

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.



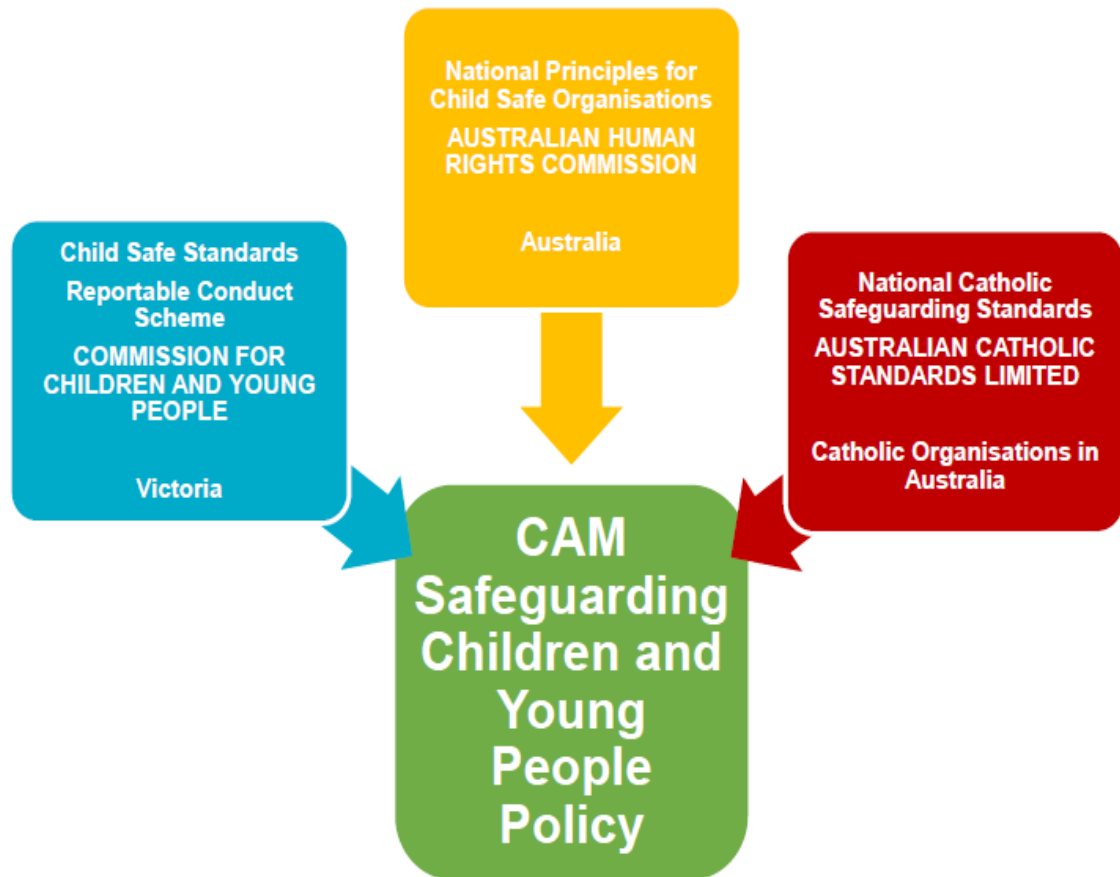
Why Is Safeguarding Important?

- 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 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 Priest and Parish Leadership | Safeguarding Committee | Other Clergy (Assistant Priests, Deacons etc.), Employees and Volunteers | Professional Standards Unit (CAM) |
|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of policy and resources• Support and advice• Coordinate responses to allegations of abuse or misconduct |



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 volunteer 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:



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE



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 to Abuse

Reporting Requirements

- This 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 PSU must be notified of any reports and will support your parish through the process

REPORTING ABUSE OR SAFETY-RELATED MISCONDUCT

STEP
01

WHO CAN REPORT?

Anyone:

- Child or young person and/or their parent or carer
- Adult
- Staff member or volunteer
- Clergy or religious person
- Any other person e.g. witness to an incident

STEP
02

WHAT TO REPORT?

Abuse or safety-related misconduct:

- Current or historical disclosures of abuse or harm
- Current or historical allegations, suspicions or observations
- Breach of the Code of Conduct

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING

STEP
03

HOW?

- Verbal report in person or by telephone
- Written report via email or mail

STEP
04

WHO TO?

If you feel comfortable and it is appropriate to do so, report the matter to a person in a leadership position within your parish, as they can assist and support you to make a report.

All reports are to be directed to:

Professional Standards Unit

Phone: 9926 5621 Email: psu@cam.org.au

Or you can contact Victoria Police directly. Remember! Always call 000 if a child or adult is in immediate danger.

STEP
05

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Professional Standards Unit will:

- Offer support to the person(s) involved
- Initiate risk management processes to ensure the safety of the person and others, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary processes
- Report the matter to relevant authorities in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care as soon as possible e.g. Child Protection, Victoria Police
- Wait for clearance from authorities before starting an investigation
- Report the matter to regulatory bodies (if applicable) e.g. Commission for Children for Children and Young People



Who Do We Report To?

Child/ Young Person
is in imminent danger

- Contact Police on 000

Concerns about
Child/ Young Person's
Wellbeing

- Child Protection
- Child FIRST

Abuse and other
child-related
misconduct within an
organisational context

- Victoria Police Sexual Offences & Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCIT)
- Professional Standards Unit to report to the CCYP Reportable Conduct Scheme

Do you want more information, have questions, concerns or want to provide feedback on safeguarding?

Please contact the safeguarding committee:

Email: sj-mc.safeguarding@cam.org.au

Phone: (03) 96819600 (through the parish office)

Website: <https://sj-mc.org.au> under the Safeguarding tab.

The Safeguarding Committee thanks you for your support and help.