone** 96819600 (through the parish office)

*The Safeguarding Committee thank you for your support and help.*