

Youth Safety Manual



Keeping our Young People Safe

Know the basics

Minimise risks

Understand
safe practises

Maximise the potential
of your leadership





A Message from Bishop Anthony Fisher OP, Bishop of Parramatta

After his Resurrection Jesus charged St Peter with feeding the sheep and tending the lambs (*Jn 21: 15-19*). The “lambs” are, of course, the young members of the flock. The Catholic Diocese of Parramatta recognises that our ministry to the youth of the Diocese is a wonderful privilege and a great opportunity to strengthen their faith and show them the love of God.

We also recognise that with this privilege there is great responsibility to ensure that the safety and well-being of those young people who participate in ministry are given our highest priority and in no way compromised.

These are challenging times for our Church. From time to time I receive information about situations where those people who have been charged with the responsibility of exercising ministry in our Diocese have let young people down or betrayed their trust. I am always greatly troubled by these reports and I seek your commitment to work with me to ensure that those engaged in Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Parramatta delivers the care and diligence that is necessary to minimise risk and bring only joy and happiness to young people’s lives. Please always remember that the safety and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable people in our care is paramount.

We believe that a commitment to follow the example of Jesus in respecting the dignity of each person will assist us to work together for the protection and flourishing of all within our Church and ministries.

We are all challenged by the information emerging from the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse that is currently under way. I am confident that with the help of this Royal Commission and other independent inquiries we can learn new ways of ensuring that every child and young person is safe when they participate in youth ministry. In your role as ministry leader, you are required to keep learning and reviewing your practices in ministry so that we can ensure the safety of our youth. I ask you to commit to this.

This **Youth Safety Manual** is intended to offer advice and practical strategies on how to manage youth group situations. It is my hope that this manual enhances your capacity to build hope in our young people and bring to them encounter the love of God.

I encourage all people involved in youth ministry to become familiar with the guidelines and policies contained in this Youth Safety Manual. I sincerely thank you for your work in this role and trust that you will experience great personal spiritual growth as you provide others with opportunities to explore their faith.

Yours sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Anthony Fisher OP". The signature is written in a cursive style.

(Most Rev.) Anthony Fisher OP
Bishop of Parramatta

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1 Introduction

Congratulations on taking up the exciting and enriching challenge of youth leadership in the Diocese of Parramatta.

The Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards is pleased to present the third edition of this *Youth Safety Manual*. The manual supports and guides many aspects of youth ministry. It provides practical advice and direction on matters that relate to the role of youth leader and the activities of youth groups in the Diocese.

The manual should be identified as one of numerous sources of the support available to youth leaders and those involved in youth ministry. The Diocesan Youth Office and the Diocesan website are important places to visit when you are in doubt or have any concerns about issues related to the safety of children and young people in your care.

While this manual is specifically designed to assist those involved in youth ministry, many of the resources contained in this document may be applied to other forms of ministry.

I would like to emphasise the fact that many young adults participate in youth groups in the Diocese and therefore this document is concerned about the safety and well-being of all participants and leaders of Youth Groups whether they are children, young people or young adults.

There will be training opportunities from time to time to ensure that you are able to learn more about the management of some complex situations that can arise in the youth group context. I encourage you to engage in these opportunities so that we can continue to explore new ways to support the growth of this important ministry in the Diocese.

The manual is a useful reference point when facing new challenges in your ministry. If after referring to the manual, you remain concerned or troubled about how to manage a situation related to your engagement in ministry, please contact the Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards so that we can work with you to resolve your concerns.

I hope that you find the manual useful. Best wishes for you and your ministry.

Paul Davis

**Director, Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards
Diocese of Parramatta**

2 Getting Started

2.1 Safety Checklist for Youth Groups

When getting started in planning to establish or strengthen the capacity of the Youth Group, please take the time to work through the following checklist:

Getting Started	Yes	In Progress	No	Guide to resources and information available
Have you conducted a risk assessment?				Finding your Risks
Do staff, volunteers and students understand what constitutes child abuse and neglect?				http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docs_menu_preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect.html
Are staff, volunteers and students carefully selected and always screened?				Recruitment and Selection Checklist Youth Safety Manual
Do you know your obligations under the Working with Children Check?				http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/New-Working-with-Children-Check
Are there opportunities for kids to contribute to your program development?				http://kids.nsw.gov.au/Publications-resources/Participation-resources

Getting Started	Yes	In Progress	No	Guide to resources and information available
Do staff, volunteers and students know how to run their activities in an inclusive way that will add to the self-esteem of all participants?				Youth Safety Manual
Have you identified barriers that prevent staff, volunteers and students from raising concerns?				Youth Safety Manual (Managing Complaints)
Moving Forward	Yes	In Progress	No	Guide to resources and information available
Do you have a child safety policy?				Youth Safety Manual http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation
Do you have a code of conduct?				Youth Safety Manual http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation
Do you have clear procedures for raising concerns and complaints?				Youth Safety Manual http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation

Moving Forward	Yes	In Progress	No	Guide to resources and information available
Have issues concerning confidentiality been clarified?				Youth Safety Manual http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation
In NSW, do you know when to report an incident to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services?				Youth Safety Manual http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docs_menu/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect.html
Do you have a staff, volunteers and students induction process on your child safe commitment and procedures?				Youth Safety Manual http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation
Keeping it Going	Yes	In Progress	No	Guide to resources and information available
Do staff, volunteers and students know what to do if faced with an allegation or disclosure of child abuse?				Youth Safety Manual – Ref 6.1 http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docs_menu/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect.html
Do kids and/or parents involved in your program know how to report or raise a concern?				Youth Safety Manual – Ref 6.1 http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docs_menu/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect.html

Keeping it Going	Yes	In Progress	No	Guide to resources and information available
Are kids able to provide feedback about their activities?				Youth Safety Manual – Ref 3.6 http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation
Does your organisation work to promote child safe and child friendly policies and practices?				http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation
Have you set a date for reviewing policy and procedures?				

2.2 Setting Up Safe Parish Youth Ministry: Important Tasks for Youth Leaders

1. Know your leadership team

- Be familiar with the duties associated with the role
- Apply for a Working with Children Check (if you are over 18 years of age) and provide the letter with your WWC number to the Parish Priest
- Understand, sign and submit a copy of the Code of Conduct to the Parish Priest
- Participate in training on standards of conduct required in the role of Youth Leader
- Encourage awareness of privacy issues (taking pictures, exchanging addresses, disclosing personal information, etc)
- Be aware of the policies and procedures on Child Protection in the Diocese
- Attend Training Days
- Arrange training sessions for new leaders

2. Be clear to be safe!

- Communicate regularly with your Parish Priest and the Parish Council about programs and activities planned for the youth group
- Seek and follow the advice of the Parish Priest and Parish Council, when needed
- Communicate details of youth group meetings and activities
- Be clear about what is the responsibility of Youth Leaders and what is the responsibility of the parents

3. Know your youth group

- Collect health information that is required in case of emergencies
- Make sure that travel arrangements to/from youth group are known and clear to parents
- Circulate and collect signed Participant Information Form sheets
- Build relationships between Youth Leaders, the Parish Priest, youth group members and their parents

4. Define clear expectations and roles in the youth group

- Develop rules and a code of conduct together with the youth members
- Expect a commitment to the Code of Conduct by having them sign it
- Inform the parents about the developed document

(Catholic Youth Parramatta (CYP) is always happy to assist)

3.1 Guide for Recruitment of Youth Leaders

At each stage, it is very important that the Parish Priest authorises your decision making.

- Step 1:** Determine the structure of the Youth Leadership Team and the resources (including people) required to make it work.
- Step 2:** Develop a position statement so that you are clear about what you expect of the Youth Leaders, what duties fit within their role and what functions belong to others
- Step 3:** Develop some selection criteria for the role – both essential criteria (i.e. they must have these attributes) and desirable criteria (i.e. it would be great if they had these credentials but you can manage without them)
- Step 4:** Seek expressions of interest from parishioners – on the understanding that the Parish Priest makes the appointments and that by expressing an interest a person is not automatically assigned to the role
- Step 5:** Prepare a process of enquiry and discernment for those interested in Youth Leadership based on the circulation of key information about the role
- Step 6:** Invite each individual to attend a meeting or interview to continue the process of selection. It is recommended that at least two experienced people participate in the selection process so that the decision to present a person to the Parish Priest with a recommendation for appointment does not rest with one person
- Step 7:** Conduct reference checks on the preferred applicant, sight originals and obtain copies of identification of the preferred applicant and obtain the preferred applicant's Working with Children Check number and date of birth
- Step 8:** Present and recommend your preferred applicant to the Parish Priest
- Step 9:** Manage the decision to not engage an applicant with sensitivity and gratitude. Offer feedback to the unsuccessful applicants
- Step 10:** Make arrangements for the Parish Priest to make a formal appointment for a finite period
- Step 11:** Implement inductions and welcome process

It is important to:

- Contact referees
- Verify that a preferred applicant is suitable to work with children
- Engage the right person for the role

You may wish to consider the following:

- the experience that they have had with youth
- relevant qualifications
- employment history
- whether they would require any specific support or guidance in assuming the role
- understanding about the structure within which the role is placed
- commitment to training and formation
- review period
- term of the appointment

3.2 Job Description

Template for Diocese of Parramatta

POSITION:

SALARY:

NOMINAL HOURS PER WEEK:

RESPONSIBLE TO:

REPORTS TO:

REPORTING POSITIONS:

KEY RELATIONSHIPS:

LOCATION:

AUTHORISED BY:

OVERVIEW OF ROLE

<Paragraph explaining role>

RESPONSIBILITIES

The <Role> is responsible for:

- <Insert list of main responsibilities>
- Other duties that are required from time to time by Manager (standard coverall clause)

SPECIFIC DUTIES

- <Insert specific outcomes or specific duties of position>

Personal Requirements/Attributes

- <Insert specific attributes or skills required for position>
- Support the teachings of the Church and the ethos of the Parish and Diocese (standard inclusion)
- (e.g. sound time-management skills and ability to prioritise)
- (e.g. excellent verbal and written, interpersonal and communication skills)
- (e.g. attention to detail, quality and accuracy)
- (e.g. ability to multi-task and work quickly and efficiently)

Qualifications, Experience & Knowledge Relevant to Position

- Tertiary qualification or relevant demonstrated experience in <insert relevant position>
- Demonstrated experience in <insert area of expertise>
- (e.g. Demonstrated sound written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills)
- (e.g. Demonstrated ability to work within a team and individually)
- (e.g. Demonstrated ability to negotiate and problem solve)
- (e.g. Demonstrated time management and organisational skills)
- Intermediate skills in Microsoft Office
- Current Drivers Licence

Performance Management Outcomes

- <Insert performance indicators>

Child protection legislation requires the preferred applicant to be subject to employment screening and a Working with Children Check before the position is formally offered.

3.3 Interview Questions When Engaging Volunteers

1. What is your understanding of the nature of the work that you are considering undertaking?
(provide a copy of the position outline)

2. Are there any aspects of this work that you do not understand or would like clarification about?

3. What other ministries have you been involved with in the Parish or in other Parishes in the Diocese?

4. What particular skills, experience or qualifications do you have that may be relevant to this role?

5. What sort of support and assistance do you think you would require in order to do the work?

6. Ongoing training is an important and mandatory aspect of this work.
Are you prepared to attend training sessions on matters relating to the ministry that you are considering?

7. Can you provide me with some details of your employment history (both as a volunteer or a paid worker) over the past 5-10 years?

8. Can you nominate two people who would be willing and able to speak to me about your suitability for this type of work and know you in the capacity of a volunteer or paid worker?

8. Whilst this work is voluntary and we very much appreciate your generosity, do you understand that by engaging you to carry out this ministry, it is expected that you will follow our reasonable directions and conduct yourself in accordance with our policies and code of conduct?

3.4 Questions for Referees

Checking the suitability of preferred applicants is an important step in the recruitment and selection process.

1. Describe the role
 - 1.1 What strengths does the applicant have that would make her/him suited to the role.
 - 1.2 What characteristics does the applicant have that would impede the capacity of the applicant to complete the role well.
2. To what capacity do you know the applicant?
3. What have you observed about the applicant when:
 - 3.1 Working as a team member
 - 3.2 Leading a team
 - 3.3 Following instruction
 - 3.4 Using imitative and common sense
 - 3.5 Managing conflict
 - 3.6 Supervising Children and young people
 - 3.7 Receiving feedback about her/his performance
4. What do you know about the applicant's experience in:
 - 4.1 The workforce
 - 4.2 In ministry
 - 4.3 Working with children
5. Are you aware of any complaints made about the applicant's conduct when engaged in Ministry or Employment?
6. How would you assess the applicants suitability for the role outlined?

3.5 Inducting Youth Leaders

Here are some ideas for you to consider and use when new people join your youth leadership group.

Welcoming new members to your team

- Make sure all workers are aware of the new team member's start date and the role they are to undertake
- Introduce the new member to the children, young people, parents and workers in your youth group
- Explain the Parish's policy and code of conduct to the new member and give them a copy
- Explain your procedures for when staff, volunteers, students or kids have a problem or concern. Explain that you are happy to receive complaints as they help you make the youth group more effective and efficient
- Explain the importance of behaviour of adults who are role models for kids in the youth group
- Make a time soon after their commencement to talk about their experiences and reaffirm their participation
- You may want to check for issues that may have arisen during their first few weeks in their new role

3.6 Managing Complaints

From time to time, parishioners may want to complain about a situation. All parishioners in the Ministry that you serve have the right to make a complaint. Children and Young People also have a right to make complaints as per the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

A complaint is defined as a “statement of unhappiness whereby expressing discontent or unhappiness about a situation”.

The Catholic Diocese of Parramatta is committed to ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a responsive, compassionate, and fair manner.

In your role as Youth Leaders you may have a complaint made to you. There are a number of factors that you should keep in mind:

- Reassure the person making the complaint that you will take this seriously.
- Thank them for the information as it will ensure that the Church can look at how to improve things and help others who may be in similar situations.
- Listen to the information and provide support.
- Let them know that you will be passing this information on for follow up
- Offer to support them or assist them to arrange support that is more suitable during any interviews that they may need to attend or afterwards.
- Record the information as soon as possible, noting as much detail as possible (who, what, why, where, how).
- Make sure this information is stored in a secure location.
- Advise your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Seek advice from the Office of Safeguarding and Professional Standards if required.

You have a duty of care for the children and young people that you are working with to take all complaints seriously even if you have a view about whether it is true or not. This is especially the case if the child or young person or their family raise an issue about you personally or your colleague.

3.7 Guide to Monitoring and Supervising Staff, Volunteers and Students

Trial Periods

Your organisation can apply a trial period of employment, for example, three months at the start of employment. This can also be used for volunteers. It is an opportunity for the organisation and the worker or volunteer to see if the engagement is suitable.

For the worker and volunteer, it is an opportunity to experience your organisation and position first hand. It is important that the worker or volunteer knows they are on a trial period.

Supervision

You should supervise all workers, volunteers or students who are working with kids.

You can hold weekly or monthly supervision and support sessions or meetings to provide open discussion and constructive feedback.

Different programs or activities require different levels of supervision – those you have assessed as high risk using the 'Finding Your Risks' tool may involve regular meetings with all participants involved. Lower risk activities may involve attendance at the activity by a senior staff member on a monthly basis.

Supervision can be by a Manager, a worker or by a team. You can also involve external supervision where someone from outside the organisation supervises workers, volunteers or students. Use the job description as the basis for measuring the worker's performance.

Performance Appraisal

This is good practice in the supervision and monitoring of staff, volunteers or students as it formalises the process of supervision and feedback. The key objectives of any appraisal are to:

- improve job satisfaction
- identify people's training needs
- assist people with their development
- help improve overall communication between managers, workers, volunteers or students

3.8 Tips for Supporting Your Team

Managers in child-safe, child-friendly organisations want to create and maintain an open and aware environment, where all adult participants feel responsible for the protection and well-being of children and young people in their programs.

Having clear communication channels, opportunities for discussion, training and consistent enforcement of policies and procedures helps you do this.

Tips for supporting your team

1. Organise regular supervision of staff, volunteers and students as soon as possible from commencement of their position/placement
2. Where one-to-one supervision is not possible, arrange regular team supervision and support sessions and emphasise the importance of participating in these sessions
3. Look for opportunities to keep volunteers up to date with program activities and other important information about the organisation. You could use your newsletter to give information for volunteers about special events and staff changes, etc
4. Resolve any and all conflicts fairly and quickly
5. Help staff, volunteers and students to develop their skills and broaden their experience
6. Create opportunities to involve staff, volunteers and students in developing new child-safe, child friendly processes. What are the kids telling them? How can we use this input

3.9 Youth Leader Exit Interview

Schedule half an hour with the departing Youth Leader on his/her last (or near to last) day of work. Find a quiet space to sit together informally and avoid any interruptions.

Let the interviewee know that you are seeking the information as part of a process of improving your organisation, and that his/her honest feedback is encouraged.

Name of Staff Member/Volunteer:

1. What was the experience of working at like for you?

.....
.....
.....

2. What were your best experiences working here?

.....
.....
.....

3. What were your most challenging experiences working here?

.....
.....
.....

4. Did you feel adequately supervised and supported in your work? Add comments.

.....
.....
.....

5. Why are you leaving this role?

.....

.....

.....

6. We would really welcome any ideas or opinions that you have about how we can improve our organisation for children and young people and or workers/volunteers/students.

.....

.....

.....

Interviewer's Name:

Date:/...../.....

4.1 Participant Information Form

..... YOUTH GROUP
..... PARISH or CHAPLAINCY

Personal Details

First Name: **Surname:**
Address: Postcode:
Home Telephone: Mobile:
Email:
Date of Birth: Gender:

Emergency Contacts

Name:
Relationship:
Address:
Home Telephone:
Mobile:
Preferred Contact Telephone Number: Home Mobile

Name:
Relationship:
Address:
Home Telephone:
Mobile:
Preferred Contact Telephone Number: Home Mobile

Are there any reasons why contact should not be made? Yes / No

If yes, provide details.
.....

Please note that it is the responsibility of parents to make safe arrangements for the transportation of their children to and from youth group activities. Youth Group Leaders are not permitted to transport Youth Group participants, except in emergency situations.

Medical Details

In order to provide for the individual needs of all Youth Group members, we seek some important health information about your child. Please note that at some Youth Group gatherings, dinner or snack food may be provided. Please complete the form below by providing details of any medical conditions and health information of your child.

If your child has any medical issues, please provide a copy of the management plan.

Medical Condition	Please indicate Y = Yes N = No	Description
Heart problems		
Epilepsy		
Asthma or other Respiratory problems		
Allergies (e.g. peanuts, tree nuts, insect stings, dairy, gluten)		
Blood pressure		
Phobias		
Surgery/Operations		
Recent illness		
Prescribed medication required		
Reaction to drugs		
Mental illness		

Please give an outline of any current medical conditions:

.....

.....

.....

If applicable:

Is the participant subject to the following: *(please tick)*

	YES	NO
Hyperactivity	[]	[]
Violent Outbursts	[]	[]
Depression	[]	[]
Other (please details)	[]	[]

.....

.....

.....

	YES	NO
Is the participant currently taking any medication?	[]	[]
Does the participant regularly take any prescribed medication?	[]	[]

Please note: The Youth Group Co-ordinator may contact you to arrange a time to discuss the management of prescribed medications.

Please give details of medication required:

.....

.....

.....

YES NO

Has the participant ever received penicillin? [] []

Has the participant had an allergic reaction? [] []

If yes – what substance was the cause of the reaction?

.....

When was the last time the participant had a tetanus injection?

.....

Is there any other information necessary for the safety, welfare and well-being of the participant, whilst attending youth nights?

.....

.....

YES NO

Is the participant covered by a medical fund? [] []

If yes, please specify:

Medicare Number:

YES NO

Does the participant have any special dietary needs? [] []

If yes, please specify:

.....

Family Medical Practitioner:

Telephone Number:

Please give an outline of the participant's medical history for the past 12 months (e.g. broken bones, hospitalisation and why, etc.):

.....

.....

.....

Consent to Medical Attention

I have completed the medical information section and have provided all relevant details required.

In the case of a medical emergency or the requirement to provide medical treatment,

I consent to the Parish Youth Group personnel providing first aid or arrange for my child to receive such medical or surgical treatment as may be deemed necessary.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date:

Consent for child to participate in Youth Group activities

I give permission for my child to participate in Youth Group activities at

Parish, on I understand that normally and unless otherwise advised the Youth Group activities are to be held at the Parish site.

Should any information that I have provided on this form change, I will notify the Parish Office at

..... Parish as soon as possible.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date:

Photograph/Video Release Form

I give permission for images of my child, captured during regular Parish activities through video, photograph and

digital camera, to be used for the purposes of Parish promotional materials and publications, and agree that they will not be entitled to any payment or other benefit in relation thereto. The child's surname will not be published.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date:

Participant Statement

I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and information detailing the activities itemised on the enclosed attachments.

Signature: Date:

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE PARISH OFFICE ASAP.

Postal Address:

Email:

Facsimile:

This form is intended to be used to assist the Parish in the case of any emergency, medical or otherwise, involving a participant on youth activities. A copy of each participant's form must be accessible by suitable personnel during any Parish Youth Group activities. The information collected will be held in a secure place and will be made available to Parish staff and leaders, and medical or paramedical staff in the case of an accident or emergency. The information contained in the form is personal information and it will be stored, used and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000*.

4.2 Developing Codes of Conduct for Kids, with Kids

A Code of Conduct for kids helps to explain their rights and responsibilities when taking part in your organisation's activities. For this to work, kids need to be able to develop the Code for themselves, with your assistance.

Codes of Conduct for kids have been shown to be a great exercise to help them develop their own sense of fair play and mutual respect. When kids 'own' the Code, they will protect it and support it.

An effective Code of Conduct for kids:

- is discussed and debated by kids
- addresses matters that are important to kids in your organisation
- is age appropriate
- has been developed collectively
- is in simple language
- is accepted as fair and reasonable by kids and adults
- is widely promoted
- Must be explained and discussed with kids when they first join the organisation

A Code of Conduct for kids may cover issues like how to treat each other and adults in the group, how to deal with problems and accidents, how to make choices and decisions.

{eXAMpLe oNLy}

we will	be respectful and friendly to everyone and welcome new kids joining the group.
we will	play by the rules.
we will	have a say about activities we take part in.
we will	report any concerns or worries.
we will not	be a bully.
we will not	leave the group without telling an adult where we are going.

Courtesy of: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Use this template to help develop a Code of Conduct for kids, with kids in your organisation.

Codes:

All kids participating in’s programs agree to:

we will	
we will	
we will	

we will not	
we will not	
we will not	

Courtesy of: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

4.3 Managing Challenging Behaviours

From time to time you are going to be faced with some form of challenging behaviour from a child or young person that you are working with.

A challenging behaviour is defined as “culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely seriously to limit or deny access to the use of ordinary community facilities.

On occasions conduct may be perceived to amount to “challenging behaviour”. In this first instance it is important to seek the advice of your supervisor before taking any action.

There are many causes for challenging behaviours which may include:

- biological – they may be in pain
- social i.e. boredom, seeking social interaction, the need for an element of control, lack of knowledge of community norms, insensitivity of staff and services to the person’s wishes and needs
- environmental
- psychological i.e. feeling excluded, lonely, devalued, labelled, disempowered, living up to people’s negative expectations
- a means of communication; a lot of the time, challenging behaviour is learned and brings rewards to the child and young person. Work on your relationship with the person first
- as a result of a trauma that they have faced and you are not aware of.

How do you manage challenging behaviours?

STOP:

Stop current engagement with the child and while maintaining supervision of the child seek the assistance of your supervisor. Remove yourself from the situation as soon as possible.

THINK:

Take some time to think about the situation and what might be happening for the child / young person.

ASSESS:

Assess the situation carefully. Recognise the possibility of low self-esteem.

RESPOND:

If you feel uncomfortable or unable to manage the situation, call your supervisor. Respond accordingly. This may involve the following:

1. Treat the child/young person as you would treat others but do not expect them to behave the same way as someone else
2. Encourage them to reflect on their own behaviour and on that of others
3. Avoid seeing the person’s behaviour as a personal affront
4. Convey firm and honest expectations that are realistic and flexible
5. Be yourself – use natural attributes and skills
6. If appropriate consider the use of humour to open communication channels
7. Give praise directly and indirectly
8. Develop a support network and take care of yourself.

It is imperative that after an incident with a child or young person that you record the incident and forward on to your supervisor. Ensure that a copy of this record is secured for any future reference.

4.4 Discrimination Issues

It is important that Youth Ministry is available to all people who are prepared to commit to the Code of Conduct and support the goals and purpose of the ministry.

In particular, it is important that the people are not discriminated against on the basis of health, disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.

It is reasonable to expect that participants of the youth ministry will support the ethos and mission of the Catholic Church.

If you have any concerns please contact The Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards.

5.1 Organising an Event with the Parish

Planning

- Working with Children Check numbers (WWC) must be collected from all youth leaders and volunteers (aged over 18 years)
- Present and discuss integrity in the Service of the Church
- Ensure the Code of Conduct for Youth Group members is circulated and understood
- Have procedures in place to manage breaches of the Code of Conduct
- Ensure that a sufficient number of Youth Leaders have current Senior First Aid qualifications including anaphylaxis training
- Assess whether there is a need for security to be organised for the event
- Assess whether there is a need for a St John's Ambulance Officer to be organised for the event

Site Assessment

- Make sure the building is secure and appropriate for the event
- Ensure that an Evacuation Plan is posted on walls and exits are clearly marked
- Ensure there are fire extinguishers in place in case of emergency
- Check that there are adequate amenities to accommodate the number of people expected to attend
- Have sign-on sheets completed by attendees prior to entry

Catering:

- Check that there is clear access to kitchen
- Check that the kitchen appliances such as fridge, stove, etc. work properly
- Restrict access to the kitchen to Youth Leaders and designated volunteers

Management of the Band:

- Make sure the equipment is working properly
- Situate them in a safe area where no one would be able to trip on the wires, etc.
- Food or drink should be kept away from equipment at all times

Supervision

- Ensure that permission forms from youth group members have been collected
- At the beginning of the event, introduce the Youth Leaders so they can go to them if there is something wrong
- Provide basic housekeeping information about toilets, rules, expectations exits and evacuation procedures
- Youth leaders should wear a coloured vest or some other form of clear identification to indicate their supervisory role
- Have a designated quiet space available for youth leaders to take young people who may feel unwell or who are distressed
- During the event have youth leaders/volunteers placed in different areas, monitoring the attendees and assessing possible dangers for the attendees and the organisers

5.2 Supervision of Children's Liturgy

Introduction

The following advice is aimed to assist those involved in the ministry of preparing and presenting children's liturgy within Parishes of the Parramatta Diocese. Current child protection legislation has been drafted to strive to establish some safeguards for children. However, compliance with legislation alone is not enough.

The Diocese of Parramatta is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the children to whom we minister are safe and receive a high level of care. The Diocese is also committed to supporting those engaged in ministry so that they are informed of strategies and general principles that make their work with children a positive and rewarding experience for them.

Legislative Compliance

All people who volunteer to take Children's liturgy groups in the Diocese are required to complete a Working with Children Check, unless they qualify for an exemption (www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-Children/New-Working-With-Children-Check/Exemptions) or they have already obtained a Working with Children Check because they work in child-related employment. A volunteer is someone who does not receive payment for his/her work. Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses does not constitute payment.

The steps are as follows:

Step 1: Complete an online application form

Go to www.check.kids.nsw.gov.au and complete the online application form. If the applicant does not have access to the internet, he/she can telephone (02) 9286 7219 for assistance.

An applicant needs to ensure that the details provided are EXACTLY THE SAME as the details on identity documents. If the applicant has submitted the form with a mistake, he/she must redo the form to avoid problems with the proof of identity requirement at Step 2.

Applicants need to select the correct category: volunteer worker. If they are volunteers and they choose 'paid worker' by mistake, the \$80 fee for paid workers is not refundable.

Once the form is submitted, the applicant will receive an application number that looks like APP1234567.

If the applicant needs help, they can watch the online tutorial on YouTube. More video tutorials are available on www.kids.nsw.gov.au – online tutorials.

Step 2: Present proof of identity

All applicants are required to go to a NSW Motor Registry, Government Access Centre, or Service NSW office – to find a location go to www.service.nsw.gov.au/service-centre.

All applicants will need their application numbers and proof of your identity. They must have both of these items for their application to proceed.

As a volunteer, applicants will not be required to pay the fee of \$80.

An applicant cannot submit proof of identity on behalf of someone else. He/she must appear in person with his/her documentation.

Proof of identity cannot be performed outside of NSW. It must be completed at a NSW Motor Registry, Government Access Centre, or Service NSW office.

An applicant will receive his/her outcome and Working with Children Check number by email (or post if he/she does not have an email address). If the applicant has not received his/her results within four weeks, he/she should email his/her details and application number to check@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au.

More information can be obtained at www.kids.nsw.gov.au – *Fact Sheets and Resources – Fact Sheet 16 (March 2014) – How do I apply?*

Supervision of Children

Given the ages of the children may vary considerably and from time to time, a child will require some one-on-one assistance (such as wanting to return to parents, use the bathroom or behaving inappropriately), it is recommended that at least two adults accompany a group of less than 15 children. If the number is greater than 15, it is recommended that an extra supervisor is required for every 10 children over 15. Some of the supervisors could be other parents. If these additional helpers have not been trained or authorised to do this work, they should not be left alone with the children and should be supervised at all times.

Involvement of Young People in the Supervision

If young people choose to be involved in this ministry, this should be encouraged; however it is recommended that these young people receive some training and remain supervised, if there is a potential situation of being left with children (even for a short period) unsupervised by a trained and authorised adult.

Risk Management

Sometimes children will demonstrate behaviours that may expose you to the risk of a complaint. Some children like a lot of affection and may not be aware of appropriate social behaviour. It is recommended that those involved in liturgy be mindful of this potential without being anxious about it. They may like to consider some strategies to deal with some specific circumstances, such as requesting that the parent of the child concerned be asked to sit with the group or an older sibling be put in charge of sitting with the child.

Addressing Concerns Relating to the Welfare of Children

From time to time, children may demonstrate behaviours that are of concern to those involved in liturgy. It is recommended that if those involved in liturgy observe or are informed of conduct that may place a child in the group at risk, they should speak to the Co-ordinator of this ministry about this matter without delay.

If a child indicates something that concerning, it is important that this information is reported to the Co-ordinator of the ministry. If a child indicates something on the proviso that it is not told to another person, the person involved in liturgy should make it clear that he/she has a duty to inform someone, but he/she will talk to the child about steps being taken. In such circumstances, the person involved in liturgy should reassure the child that he/she is doing the right thing by telling someone about the concerns; record what the child has said in as much detail; and report the matter to the Co-ordinator of the ministry as soon as possible (within no more than one to two hours, if possible).

Further Questions of Comments

Please seek further information and support by contacting the Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards Manager, Tamena Yarak on 8838 3436

5.3 Organising a Trip

Field Trips

Keep in mind who is the audience coming on the field trip. **Take a first aid kit with you.**

- Make up permissions forms for under 18 year olds to be signed by parents/guardians
- Include the event, date, location, transportation arrangements, activities and a medical section: allergies, medication being taken currently, known illnesses, etc
- Hand out permission forms to the youth group with a date when they have to be returned to you
- Remind the youth as the day gets closer to hand in their permission forms
- Collect permission forms before the field trip happens. Those who have not brought it back signed by parents/guardians cannot go
- Is this field trip sponsored by the parish? Does the parish insurance cover it?

Transportation

Transportation of Children and Young People

- Ensure that reputable professional transport service providers are engaged to transport children and young people to and from the event, unless parents/guardians assume this responsibility
- Before transporting a child or young person in your private motor vehicle, ensure that all alternatives have been considered and seek approval from your Parish Priest
- In such cases:
 - Maintain a written record of why this was necessary
 - Ensure that more than one adult is present
 - Ensure where possible that more than one child is present in the car.
 - Supervisors should assess the following before approval is provided:
 - Suitability of the vehicle – roadworthiness, insurance, condition, service history and registration details
 - Suitability of the driver – age, experience, driving history, driving experience and licence details
 - Suitability of context – necessity, options considered
- Obtain written consent of parents/guardian
- Log of transportation should be maintained:
 - Time/date commenced
 - Distance travelled, route taken
 - People transported

Screening of Volunteers

- Volunteer supervisors and youth leaders coming on the trip must already be screened (e.g. known to the parish, youth co-ordinator) and have a verified Working with Children Check
- The behaviour of volunteers should not put the health/lives/wellbeing of youth in danger
- Are volunteers able to follow instructions, trustworthy, comply with the rules, e.g. no smoking, no alcohol, no drugs, etc
- Do they have the skills, training and/or previous experience of supervising youth on a field trip

Supervision

- Supervisors should be responsible adults aged 18 years or older
- Ensure that there are an adequate number of adults to cover the number of youth going. Determine an appropriate ratio of adults to youth typically a ration of 1:10 is appropriate
- Each of the supervisors should know his/her role, the people in their group and plan of action in case, there is an emergency, i.e. the person in charge, first aid person, etc
- Organise youth into groups and ensure that each of the youth know his/her group leader
- Ensure that each of the group leaders have a list of the youth attending and a headcount is done regularly while on the field trip
- Let the supervisors know if any of those trusted in their care have any medical problems that may be a danger to the group, e.g. epilepsy, so they can keep a close eye on them

5.4 Transportation Policy

Youth leaders should avoid situations where they are required to transport children and young people (as well as vulnerable adults) in the course of their duties. It is recommended that wherever possible, the responsibility for the transportation of minors should rest with their parents or legal guardians.

There may be unforeseen or complex circumstances where it may be necessary to transport members of the Youth Group. In such circumstances the following guidelines should be considered:

Transportation of Children and Young People

- Ensure that reputable professional transport service providers are engaged to transport children and young people to and from the event, unless parents/guardians assume this responsibility
- Before transporting a child or young person in your private motor vehicle, ensure that all alternatives have been considered and seek approval from your Parish Priest
- In such cases:
 - Maintain a written record of why this was necessary
 - Ensure that more than one adult is present
 - Ensure where possible that more than one child is present in the car.
 - Supervisors should assess the following before approval is provided:
 - Suitability of the vehicle – roadworthiness, insurance, condition, service history and registration details
 - Suitability of the driver – age, experience, driving history, driving experience and licence details
 - Suitability of context – necessity, options considered
- Obtain written consent of parents/guardian
- Log of transportation should be maintained:
 - Time/date commenced
 - Distance travelled, route taken
 - People transported

5.5 Event Risk Management Checklist

This checklist may be used to assist in the assessment and management of risk in planning youth group events.

Youth Group Personnel

Risk/Issue	Tool	Yes	No	Date/Action/Progress
Employment Screening Practices	Working with Children Check Referee Check Questions			
Acceptable behaviour defined	Code of Conduct			
Induction/Training	Group sessions: Code of Conduct Receiving Complaints Mandatory Reporting Reportable Reporting Work Health and Safety			

Complaints Management

Risk/Issue	Tool	Yes	No	Date/Action
Youth Group Leaders are aware of complaints procedure	Group sessions: Receiving complaints			
Children/young people and parents are aware of how to register a complaint	Information circulated to parents and young people about how to make a complaint			

5.6 Finding Your Risks

Courtesy of CCYP Website: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

This resource will help you to:

- Identify what can go wrong in your program activities

Brainstorm all the possible things that could go wrong in the process of planning and implementing the activities of your organisation. This can be done on an individual activity or as an organisation as a whole. Children and young people can get involved in this process.

- Develop ways to reduce the likelihood of things going wrong

Remember to think about each problem area and decide how seriously a child could be harmed and how likely it is that the problem would arise. When the harm is serious and the problem could arise often, you have a high risk that needs immediate attention.

- Set action priorities

Think about the actions you take immediately as opposed to action that will require planning and preparation. In some cases, you may find that a medium to low level of risk can be addressed quickly; we would encourage you to give them a higher priority so that these changes happen immediately. Generally, high-risk activities should attract a high priority action. However, there may be cases where a period of planning and preparation is required to genuinely lower the risk of the activity, hence a lower priority rating may apply to reflect the planning process.

EXAMPLE

Activity List each activity you provide for kids	Risks What could go wrong?	Ranking Use scale of high/medium/low to describe risk level	How to reduce risk Changes to reduce, modify or avoid risk	Priority Use a numerical scale (1 – highest) to decide what you will do first
Sports Training	Intimate physical contact with children	Medium	Code of conduct explains what touching and coaching behaviour is acceptable.	2
	Toilets are isolated/out of sight	High	Planned toilet breaks where children go in groups.	1
	Children wander away from training area	Medium	Code of conduct explains what area kids can use at training. Kids are told these rules.	2
	Children are not collected as planned	High	Code of conduct explains collection requirements and who will look after children collected late.	2

Activity List each activity you provide for kids	Risks What could go wrong?	Ranking Use scale of high/medium/low to describe risk level	How to reduce risk Changes to reduce, modify or avoid risk	Priority Use a numerical scale (1 – highest) to decide what you will do first
Overnight camping trip	Inappropriate person volunteers for supervision duty.	High	Care in recruitment and selection.	2
	Adult and child alone together in sleeping quarters.	High	Ensure adequate adult/child sleeping ratios for camp supervision. At least, two adults should attend any child contact activity.	1
	Child feels isolated and lonely.	High	Plan inclusive activities and actively monitor children.	2
			Introduce team building activities.	1
			Support leadership in children and young people.	3
Child sustains injury.	Medium	Up to date medical and emergency contact forms for each child are available. Organisation's emergency action procedures are up to date and available.	2	

Activity List each activity you provide for kids	Risks What could go wrong?	Ranking Use scale of high/medium/low to describe risk level	How to reduce risk Changes to reduce, modify or avoid risk	Priority Use a numerical scale (1 – highest) to decide what you will do first
Clown performance visiting a centre	Clown has a history of harm to children.	High	Ask the individual or clown company, if the appropriate checks (police check, Working with Children Check) have been made. Centre policy that requires all guest speakers, entertainment, etc. must have the appropriate check and evidence given.	1
	Tricks and entertainment hurt a child.	Medium	Staff have first aid training and qualifications. First aid kit easily accessible.	2
	Child is frightened by the clown.	Medium	Ensure adequate space is between the clown and the children. Inform parents of clown visit and seek permission for child's participation. Children are asked to participate in planning of guests.	1
				1
				2
				1

Activity List each activity you provide for kids	Risks What could go wrong?	Ranking Use scale of high/medium/low to describe risk level	How to reduce risk Changes to reduce, modify or avoid risk	Priority Use a numerical scale (1 – highest) to decide what you will do first
Excursion to local playground	A child falls off equipment and hurts themselves.	High	Organisation has policies and procedures for outings. Suitably qualified staff member to deal with first aid. Plan adequate staff ratio to supervise children. Parents contact details are taken on the outing. Visit site to check equipment is safe before outing. Permission sought from parents to go on the outing.	1 1 1 2 1 1
	Parents arrive at the centre to pick up child early and does not find their child.	Medium	Arrange alternative in centre activity for those being picked up during the outing. Parents are given playground location so they can pick up their children.	2 2
	Playground toilets are locked or out of sight or there is not one.	High	Site visit before the excursion to check the facilities. Inform Council before the excursion that you are going and see if they can open the toilets for the excursion.	1

Activity List each activity you provide for kids	Risks What could go wrong?	Ranking Use scale of high/medium/low to describe risk level	How to reduce risk Changes to reduce, modify or avoid risk	Priority Use a numerical scale (1 – highest) to decide what you will do first
Use of volunteers in running school holiday activities	Volunteer inappropriately discloses personal information to a group of young people.	High	Volunteer code of conduct. Volunteer training.	1 1
	Volunteer runs an in-house activity on his/her own.	Low	Volunteer code of conduct. Supervising paid worker in the centre while activity is being held and is supervising/monitoring the activity.	1 1
	Volunteer takes an inappropriate interest in one child.	High	Volunteer code of conduct and appropriate behaviour is reinforced to all volunteers.	1
			Supervisor/manager, etc. to closely monitor situation.	1
			Staff demonstrate to children that concerns and opinions are listened to.	1

Use this template to help find the risks in your organisation

Activity List each activity you provide for kids	Risks What could go wrong?	Ranking Use scale of high/medium/low to describe risk level	How to reduce risk Changes to reduce, modify or avoid risk	Priority Use a numerical scale (1 – highest) to decide what you will do first

6.1 Child Protection Reporting Process

What you must do...

Please follow the 3 “Rs”... if you think that a child or young person:

- Is at risk of harm, or
- Has been subjected to physical or sexual assault, ill treatment, neglect or psychological harm, or professional misconduct

1. Reassure – the child or young person that:

- ✓ the child or young person did the right thing by telling you
- ✓ the child or young person is not in trouble
- ✓ you will tell someone who can help the child or young person
- ✓ the child or young person has a right to feel safe and protected

2. Record

- ✓ immediately anything that you are told or what you observe
- ✓ include the date, time, parties involved
- ✓ sign the record

3. Report – the incident immediately or as soon as practicably possible to:

- ✓ Parish Priest
- ✓ Ministry Co-ordinator

Contact Details

Paul Davis Director, Safeguarding and Professional Standards Unit
Diocese of Parramatta
PH: (02) 8838 3423

Tamena Yarak Manager, Office for Safeguarding & Professional Standards
Diocese of Parramatta
PH: (02) 8838 3436

6.2 Child Protection Contacts

DIOCESAN CONTACTS	TITLE	PHONE NO
Bishop Anthony Fisher OP	Head of Agency for NSW Ombudsman Act	02 8838 3403
Very Rev Fr Peter Williams	Vicar General	02 8838 3400
Mr Paul Davis	Director, Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards	02 8838 3423
Ms Tamena Yarak	Manager, Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards	02 8838 3436
Mr James Camden	Director Catholic Youth Parramatta	02 8838 3428
Sr Rosie Drum	Assistant Director Catholic Youth Parramatta	02 8838 3418
Ms Ann O'Brien	CatholicCare Social Services – Counselling	02 9630 7788
OTHER CONTACTS		
Ms Linda Waugh	NSW Assistant Ombudsman	02 9286 1000 www.ombo.nsw.gov.au
	NSW Commission for Children and Young People/Office of the Children's Guardian – Working with Children Check	02 9286 7276 www.kids.nsw.gov.au
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
NSW Department of Family and Community Services		132 111 www.community.nsw.gov.au
NSW Police Local Area Command (LAC)		
Blacktown LAC		02 9671 9199
Blue Mountains		02 4751 0299
Eastwood		02 9858 9299
Holroyd		02 9897 4899
Mt Druitt		02 9625 0000
Parramatta		02 9633 0700
Penrith		02 4721 9444
Quakers Hill		02 9678 8999
St Mary's		02 9677 7499
Castle Hill		02 9680 5399

7.1 Safety Standards for Parish Youth Groups

For more information about Becoming a Child Safe Organisation –

<http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-Children/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation>.

STANDARDS	STRATEGIES
Recruitment of Youth Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply effective recruitment processes and seek references • Refer to <i>Staff Recruitment and Management</i> under abovementioned link
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly provide training to leaders on child safety, including the health, educational and safety needs of children and young people, including Child Safe Organisation training • Refer to <i>Staff Recruitment and Management</i> under abovementioned link
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain good leader to child ratios, which increase during excursions or camps • Have a clear policy on male to female ratios, especially on overnight trips • Discourage youth leaders from being in a one on one situation, without another worker being close by
Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a copy of the child protection policy available. Involve children and young people in the development of the Code of Conduct • Be clear about whom the Code of Conduct applies and what happens if there is a breach of the Code • Refer to <i>Child Safe Policy and Codes of Conduct</i> under the abovementioned link
Management of Complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to youth leaders the complaints procedure and what happens when a complaint is made • Educate children and young people about who they can talk to, if they are concerned or worried about something and what will happen when they raise a concern • Refer to <i>Complaints Management</i> under the abovementioned link

Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage active parent participation• Actively involve children and young people in decisions and policies, which directly impact on them• Encourage children and young people to provide feedback on activities and the organisation• Involve children and young people in developing a Code of Code• Refer to <i>Listening to Children and Young People</i> under the abovementioned link
Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that personal information is collected in the correct manner and for a specific purpose (e.g. Working with Children Check and reference check)• Ask permission prior to obtaining personal information• Store personal information securely• Ensure that personal information can only be accessed by an authorised person• Have a policy in place outlining when personal information needs to be accessed• Ensure that personal records are not altered or forged• Check the accuracy of information provided• Have a policy in place in relation to disclosing information to others• Refer to <i>Privacy Considerations</i> under the abovementioned link

Risk Management

- Establish the context: Why are you doing this? What external and/or internal factors/requirements are making you develop a risk management strategy/plan. What are the parameters in which you are doing it
- How will you do it: What processes are you going to use to develop the strategy/plan? Who is going to be involved, and how? Is there a timeframe for completing it in? What will you do with the strategy/plan when it is finished?
- Communicate and consult: Let people know what you are doing and work together in identifying the risks and how they can be managed. Do this with your internal and external stakeholders in developing your strategy/plan as a whole, and then, as appropriate, at each stage of the risk management process.
- Identify risks: What are the *where, when, why and how* events that precipitate risks? Identify not just Work Health and Safety issues, but also risks to do with child abuse and unintentional harm.
- Analyse risks: Determine what the likelihood and consequences are of each identified risk and assign a level to the risk, e.g. high if highly likely and the consequence is severe. Use a matrix to do this to plot the rating for each risk.
- Develop interventions: Work out what you can do to stop the identified risk from happening, and what to do if the risk does eventuate. What will these interventions mean in terms of resources and what will be the consequences of doing them and not doing them.
- Monitor and review: Develop a process to monitor and evaluate your risk management strategy/plan. Keep a record of any risks that happened and what the outcome was, both of the risk itself and what you did. Record whether these accorded with your strategy/plan or deviated from it and why. This is important for continuous improvement.
- Designate and manage: Risk management is not a function you do once and forget about it. It should be part of the ongoing quality improvement process of the organisation. Nominate a person to be responsible for the ongoing management of the strategy/plan and include the strategy/plan in the organisation's culture and management.
- Refer to *Risk Management* under the abovementioned link.

7.2 Code of Conduct

Preamble:

To have the opportunity to work with children and young people is a wonderful privilege. As you will be representing your Parish community, there are commitments to care for children and young people, yourself and the communities you represent. This Code of Professional Conduct is based upon a commitment to the children and young people in our care, their parents and the broader faith community.

This Code will assist to clarify the parameters of appropriate conduct for those who work in child and youth related ministry. It is anticipated that the general principles expressed in this Code may be applied to circumstances not referred to in this document when required.

1. Professional Responsibilities:

1.1 In attending to compliance matters it is expected that you will:

- Comply with lawful instructions and policies presented by the Diocese, Parish Priest or his delegate
- Comply with legislative and industrial requirements and any policies and procedures implemented by the Parish
- Demonstrate a duty of care to children and young people by being punctual, diligent and sensitive to their needs
- Take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from foreseeable risk of injury and to protect their own health and safety at all times
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the workplace is free of all forms of harassment, bullying and unlawful discrimination
- Be aware of, and apply, the Privacy policies of the Parish and the Diocese
- Complete your duties in accordance with the directions provided by the Parish
- Consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks

1.2 In matters relating to professional standards, it is expected that you will:

- Support the core values of the Diocese
- Adhere to an appropriate standard of dress when engaged in ministry
- Use language that is appropriate and non-threatening
- Be cautious about the responsible storage of medications
- Respect the privacy and dignity of all Parish and Diocesan personnel
- Maintain the security of all official and confidential information at the parish relating to your ministry
- Report to your supervisor **AND** the Parish Priest reportable conduct that is brought to your attention particularly:
 - Any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with, or in the presence of a child (including child pornography).
 - Any physical assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child.
 - Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child.
 - Misconduct that may involve reportable conduct as listed above.

AND any circumstances where you suspect that a child or young person is currently at risk of harm.

2. Professional Relationships with Children and Young People

It is expected that you will:

- Be caring, respectful, compassionate and take an interest in the children and young people in your care
- Avoid as far as possible being alone with a child and young person and if required, discuss strategies to allow for observation beforehand
- Avoid favouring individual children and young people and treat them all equally.
- Be equally available to all children and young people
- Avoid offering to, or receiving gifts from, **individual** children and young people
- Remain removed from personal relationships with children and young people
- Restrict the transportation of children and young people in your car to circumstances that are in accordance with the prescribed policy
- Ensure that physical contact with children and young people is reasonable for the purpose of their management or care. Examples include:
 - assessing a child or young person who is injured or ill
 - comforting an upset child
 - guiding a child or young person in a non-threatening manner
 - protecting a child or young person from imminent danger to himself/herself or to others
 - demonstrating or guiding a particular action or skill as part of drama or other activities within the lesson

Acceptable physical contact with children and young people:

- *Physical contact should be **appropriate** given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the child*
- *Physical contact should be **consistent** with any specific **management plan** for specific children*
- *Physical intervention (including physical restraint, removals or escorts) should be avoided and **used only as a last resort to ensure safety and protection of children and others**. Physical intervention may be regarded as appropriate when a child or young person is causing, or at risk of causing injury or harm to self or others.*

3. Inappropriate Practices

The following practices are inconsistent with the values of the Parish you represent and are therefore not permitted:

- the application of corporal punishment or physical force to punish or correct a child or young person
- using an object, such as a book to gain a child's attention in a hostile or inappropriate physical manner
- hitting, kicking, shaking, pulling, shoving, grabbing, pinching, poking or pushing a child or young person
- holding or restraining a child or young person other than to prevent injury or harm to them or others
- intimidating, humiliating or swearing at a child or young person
- locking a child or young person in a confined space
- refusing biological needs or basic necessities
- using practices which instil fear or cause a child or young person to feel alienated
- having in your possession or providing children or young people with alcohol or prohibited substances
- providing tobacco or tobacco-based products to children and young people

- engaging in conduct of a sexual nature that is improper, including inappropriate touching, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, suggestive remarks or innuendo, obscene gestures, sexual exhibitionism, personal correspondence, exposure of children or young people to sexual behaviour
- exposing a child or young person to material that contains violent, inappropriate sexual messages or adult concepts and themes that are inappropriate, given their age and level of maturity

NB: EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE USE OF INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICES MAY RESULT IN THE TERMINATION OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THIS AND OTHER MINISTRIES THAT INVOLVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. IT MAY ALSO IMPACT ON YOUR ABILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE FUTURE

7.3 CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This Policy applies to all employees and volunteers engaged in ministry in the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta including:

- Paid staff
- Clergy
- Volunteers
- Contractors and subcontractors
- Foster carers
- Work experience participants and Students on placement; and
- Special Religious Education (SRE) teachers

This Policy document encompasses a range of child protection related matters including making reports to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) regarding concerns about risk of significant harm to children and young people; seeking appropriate checks when working with children and young people and processes for managing allegations of reportable conduct against employees.

INTRODUCTION

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be safe and to grow and develop in environments that are free from violence, exploitation and harm. The safety and protection of children requires a commitment from all levels of the community. At the same time, the community has clear expectations that children, while involved in church ministry, will be protected from all forms of harm including sexual, physical and psychological harm as well as ill-treatment and neglect. The Catholic Diocese of Parramatta is supportive of these expectations and strives to promote the safety and protection of children.

The Diocese also seeks to support its children and young people in learning how to protect themselves and to seek help if they are concerned about their safety. Diocesan agencies and parishes take these responsibilities very seriously to ensure that the children and young people in its care are protected from all forms of harm and neglect.

The Diocese also has structures in place to support people who have been the subject of breaches of professional standards while they have been involved in ministry.

Ministry as a relationship of trust

Any employees or volunteers engaged by a Diocesan agency or parish to minister to children are expected to understand the significant responsibility that they have in keeping children and young people safe and free from harm. People appointed to this kind of ministry understand that they are entering into a relationship of trust with the faithful on behalf of the Diocese.

Any person involved in ministry acknowledges that they are assuming an important role on behalf of the Diocese and the church generally. Therefore those engaged in ministry are required to carry out these duties with integrity, compassion, respect and courtesy.

The authority provided to any person engaged in ministry is provided by the Diocese and may be removed at any time.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Within the Diocese the procedures to be followed in handling complaints relating to child protection are based on the following principles:

- All children and young people have the right to safety and to be protected from any kind of harm
- Persons involved in situations considered to be inappropriate or where reportable conduct is disclosed or suspected should be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect
- In any preventive and/or protective action related to child abuse, the overall well-being of the child is the primary concern
- The value of the family unit is respected but not to the detriment of the well-being of the child
- The Parish Priest or agency leader should be informed promptly of suspected or disclosed incidents of harm to children and young people as well as serious matters concerning their welfare. This obligation is shared by all employees and volunteers involved in ministry
- Information regarding suspected or disclosed child abuse shall be made available only to those personnel who have a genuine need to be informed. Personnel who have access to such information have the obligation to observe appropriate confidentiality in relation to this information.

KEY TERMS

1.1 Mandatory Reporters

Certain employees are required by law to report matters or concerns to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) if they suspect (using their professional judgment and training), on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm.

Mandatory reporters are those people who deliver the following services to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- health care – doctors, nurses, dentists and other health workers
- welfare – psychologists, social workers and youth workers
- education – teachers
- children's services – child care workers, family day carers and home based carers
- residential services – refuge workers, community housing providers
- law enforcement – Police

Any person with direct responsibility for the provision of the above mentioned services must report any matters that are assessed as posing a risk of significant harm to children.

Managers, including both paid employees and volunteers, who supervise direct services to children are mandated to report.

While employees and volunteers engaged in ministry in the Church are not mandated by law to report to FACS, it is a policy requirement of the Diocese that any employee or volunteer engaged in ministry who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm will make a report. Any concerns should also be notified to the Parish Priest.

Reports about risk of or significant harm to children may be made to the Child Protection Helpline on 133 627.

A Mandatory Reporter Guide has been developed to help both mandatory and non-mandatory reporters decide whether a concern meets the statutory threshold for reporting risk of significant harm.

Mandatory reporters are encouraged to use the Mandatory Reporter Guide to guide their decision making about whether or not to report to the Child Protection Helpline. The Mandatory Reporter Guide may be accessed by going to the following website:

http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect/resources_for_mandatory_reporters/when_must_i_make_a_report.html#mrg

The Diocese may be required to assume responsibility for the case management of matters that do not reach the threshold of “significant risk of harm” or those matters which meet the threshold but cannot be responded to by FACS. The Diocesan Chancery is resourced to assist in managing these responsibilities and should be contacted to seek advice and support as soon as possible.

1.2 Allegations of Reportable Conduct against Employees

The *Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)* requires agencies working with children to report to the Office of the New South Wales Ombudsman and to investigate any allegations of “reportable conduct” against employees. For further information about the protocols followed by the Diocese see section 5. Reportable conduct is defined as:

- (a) any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence) or
- (b) any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child, or
- (c) any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child

Whether or not in any case, with the consent of a child

Reportable conduct does not extend to:

- (a) conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards, or
- (b) the use of physical force that in all the circumstances, is trivial and negligible but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result recorded, or
- (c) conduct of a class or kind exempted from being reportable conduct by the Ombudsman under section 25CA.

The NSW Ombudsman’s Practice Update 2013/1: Defining reportable Conduct, defines the different categories of reportable conduct in the following terms:

1.2.1 Child Sexual offences

The term ‘sexual offence’ encompasses all criminal offences involving a sexual element that is ‘committed against, with or in the presence of a child’.

These offences include (but are not limited to) the following:

- indecent assault
- sexual assault
- aggravated sexual assault
- sexual intercourse and attempted sexual intercourse
- possession/ dissemination/production of child pornography or child abuse material
- using children to produce pornography
- grooming or procuring children under the age of 16 years for unlawful sexual activity
- deemed non-consensual sexual activity on the basis of special care relationships

All cases involving a sexual offence would also involve sexual misconduct

1.2.2 Sexual misconduct

The term 'sexual misconduct' includes conduct that does not necessarily equate to a criminal offence.

For sexual misconduct to constitute reportable conduct, the alleged conduct must have been committed against, with or in the presence of a child.

There are three categories of sexual misconduct in addition to sexual offences:

- crossing professional boundaries
- sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour
- grooming behaviour.

1.2.3 Crossing professional boundaries

Sexual misconduct includes behaviour that can reasonably be construed as involving an inappropriate and overly personal or intimate:

- relationship/contact with
- conduct towards; or
- focus on

a child or young person, or a group of children or young persons

1.2.4 Sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour

Sexual misconduct includes a broad range of sexualised behaviour with or towards children. While it is not possible to provide a complete and definitive list of unacceptable sexual conduct involving children, the following types of behaviour give strong guidance:

- sexualised behaviour with or towards a child (including sexual exhibitionism)
- inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner
- unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child
- personal correspondence and communications (including emails, social media and web forums) with a child or young person in relation to the adult's romantic, intimate or sexual feelings for a child or young person
- exposure of children and young people to sexual behaviour of others including display of pornography
- watching children undress in circumstances where supervision is not required and it is clearly inappropriate

1.2.5 Grooming behaviour

Grooming or procuring a child under the age of 16 years for unlawful sexual activity is a sexual offence. However, Schedule 1(2) of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* also recognises grooming as a form of sexual misconduct

Behaviour should only be seen as 'grooming' where there is evidence of a pattern of conduct that is consistent with grooming the alleged victim for sexual activity, and that there is no other reasonable explanation for it

The types of behaviours that may lead to such a conclusion include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Persuading a child or group of children that they have a 'special' relationship, for example by:
 - spending inappropriate special time with a child
 - inappropriately giving gifts
 - inappropriately showing special favours to them but not other children
 - inappropriately allowing the child to overstep rules
 - asking the child to keep this relationship to themselves
- Testing boundaries, for example by:
 - undressing in front of a child
 - encouraging inappropriate physical contact (even where it is not overtly sexual)
 - talking about sex
 - 'accidental' intimate touching
- Inappropriately extending a relationship outside of work (except where it may be appropriate – for example where there was a pre-existing friendship with the child's family or as part of normal social interactions in the community)
- Inappropriate personal communication (including emails, telephone calls, text messaging, social media and web forums) that explores sexual feelings or intimate personal feelings with a child

An adult requesting that a child keep any aspect of their relationship secret or using tactics to keep any aspect of the relationship secret, would generally increase the likelihood that grooming is occurring.

1.2.4 Physical assault

An assault of a child includes any act by which a person intentionally inflicts unjustified use of physical force against a child. An assault can also occur if a person causes a child to reasonably fear that unjustified force will be used against them. Even if a person who inflicts, or causes the fear of, physical harm does not intend to inflict the harm or cause the fear, they may still have committed an assault if they acted recklessly (i.e. the person ought to have known that their actions would cause physical harm or the fear of such harm).

Assaults can include hitting, pushing, shoving, throwing objects, or making threats to physically harm a child.

While every allegation of physical assault should be investigated, only findings that a serious physical assault occurred are reportable to the Office of the Children's Guardian for consideration in Working with Children Check assessments.

A physical assault is serious where:

- it results in the child being injured, beyond a type of injury like a minor scratch, bruise or graze
- it had the potential to result in a serious injury
- the injury suffered may be minor, but the assault is associated with aggravating circumstances (in this regard, aggravating circumstances might include associated inhumane or demeaning behaviour by the employee, for example kicking a child, pulling a child by grabbing the child around the neck)

In considering whether a serious physical assault has occurred, reporting bodies whose work involves regular restraint of children should consider the context of events, including the child's age and vulnerability

Generally, behaviour that does not meet the standard of a serious physical assault does not become a serious physical assault by means of it being repeated

1.2.5 Ill-treatment

Ill-treatment captures those circumstances where a person treats a child or young person in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel manner.

The focus is on the alleged conduct rather than the actual effect of the conduct on the child or young person.

Ill-treatment can include disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate or improper manner; making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child; hostile use of force towards a child; and/or a pattern of hostile or unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, degrading comments or behaviour towards a child.

1.2.6 Neglect

Neglect includes either an action or inaction by a person who has care responsibilities towards a child. The nature of the employee's responsibilities provides the context against which the conduct needs to be assessed.

1.2.6.1 Supervisory neglect:

- An intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise a child that results in the death of, or significant harm to, a child, or
- An intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise a child, or a significantly careless act or failure to act, that:
 - involves a gross breach of professional standards, and
 - has the potential to result in the death of, or significant harm to, a child

1.2.6.2 Carer neglect:

- Grossly inadequate care that involves depriving a child of the basic necessities of life: such as the provision of food and drink, clothing, critical medical care or treatment, or shelter

1.2.6.3 Failure to protect from abuse:

- An obviously or very clearly unreasonable failure to respond to information strongly indicating actual or potential serious abuse of a child

1.2.6.4 Reckless acts (or failure to act):

- A reckless act, or failure to act, that:
 - involves a gross breach of professional standards, and
 - has the potential to result in the death of, or significant harm to, a child

1.2.7 Behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child

Behaviour that causes psychological harm is conduct that is obviously or very clearly unreasonable and results in significant emotional harm or trauma to a child.

There needs to be a proven causal link between the inappropriate behaviour and the harm, and the harm must be more than transient.

For reportable conduct involving psychological harm, the following elements must be present:

- an obviously or very clearly unreasonable or serious act or series of acts that the employee knew or ought to have known was unacceptable, and
- evidence of psychological harm to the child that is more than transient, including displaying patterns of 'out of character behaviour', regression in behaviour, distress, anxiety, physical symptoms or self harm, and
- an alleged causal link between the employee's conduct and the psychological harm to the child

Psychological harm can include the exacerbation or aggravation of an existing psychological condition, such as anxiety or depression

1.3 Children and young people

Children and young people are people under the age of 18 years.

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

1.3.1 Child means a person under the age of 16 years

1.3.2 Young person means a person who aged 16 years but who is under 18 years

1.3 Child related work

Child related work is defined as face-to-face contact with children in a child-related sector or work in a child-related role.

Child-related sectors include:

- Child development and family welfare services
- Child protection
- Clubs or other bodies providing services for children
- Disability services
- Early education and child care
- Education
- Religious services
- Residential services
- Transport services for children
- Youth workers
- School cleaners

Work for a religious organisation where children form part of the congregation or organisation is child-related work, if the work is carried out:

(a) as a minister, priest, rabbi, mufti or other like religious leader or spiritual officer of the organisation, or

(b) in any other role in the organisation involving activities primarily related to children, including youth groups, youth camps, teaching children and child care

Many forms of ministry that involve children may be described as child related work.

2. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS OF DIOCESAN AGENCIES

2.1 Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

This Act requires mandatory reporting to FACS of a child or young person under 18 years of age who is suspected to be at risk of significant harm.

The Diocese requires all employees and volunteers engaged in ministry to inform their relevant leader of any serious wellbeing concerns that they may have about a child or young person, particularly where they suspect the child or young person may be currently at risk of significant harm.

2.2 Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012

This Act requires all employees and volunteers whose ministry involves services to children to apply for a Working with Children Check clearance. In other words, employees and volunteers engaged in ministry that is child-related work (see 1.4) need to apply for a Working with Children Check. This may be done online at www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au or through phone support services which are available by contacting (02) 9286 7219. It is the responsibility of employees and volunteers to apply for and renew their own Working with Children Check. The Diocese is responsible for verifying that an employee or volunteer is cleared to work with children.

A Working with Children Check involves a national police check and review of findings of misconduct involving children, and the result is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children. A Check is a prerequisite for anyone in child-related work.

If the outcome of the Working with Children Check is a clearance, the Check can be used for any voluntary child-related work in NSW.

If the outcome is a bar it is an offence to engage in any child-related work, paid or unpaid. In most cases, application may be made for this outcome to be reviewed by the Administrative Decisions Tribunal. More information on the review process is available at www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au.

3. RELEVANT PROCEDURES

3.1 Procedures for Notifying Concerns that a Child is at Risk of Significant Harm

3.1.1 *Managing Disclosures*

Disclosures related to a child or young person potentially being at risk of significant harm require assessment to determine whether the matter requires case management or reporting to Community Services. This assessment should not be made in isolation and should be the subject of advice from the Chancery or the agency. Disclosures may take the following forms:

- (i) A child or young person tells an employee or volunteer who is engaged in ministry that they are at risk of significant harm
- (ii) Someone else tells an employee or volunteer who is engaged in ministry that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm
- (iii) A child or young person tells an employee or volunteer that they know someone who is at risk of significant harm
- (iv) An employee or volunteer engaged in ministry may make their own observations that leads her/him to suspect a child or young person is at risk of significant harm (some indicators of risk of harm are: marked changes in behaviour; withdrawal; depression; attention to personal appearance; pregnancy; anorexia or over-eating; self-destructive behaviour such as drug dependency, suicide attempts or self-mutilation)

3.1.2 Managing notifications of children and young people who are at risk of significant harm

- (i) Any a person engaged in ministry who has reason to believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm is expected to report the concern to the Parish Priest or Ministry Coordinator. If the allegation relates to the Parish Priest or Ministry Coordinator then reports should be made to the Professional Standards Manager of the Diocese
- (ii) Those involved in this report are expected to maintain the confidentiality of such matters. It is therefore expected that such matters are not discussed unless for the purpose of legal compliance or seeking professional advice
- (iii) The details of the disclosure or incident should be forwarded to Community Services
- (iv) The Diocesan Chancery should be informed immediately

3.2 Procedures for managing allegations of reportable conduct by employees and persons engaged in parish ministry

Allegations of reportable conduct involving staff members and persons engaged in parish ministry must be investigated and may need to be notified to the Office of the Children's Guardian during or after the investigation.

While the primary concern of the Diocese at all times is the safety and care of children and young people, the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice should be adhered to at all times so that the privacy and dignity of all involved may be considered and maintained.

Detailed procedures for managing allegations of reportable conduct against employees are outlined in section 5.

3.3 Supporting a Child or Young Person Who Has Disclosed Risk of Harm

Children and young people generally disclose with great hesitation and often with feelings of fear and guilt. It is therefore important to remain calm and supportive in these situations. Active listening without probing is required.

The following three steps are expected:

Reassure – the child or young person that:

- the child or young person did the right thing by telling you
- the child or young person is not in trouble
- you will tell someone who can help the child or young person
- the child or young person has a right to feel safe and protected

Record

- immediately anything that you are told or that you observe
- include the date, time, parties involved
- sign the record

Report – the incident immediately or as soon as practicably possible to the Parish Priest or Ministry Coordinator.

If the allegation relates to the Parish Priest or Ministry Coordinator then reports should be made to the Professional Standards Manager of the Diocese.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THOSE APPOINTED TO MINISTRY

4.1 PREAMBLE

To have the opportunity to work with children and young people in ministry is a wonderful privilege. This Code will assist to clarify the parameters of appropriate conduct who work in child related ministry. It is anticipated that the general principles expressed in this Code may be applied to circumstances not referred to in this document when required.

This document is to be read in conjunction with Integrity in the Service of the Church.

4.2 PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

4.2.1 *In attending to compliance matters it is expected that you will:*

- Comply with lawful instructions and policies presented by the Diocese, Parish Priest or his delegate
- Comply with legislative and industrial requirements and any policies and procedures implemented by the parish
- Demonstrate a duty of care to children and young people by being punctual, diligent and sensitive to their needs
- Take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from foreseeable risk of injury and to protect their own health and safety at all times
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the workplace is free of all forms of harassment and unlawful discrimination
- Be aware of and apply the Privacy policies of the parish and the Diocese.
- Complete your duties in accordance with the directions provided by the parish
- Consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks

4.2.2 *In matters relating to professional standards it is expected that you will:*

- Support the core values of the Diocese
- Adhere to an appropriate standard of dress when engaged in ministry
- Use language that is appropriate and non-threatening
- Be cautious about the responsible storage of medications
- Respect the privacy and dignity of all Parish and Diocesan personnel
- Maintain the security of all official and confidential information at the parish relating to your ministry
- Report to the Diocesan Chancery AND the agency leader reportable conduct that is brought to your attention particularly:
 - Any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including child pornography)
 - Any physical assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child
 - Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child
 - Misconduct that may involve reportable conduct as listed above

AND any circumstances where you suspect that a child is currently at risk of harm.

4.3 PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

It is expected that you will:

- Be caring, respectful compassionate and take an interest in the children and young people in your care
- Avoid as far as possible being alone with a child and young person and if required discuss strategies to allow for observation beforehand
- Avoid favouring individual children and young people and treat them all equally
- Be equally available to all children and young people
- Avoid offering or receiving gifts to or from individual children and young people
- Remain removed from personal relationships with children and young people
- Restrict the transportation of children and young people in your car to circumstances that are in accordance with prescribed policy
- Ensure that physical contact with children and young people is reasonable for the purpose of their management or care. Examples include:
 - assessing a child or young person who is injured or ill
 - comforting an upset child
 - guiding a child or young person in a non-threatening manner
 - protecting a child or young person from imminent danger to himself/herself or to others
 - demonstrating or guiding a particular action or skill as part of drama or other activities within the lesson

Acceptable physical contact with children and young people

Physical contact should be appropriate given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the child.

Physical contact should be consistent with any specific management plan for specific children.

Physical intervention (including physical restraint, removals or escorts) should be avoided and used only as a last resort to ensure safety and protection of children and others.

Physical intervention may be regarded as appropriate when a child or young person is causing, or at risk of causing injury or harm to self or others.

4.4 INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICES

The following practices are inconsistent with the values of the parish you represent and are therefore not permitted:

- the application of corporal punishment or physical force to punish or correct a child or young person
- using an object, such as a book to gain a child's attention in a hostile or inappropriate physical manner
- hitting, kicking, shaking pulling, shoving, grabbing, pinching, poking or pushing a child or young person
- holding or restraining a child or young person other than to prevent injury or harm to them or others intimidating, humiliating or swearing at a child or young person
- locking a child or young person in a confined space
- refusing biological needs or basic necessities
- using practices which instil fear or cause a to feel alienated
- having in your possession or providing children or young people with alcohol or prohibited substances
- providing tobacco or tobacco-based products to children and young people

- engaging in conduct of a sexual nature that is improper including inappropriate touching, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, suggestive remarks or innuendo, obscene gestures, sexual exhibitionism. Personal correspondence, exposure of children or young people to sexual behaviour
- exposing a child or young person to material that contains violent, inappropriate sexual messages or adult concepts and themes that are inappropriate given their age and level of maturity

NB: EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE USE OF INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICES MAY RESULT IN THE TERMINATION OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THIS AND OTHER MINISTRY THAT INVOLVES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

5 PROTOCOLS FOR RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS AGAINST THOSE ENGAGED IN MINISTRY ON BEHALF OF THE DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA

5.1 Purpose and extent of these protocols

These protocols set out the general procedure which the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta (“the Diocese”) will follow when responding to complaints made against those engaged in parish ministry in relation to their professional conduct.

For the purpose of these protocols an employee is any person who is engaged to provide a service to the Diocese including:

- Paid staff
- Clergy
- Volunteers
- Contractors and subcontractors
- Foster carers
- Work experience participants and Students on placement; and
- Special Religious Education (SRE) teachers

Professional conduct is conduct which takes place during the course of employment. Employees have a responsibility to meet high standards of professional and ethical behaviour required by the Diocese.

5.2 Investigation and reporting

Child protection legislation requires the Diocese to report to the NSW Ombudsman and to investigate allegations or convictions of “reportable conduct” or allegations of “misconduct which may involve reportable conduct” which are made against its employees.

“Reportable conduct” means:

- any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence), or
- any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child, or
- Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child, whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child

5.3 Stages in the conduct of an investigation of a complaint

a. *Identification of an allegation of “reportable conduct”*

A complaint may need to be clarified so that:

- it is clear whether an allegation of “reportable conduct” is actually being made and, if so, what category of reportable conduct is relevant

- investigators are clear about what they are investigating
- persons subject of allegations are clear about what they need to respond to

Details to be clarified might include:

- the identity of the person making the allegation and (if different) the identity of the alleged victim
- the identity of the employee against whom the allegation is made
- when and where the alleged incident or incidents occurred, and
- a description of the action and/or omissions which form the basis of the allegation against the employee

b. Investigative Stage

During this time, an impartial investigator is appointed and proper enquiries are made of the child(ren) involved, the person subject of the allegation, and other witnesses, by way of interview and/or the collection of other relevant information.

c. Determination of a finding

At the conclusion of the investigation the investigator will present all of the evidence to the Diocese. The Diocese will then make a finding, on the balance of probabilities, in relation to each allegation. The available findings are:

- sustained (ie a finding that the conduct occurred), or
- not sustained – insufficient evidence (ie there is some evidence of weight however there is insufficient evidence available to reasonably establish that the alleged conduct did occur), or
- not sustained – lack of evidence of weight (ie where the evidence is of such poor probative value or lacking in weight, such as to warrant a finding that, on the balance of probabilities, the conduct did not occur), or
- false (ie where inquiries into the matter show reportable conduct or an act of violence did not occur). Some of these matters may be vexatious, for example where inquiries into the matter show the allegation was made without substance and to cause distress to the person against whom the allegation was made, or
- not reportable conduct (ie where inquiries into the matter show the conduct was not reportable). For example, use of force that was trivial or negligible in the circumstances, conduct that was reasonable in the circumstances or accidental.

This may include ‘misconceived’ matters, where inquiries into the matter show that, even though the allegation was made in good faith, it was based on a misunderstanding of what actually occurred and the incident was not reportable conduct.

d. Reporting and disciplinary action

The finding will inform a final risk assessment and any action the Diocese considers necessary to mitigate risk. This may include disciplinary action.

The Diocese will also need to consider whether it has legal obligation to notify the employee’s details to the Office of the Children’s Guardian where there has been a finding of sexual misconduct or serious physical assault.

A final report will also be submitted to the Office of the NSW Ombudsman. The NSW Ombudsman will then assess whether the process was procedurally fair and the findings and outcome were appropriate.

5.4 The requirements of procedural fairness

Procedural fairness means that an employee has:

A right to an impartial decision:

- a. The investigators and other decision-makers should conduct all aspects of the process in an impartial and objective manner without prejudging the matters under consideration.
- b. The employee should be given an unbiased hearing of his/her responses both to the matters alleged and to any proposed adverse finding or recommended disciplinary action.

A right to be heard:

- a. Prior to being interviewed, employees should be advised of the allegation in as much detail as possible to enable them to respond, and should be provided with a summary of the employer's current investigation process and/or a copy of this document.
- b. Employees should be provided with reasonable notice regarding arrangements for any interview regarding the allegations, although an employee may waive the notice period and request the interview proceed at a mutually acceptable earlier time.
- c. Employees should be advised of the names of the people who have been appointed by the employer to conduct the investigation – any actual or perceived conflicts of interest should be addressed by an open and transparent process. If such concerns are not resolved, it may be advisable to appoint an alternative investigator.
- d. During the investigation phase of the process, employees should be provided with sufficient information to enable a response to each allegation.
- e. Employees should be provided with reasonable opportunities to respond to the allegations whether at interview and/or in writing.
- f. Employees should be advised of and given an opportunity to comment upon any proposed adverse finding, any proposed report to the Office of the Children's Guardian and disciplinary action. The employee's comments should be considered prior to the final determination of the findings and disciplinary action.
- g. At any stage in the process, employees may access the investigation file, and shall be informed of this right.

7.5 Digital Technology Policy

PART 1: INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE and SCOPE

i. Preamble

The Diocese of Parramatta ('the Diocese') actively encourages and embraces the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and social media. ICT and social media are a powerful means of evangelisation but we must engage them in a safe, responsible and civil manner. ICT and social media can offer many benefits to our Diocese.

Pope Benedict XVI has called on Christians to use this technology: *"I would like then to invite Christians, confidently and with an informed and responsible creativity, to join the network of relationships which the digital era has made possible."* (**Message for the 45th World Communications Day**) The reason is simple: *"The development of the new technologies and the larger digital world represents a great resource for humanity as a whole and for every individual, and it can act as a stimulus to encounter and dialogue. But this development likewise represents a great opportunity for believers. No door can or should be closed to those who, in the name of the Risen Christ, are committed to drawing near to others."* (**Message for the 44th World Communications Day**)

Whilst the Diocese recognises the benefits of ICT and social media, it acknowledges there are risks from its inappropriate use that could harm people and the reputation of the Diocese. Therefore, the following policy outlines the acceptable use of ICT and social media.

ii. Introduction and Purpose

This policy sets out the basis upon which you are able to use the ICT facilities owned by the Diocese and located in the Diocesan buildings and/or which are serviced by the Diocese, including its offices, parishes, schools, and agencies. It also sets out expectations of clergy, religious and Church personnel, both paid and volunteer, with respect to the use of ICT and social media in the course of their ministry and work.

Consistent with the principles of ***Integrity in Ministry: A Document of Principles and Standards for Catholic Clergy and Religious in Australia (June 2004)***, clergy and religious engaged in ministry on behalf of the Diocese have a responsibility at all times to use ICT and social media to protect, honour and advance the dignity of every human person by demonstrating sensitivity, reverence and respect in their relationships.

Consistent with the principles of ***Integrity in the Service of the Church: A Resource Document for Principles and Standards for Lay Workers in the Catholic Church of Australia (September 2011)***, lay workers in the Catholic Church are also required to adhere to the principles of upholding the dignity of all people and their right to respect.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with specific agency or parish policies related to using technology provided by the Diocese, using the internet provided by the Diocese and accessing social media. In circumstances of inconsistency, this policy shall apply.

iii. Scope

This policy applies to all clergy, religious, staff, agencies and volunteers in ministry and work or volunteer for the Diocese of Parramatta.

PART 2: POLICY DETAILS

i. Property

The Diocese, parishes of the Diocese and agencies of the Diocese provide ICT equipment, including computers, mobile phones, hardware and software to personnel engaged in Parish and Diocesan work. The contents of work/ ministry related files, documents, e-mails, attachments and/or messages created and received by its personnel remain the property of the Diocese at all times. Parish Priests and Directors of Agencies remain the record-keepers of these documents.

ii. Authorised Websites, Social Media Assets and Administrative Control

Websites, social media sites, Twitter and other social media accounts, e-mail accounts or any other electronic medium bearing the insignia, name or any identifier of the Diocese or the Bishop of Parramatta, or a parish or agency of the Diocese, or which a reasonable person would presume be authorized by the Diocese, must be authorized by the Bishop or his Vicar General and be the responsibility of the Chancery, Parish Priest, Agency Head or other appropriate supervisor. These are considered the Diocese's social media assets.

iii. Monitoring

The contents of electronic communications on the Diocesan, Parish or Agency ICT systems may be examined by the Bishop, the Diocese or by a third party on behalf of the Diocese. This would include electronic communications which are sent to you or by you both internally and externally. During the examination, the Parish Priest/ Supervisor may be present.

ICT of the Diocese are tools to be used primarily for business, pastoral and educational purposes. You therefore have a responsibility to use these tools in an appropriate, professional and lawful manner.

All messages on ICT of the Diocese of Parramatta will be treated as business, pastoral or educational related messages, which may be monitored. Accordingly, you should not expect that any information or document transmitted or stored on such equipment will be entirely private. Cases which involve confidentiality issues will be discussed between the person involved and the supervisor or Bishop.

The Diocese of Parramatta will monitor the use of digital technology of the Diocese to access the internet, both during working hours and outside of those hours. This includes the internet sites and content that you access and the length of time you spend using the internet. This monitoring arrangement applies to all Diocesan Personnel, including clergy and religious engaged in ministry on behalf of the Diocese.

iv. Personal Use

You are permitted to use the ICT facilities to send and receive personal messages, provided that it does not interfere with the performance of your duties. This permission may have exceptions depending on your specific role within the Diocese.

You should bear in mind that any use of the internet (including social media) or email for personal purposes is still subject to the same terms and conditions as described in this policy.

v. Content

Diocesan Personnel have a responsibility to make effective and appropriate use of ICT and social media by avoiding the circulation of derogatory or offensive communications and all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

The overarching principle is that all communication should be marked by Christian charity and respect.

Therefore you should use ICT and social media in a manner that witnesses God's love for every human person through the demonstration of sensitivity, reverence and respect in your communication with others.

You should not use ICT and social media, including internet or email for the following purposes:

- To abuse, vilify, defame, harass or discriminate (by virtue of sex, race, religion, national origin or other);
- To visit pornographic sites, download store or transmit pornographic material or messages;
- To send or receive obscene or pornographic material;
- To injure the reputation of the Diocese or in a manner that may cause embarrassment to the Diocese;
- To spam or mass mail or to send chain mail;
- To infringe the copyright or the other intellectual property rights of another person;
- To perform any other unlawful or inappropriate act; or
- To download video files or downstream content from the internet that is not related to the work of the ministry, parish, agency or office.

Comments that are not appropriate in ministry and in Diocesan workplaces will also be regarded as being inappropriate when sent by electronic communications; this includes through email, SMS and the internet. Electronic communication messages can easily be misconstrued. Words and attached documents should therefore be carefully chosen and expressed in a clear, professional manner. It is important to be mindful that, before sending any electronic communication, it be assessed in terms of its potential to be perceived as being aggressive, provocative or offensive to the recipient. In such circumstances, it is expected that the messages and attachments should be amended to ensure that the nature and form of the communication is respectful, courteous and professional.

It is also important to be mindful that Commonwealth Law stipulates that it is an offence to use a “carriage service” to menace, harass or cause offence and carries heavy penalties. *Carriage service* has the same meaning as in the *Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)* s7; that is, a service for carrying communications that includes telephone calls, internet, email and SMS. Below is extracted the relevant provision of the Criminal Code (Cth).

Criminal Code (Cth) 474.17 Using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if:

(a) the person uses a carriage service; and

(b) the person does so in a way (whether by the method of use or the content of a communication, or both) that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, menacing, harassing or offensive.

PART 3: SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MEDIA

Social Networking and Media offers many opportunities and challenges to the Diocese. These can be grouped into three primary categories:

- a) Visibility
- b) Community
- c) Accountability

i. Visibility

Given the size of social media, it offers an excellent opportunity for the Church’s visibility and evangelisation. Careful consideration should be made to determine the most appropriate form of social media and networking and the needs of a parish, agency or ministry. Seek advice on appropriate forms of engagement. Whilst social media and networking tools are generally free, they do consume time and require appropriate planning and monitoring. These plans should include regular updates.

ii. Community

Social networking can be used to enhance the development and support pastoral, community and professional relationships. However, social networking sites should not be seen as a substitute for other community life and personal interactions.

iii. *Accountability*

Social networking provides a tool for building community. Membership in community requires accountability and responsibility. Users expect site administrators to allow dialogue, to provide information and to acknowledge mistakes – like real communities, online communities of the Diocese must be trusted. Therefore it is important that creators and administrators use social networking carefully.

iv. *Professional Boundaries*

Diocesan Personnel (including clergy and religious) have a responsibility to engage in social networking sites within the constraints of appropriate boundaries. A clear distinction should be maintained between personal and professional communication in the social networking environment at all times.

v. *Personal Social Media and Networking*

The Diocese acknowledges that many personnel, be they Clerical, Religious, Employees or volunteers, will use social media and networking for personal use. For any personal use a following notice must be displayed:

“The views expressed on this website are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer”.

Despite this acknowledgement, Diocesan personnel should understand that their manner and what they publish, be it “private” or public, may never be contrary to the Diocese or teachings of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, you must never speak on behalf of the Diocese, Agency, Parish or Community unless you have appropriate permission to do so. Official communication of the Diocese must be authorised by the Bishop by delegation through His staff or the Communications Director or her designate.

PART 4: ICT AND SOCIAL MEDIA/NETWORKING USE (SOCIAL NETWORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE)

i. *Introduction and Consent*

Church Personnel of the Diocese of Parramatta comply with all aspects of the Child Protection Policy of the Diocese of Parramatta. This policy is available on the website. Church Personnel are forbidden to post or distribute personal identifiable information, including photos and/or video of any child under the age of eighteen without verifiable consent of a parent or guardian. Personal identifiable information includes full name, photos, home address, email or social networking address (including tagging), telephone number or any information that would allow someone to identify or contact the child. Verifiable consent can take the form of release/permission form, an email from a parent/guardian, or SMS. Please retain this consent for future reference.

ii. *“Friending” Children*

Church personnel may not initiate friend requests or similar with anyone under 18 that they meet through their Church employment or ministry. It is recommended that church ministries use secret groups for parish youth groups and respond in general. The primary purpose of such communication shall be for providing information related to a ministry or event or to answer questions about the faith.

iii. *Guidelines for communicating with children using ICT and social media*

- a) Parents must be notified of the methods of communication which are used in each particular ministry and must be granted access in such communication.
- b) Social Media/Networking may not be used to communicate with children under the age of 14.
- c) As a general rule, personnel may not contact children individually. When the contact is such that a group response is not appropriate, the adult is to avoid using a personal, social media account to respond. Adults should maintain copies of all such messages.
- d) Acceptable hours for communication with children via ICT and Social Media/Networking shall be between 7:00am and 10:00pm. Communication outside of the acceptable hours may be only used in an emergency.

- e) Online 1-1 chatting is not permitted. If the matter is of a deeply personal nature and is initiated by the child, every effort should be made to not allow the conversation to continue, without being insensitive to this situation. It is preferable that the matter is discussed on a face to face level. However, if for some reason this is not possible, the adult must keep a record of the conversation. It is suggested that adults block chat functions to children if possible.
- f) If any knowledge from online activities of child abuse or anything contrary to the Child Protection Policy takes place, the law enforcement officers and Diocesan Child Protection Officer must both be immediately notified for appropriate course of action.

PART 5: ICT AND SOCIAL NETWORKING USE (OLDER THAN 18)

i. Friending

Any Diocesan Personnel who uses social networking and who wishes, as part of this activity, to set up a personal profile which might involve 'friending' those to whom he/she ministers, must relate to them in a professional and Christian manner.

ii. Official Diocesan Social Networking Sites

All official social networking sites require the approval of the relevant parish priest/supervisor. Such approved sites should be clearly named as group sites and not as a site belonging to individuals. Such groups should be clearly placed under the 'Religious organisations' grouping, and in the descriptor it should clearly state that it is an Official Group of the Diocese. Once it has been created, the Diocesan Social Media Coordinator will be made aware and given administrative access; and it is to be recorded in a diocesan log. Once a presence has been created, the administrators must ensure that there is a plan for usage, that posting is kept regular and that if they stop being involved they must notify their parish priest or supervisor.

iii. Isolation

Great care must be taken not to rely exclusively on social networking as a means of communication. To do this could be to exclude the poor – those who cannot afford a computer, who live in localities with poor internet connectivity, who struggle with literacy or who face other challenges which place them outside of the online world.

iv. Privacy and social networking

Great care should be used to protect the personal and sensitive information of people, especially young people. The circulation of photographs, video clips, full names, contact details and other information should not be placed on social networking sites without their permission.

v. Privacy

In the course of carrying out your duties or ministry on behalf of the Diocese of Parramatta, you may have access to, or handle personal information relating to others. Email and electronic communication should not be used to disclose personal information of another, except in accordance with the Privacy Policy of the Diocese of Parramatta or with proper authorisation.

The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) requires both you and the Diocese to take reasonable steps to protect the personal information that is held, from misuse and unauthorised access. It is therefore critical that you take responsibility for the security of your ICT and not allow it to be used by an unauthorised party, which specifically includes anyone who is not an employee or priest of the Diocese.

In order to comply with the obligations of the Diocese under *The Privacy Act*, you are encouraged to use the blind copy option when sending emails to multiple recipients where disclosure of email addresses will impinge upon the privacy of the recipients.

vi. Security

You may be assigned a username and be required to select a password to use the ICT and social media facilities of the Diocese. You should ensure that these details are not disclosed to anyone else and should therefore ensure that you take steps to keep these details secure.

You are encouraged either to lock your screen or log-out when you leave your computer. This will avoid others gaining unauthorised access to personal or confidential information.

vii. General

The terms and recommended conduct described in this Policy are not intended to be exhaustive, nor do they anticipate every possible use of ICT and social media facilities. You should act with caution and take into account the underlying principles intended by this Policy. If you feel unsure of the appropriate action relating to use of ICT and social media, you should speak to your Supervisor or the Vicar General.

viii. Interaction with other policies of the Diocese of Parramatta

It is expected that this Policy is read and understood in conjunction with the existing policies and procedures of the Diocese of Parramatta or the wider Church applicable in Parramatta. In particular, it is expected that you understand and regularly review the following policies of the Diocese of Parramatta.

ix. Breach of the Policy and Compliance

a) Breach of Policy

Inappropriate use of ICT and social media of the Diocese of Parramatta, including breaches of this Policy by you can result in, but is not limited to, any one or more of the following:

- Disciplinary action
- Loss of internet or ICT privileges
- Dismissal
- Notification to an external agency
- Criminal charges

Contractors who engage in misbehaviour may have their contract or engagement with the Diocese terminated or not renewed.

b) Compliance

Those who use social media in their work must attend annual compliance sessions conducted by the Diocese. This compliance will keep the user informed of the latest changes to any policy and also techniques to enhance their use of social media for the purpose of evangelisation.

c) Definitions

Electronic Communication: Electronic communication refers to any communication that is transmitted through the internet, phone networks and/or social media. This includes but is not limited to: Email, SMS, Internet Messaging and Chat, Internet Posting. This may include but is not limited to the transmission of Text, Audio, Images, or Video through an electromagnetic service.

ICT – Information and Communication Technology: This refers to “hardware” Computers, Phones, Smart Phones, Faxes, Modems or any other electromagnetic storage or communication transmission device.

Social Media/Networking: Refers to a site on the internet which allows for direct contact and posting or messaging. Examples include but are not limited to: “Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Google+, Instagram, Foursquare, MySpace, Orkut, Pinterest, Flickr”

7.6 Diocesan Privacy Policy

Introduction

The Diocese of Parramatta (“Diocese”), as part of the Roman Catholic Church, conducts a range of activities in order to fulfil its mission of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Those activities include parishes, schools and welfare agencies. In conducting those activities, the Diocese collects personal information. The information is collected to enable the Diocese to minister to the faithful and to fulfil its canonical and civil law obligations under the Code of Canon Law and under the Civil Law (both State and Commonwealth).

The Diocese is bound by the 2001 amendments to the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (“Act”), which include the National Privacy Principles. The Diocese respects the rights of individuals to keep their personal information private and to ensure that it is accurate.

This policy describes ways in which the Diocese gathers, stores, disseminates and disposes of personal information.

Application

This policy applies to the Diocese and to all of the agencies and organisations, which are part of that juridical person, except those having their own privacy policies, which have been approved by the Trustees of the Diocese.

Other separate juridical persons which are subject to the authority of the Bishop of Parramatta and which are bound by the Act and the National Privacy Principles are requested to draft privacy policies consistent with the civil law and their own particular circumstances and to seek the advice of the Bishop in relation to them prior to adoption.

This policy applies to:

- Parishioners
- Students in Diocesan schools and their parents or guardians
- Volunteers, contractors and prospective employees of the Diocese
- Members of the general public
- Any other parties to whom the Act applies.

This policy and the provisions of the Act do not apply to records or information held or collected on behalf of, or relating to, existing or former employees of the Diocese. This policy does not apply to personal information collected prior to 21 December 2001.

This policy applies where personal information is collected and/or used by Diocese.

“Personal information” means information or an opinion, whether true or not, and whether or not recorded in material form, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can be reasonably ascertained, from the information or opinion.

In addition to personal information, the Act also regulates the collection of sensitive information, including personal information about racial or ethnic origin, religion, criminal record, sexuality, and union activities. Sensitive information is also health information about an individual.

Purpose of Collection of Personal Information

The Diocese collects personal information for many purposes, including:

- To minister to the faithful and to provide pastoral care
- To fulfil educational needs and expectations in Diocesan schools

- To provide welfare and support
- Fundraising activities
- To administer sacraments
- To assess the employment applications of prospective employees
- Other purposes that may arise from time to time

Collection of Personal Information

The Diocese collects personal information in various ways, including:

- You providing personal information about yourself and/or your child to the Diocese, a parish, school, or Diocesan welfare agency
- You providing the Diocese with your personal information and various documentation relating to possible employment with the Diocese
- Other methods that may arise from time to time

The Diocese will endeavour to collect your personal information directly from you. Where this is not possible, your consent will be sought prior to collecting your personal information from a third party. If your consent cannot be obtained, the Diocese will have regard to the requirements and exemptions of the Act before making such a collection.

In the case of children, personal information will ordinarily be collected from their parents or guardians, unless specific and/or unusual circumstances require that the collection be made directly from the relevant child.

For prospective employees, the Diocese may collect personal information by speaking with referees. The Diocese may contact applicants' previous employers who have not been nominated as referees. Should this be the case, applicants will be advised prior to such contact being made.

Information Held

The personal or sensitive information that the Diocese holds about you may include the following:

- Personal contact details
- Sacramental records
- Information relating to your application for employment
- Any health information required by law
- Any personal information about you that will enable the Diocese to satisfy its duty of care to other individuals with whom you may come into contact in the course of your involvement with the Diocese
- Information relating to pastoral care needs
- Information relating to a child's enrolment at a Diocesan school
- Any other information about you that may be relevant to the contact that you have with the Diocese

How Your Personal Information is Used and Disclosed

Your personal information will be used for the purpose for which it was collected, or for a related secondary purpose. If your personal information is quite sensitive, then it will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected or for a directly related secondary purpose. Your personal information may also be used for another purpose where:

- We have your consent
- You would reasonably expect that to occur
- The Diocese is legally required to do so

Your personal information will generally be used to attend to any pastoral care, ministry, educational or welfare needs that you may have. If you are a prospective employee, your personal information will be used to assess your suitability for the position for which you have applied. Your personal information may also be used to assess your suitability for a position for which you have not applied but to which the Diocese believes you may be suited. Should this be the case, the Diocese will seek your consent before considering you for such a position.

Other related secondary purposes are:

- To minister to the faithful and to provide pastoral care
- To fulfil educational needs and expectations in Diocesan schools
- To provide welfare and support
- For fundraising activities
- To administer sacraments
- To assess the employment applications of prospective employees
- For other purposes that may arise from time to time

The Diocese may distribute aggregated statistical information to the Vatican and the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference for reporting purposes. In most cases, this information will not contain any features that will identify relevant individuals.

The Diocese is a large entity with many agencies and organizations. Information may be shared over the whole range of Diocesan bodies.

In some limited circumstances, contractors to the Diocese may have access to your personal information. In most cases, confidentiality agreements are in place with these contractors so that personal information.

Website

The Diocese has a website located at www.parra.catholic.org.au.

This website contains information about Catholic parishes and clergy, mass times, pastoral care, current issues, other Catholic websites, prayer, educational and other services, the Bishop, administrative matters, and other topics.

The Diocese does not record the personal information of visitors to the website.

Storage of Information

The Diocese takes reasonable steps to protect and secure personal information from unauthorised access, loss, misuse, disclosure or alteration. These steps include restricted access to Diocesan offices and other areas where personal information is stored, and in computer files that can be accessed only by authorised individuals using login names and secret passwords. All parishes, schools, and welfare agencies of the Diocese are required to do the same.

The Diocese will store personal information for such a period of time as the Diocese deems necessary.

Disclosure of Personal Information

Disclosure of your personal information will only be made, with your consent, to individuals or companies outside of the Diocese.

In some limited circumstances, contractors to the Diocese may have access to your personal information. In most cases, confidentiality agreements are in place with these contractors, so that personal information that they may come into contact with in the course of their work with the Diocese is protected.

Accessing Your Information

You may request access to personal information that is held about you. Access to your personal information must be provided to you, except in specific circumstances as identified by the Act. The Diocese is entitled to impose a reasonable charge on you for providing you with the personal information, particularly where photocopying is necessary.

To access your personal information, you must make a written request to the Parish Priest, Principal, or the Manager of the relevant agency. Should you be uncertain of contact details, please contact the Vicar General at the Diocesan Chancery, telephone 9683 6277, address Level 2, 12 Victoria Road, Parramatta NSW 2150.

Accuracy of Information

The Diocese will take all reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of your personal information. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that your personal information is kept up to date. If you wish to change or modify your personal information, you should make a written request to the Parish Priest, Principal, or Manager of the relevant agency. Your written request should set out the changes that you wish to make.

Consequences of Not Providing Personal Information

Subject to certain exceptions, the Diocese cannot collect your personal or sensitive information without your consent.

If you withhold your consent, however, the Diocese may be limited in its ability to:

- Attend to your welfare needs
- Attend to your child's educational needs
- Attend to any pastoral care or other ministry needs that you may have
- Offer you employment
- Deal with any inquiries, difficulties or concerns that you may have.

Questions and Complaints

If you have any queries about this policy or wish to make a complaint about the manner in which the Diocese has handled your personal information, in the first instance please contact the relevant Parish Priest, Principal or the Manager of the relevant agency.

If the complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may then wish to make a complaint to the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner, who is responsible for the enforcement of the Act.

You may contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner as follows:

Office of the Privacy Commissioner
Telephone: 1300 363 992
GPO Box 5218
Sydney NSW 1042
Facsimile: 02 9284 9666
Email: privacy@privacy.gov.au

7.7 Frequently Asked Questions

1. I'm a youth leader and I am still below 18: do I need to have a Working with Children Check?

No, you are exempted because of your age and are not required to have a Working with Children Check.

Youth leader roles may be assigned to people over the age of 16 years but preferably they will be over 18 years

<http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/New-Working-With-Children-Check/Exemptions>

2. As a volunteer, do I have to get a Working with Children Check?

If you volunteer in child-related work, you will need a Working with Children Check, unless you qualify for an exemption (www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-Children/New-Working-With-Children-Check/Exemptions) or you have already obtained a Working with Children Check because you work in child-related employment. A volunteer is someone who does not receive payment for his/her work. Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses does not constitute payment. The steps are as follows:

Step 1: Complete an online application form

Go to www.check.kids.nsw.gov.au and complete the online application form. If you do not have access to the internet, please telephone (02) 9286 7219 for assistance.

Please make sure the details you provide are EXACTLY THE SAME as the details on your identity documents. If you have submitted the form with a mistake, please redo the form to avoid problems with the proof of identity requirement at Step 2.

Ensure you select the correct category: volunteer worker. If you are a volunteer and you choose 'paid worker' by mistake, the \$80 fee for paid workers is not refundable.

Once you have submitted the form, you will receive an application number that looks like this: APP1234567.

If you need help, watch the online tutorial on YouTube. More video tutorials are available on www.kids.nsw.gov.au – online tutorials.

Step 2: Present proof of identity

Go to a NSW Motor Registry, Government Access Centre, or Service NSW office.

Find a location at www.service.nsw.gov.au/service-centre.

- You will need your application number and proof of your identity. You must have both of these items for your application to proceed.
- As a volunteer, you will not be required to pay the fee of \$80.
- You cannot submit proof of identity on behalf of someone else. You must appear in person with your own documentation.
- Proof of identity cannot be performed outside of NSW. It must be completed at a NSW Motor Registry, Government Access Centre, or Service NSW office.

You will receive your outcome and Working with Children Check number by email (or post if you do not have an email address). If you have not received your results within four weeks, please email your details and application number to check@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au.

For more information, please go to www.kids.nsw.gov.au – *Fact Sheets and Resources – Fact Sheet 16 (March 2014) – How do I apply?*

Details of your application process must be provided to your Parish so that they are recorded on the Diocesan Register

3. I am paid to work as a Parish Youth Coordinator. What forms do I need to complete?

You will need to complete the Working with Children Check, if you are in paid child-related employment. For the Working with Children Check, a child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

There are three tests that determine whether you are in child-related employment.

- Is the nature of the work “employment”?
- Is the work in a “child-related” setting?
- Do you need to have direct unsupervised contact with children to do their job?

If the answer to all these tests is “yes”, you provide child-related employment. Therefore if you are the preferred applicant for child related employment, you will need to complete a Working with Children Check, preferably prior to your application for the position. Go to www.check.kids.nsw.gov.au The process is outlined in the previous question.

As a paid employee, you will need to pay a fee of \$80 for a five year clearance.

4. How often do I need to get a Working with Children Check?

The Working with Children Check lasts for five years, is portable and renewable.

5. Who is prohibited from working with children?

When you apply for a Working with Children Check, there are only two outcomes: a clearance to work with children or a bar against working with children.

If you are subject to a risk assessment you may become barred from working with children. For more information, see www.kids.nsw.gov.au – *Fact Sheets and Resources – Fact Sheet 12 – Bars and Appeals*.

Offences listed in Schedule 2 of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* are disqualifying offences which means they will lead to an automatic bar against working with children. Details of Schedule 2 offences are available at www.kids.nsw.gov.au – *Fact Sheets and Resources – Fact Sheet 13 – Disqualifying Offences (Schedule 2)*.

If a bar is being considered, you will be contacted by telephone and by letter to inform you of the proposed decision. You will also be invited to submit information which may affect the decision, and this information will be taken into account in deciding the final outcome.

If the Children’s Guardian has decided not to grant you a clearance to work with children (that is, to impose a bar), you will receive a letter informing you of this decision. The letter will also provide you with the reasons for the decision.

If you are already in child-related work (or planning to be in such employment), your employer (or proposed employer), will be notified that you have become barred and instructed to remove you from child-related work. However, no information regarding your work or criminal records will be shared with your employer (or proposed employer).

Once a bar is in place, it is an offence to work with children for five years and penalties apply. If you are already working with children, you must immediately remove yourself from this work. It does not matter whether the work is paid or voluntary.

6. A child in the youth group has just disclosed to me that they were victim of an abuse. I'm very busy now with the youth group activity. Can I report the incident later at the end of the meeting? What is the priority?

It is important to firstly reassure the child or young person and encourage them to speak with you about their disclosure. Be sensitive to the privacy and emotional state of the person. Arrange to speak privately with the person as soon as possible so that you are able to record details and report as soon as possible. Each case is different, in some cases it may be necessary to ask someone to stand in for you while you speak privately and be with the person if they are distressed or require your attention immediately.

7. I'm organising an outing with the youth group and some parents have offered to come along and help out during the day. Do they also need to be checked, if it is just a one off activity?

Volunteering is usually exempt from a Working with Children Check for parents, where the involvement is up to five days in a year, with minimal direct or unsupervised contact with children, the work is not part of a formal mentoring program or does not involve intimate, personal care of children with a disability.

However, it is recommended that the Code of Conduct is also issued, so that the parent is aware of what is expected of him/her from the start.

8. I'm organising an interstate trip with the youth group. Is it enough that I comply with the Child Protection regulations in NSW or would I need to enquire about different procedures in place in the State we will be visiting?

There is a need to comply with laws operating within the State, where the appointment took place. In addition to this, there may be a requirement to comply with child protection legislation that exists in the State that you are visiting. If you are uncertain seek advice before you leave and seek assistance from the Diocese while you are away.

9. A guest speaker is coming to a discussion forum I'm organising in the Parish for the youth group. Does the guest speaker need to get a Working with Children Check?

Firstly check with the Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards. In some circumstances the guest speaker will be exempted from obtaining a Working with Children Check, if it is a one-off occasion and the person is in the presence of one or more other adults.

10. What about a visiting priest coming from another Diocese? Any procedure to follow?

There are very clear processes in place for visiting clergy. Visiting clergy should contact the Diocesan Chancery, before coming in to the Diocese to deliver ministry.

8. Definitions

Allegation

A claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically one made without proof.

Code of Conduct

A statement that provides direction to workers about acceptable and unacceptable conduct that is expected when one assumes that role.

Commission for Children and Young People

NSW government agency that collect data relating to the suitability of people to work with children. It also conducts research and convenes activities to promote the rights of children and young people and the issues they face in our society.

Disclosure

The communication of important and sensitive information that requires reporting to occur.

Domestic and Family Violence

Violence of a verbal, physical, emotional or sexual nature that occurs within the home between family members or residents within that home.

Duty of Care

A legal duty that is owed to others when one assumes a role to provide leadership, care or direction to another person.

Finding

A determination made at the conclusion of an investigation. Usually the finding is made on the balance of probabilities and may be found to be sustained or not sustained.

Grooming

Conduct that encourages another less powerful person to be influenced into entering into sexual activity or other inappropriate behavior.

Head of Agency

Ultimate leader for the purpose of legal compliance.

Mandatory Reporting

Those who work with children and young people who are required by law to notify the NSW Department of Family and Community Services of children and young people who, in the course of their duties, are identified as being at risk of significant harm.

National Criminal History Check

A national criminal history check is a 'point in time' name-based check of an individual's criminal history record. The process involves CrimTrac searching against a central index of names of persons of interest to police services in order to identify any potential matches. Criminal history information is released subject to relevant Commonwealth/ State/Territory spent convictions / non-disclosure legislation and/or information release policies.

Physical Assault

Physical assault refers to a hostile or reckless act, application of force, assault or non-accidental injury and/or harm to a person. This can include pushing, shoving, throwing objects, hitting or the display of threatening behavior that leads a person to fear that an assault is likely to occur. Physical harm does not have to be experienced in order for an assault to have occurred.

Professional Boundaries

Limits that define appropriate conduct in accordance with the professional role or duties being assumed.

Relevant Completed Disciplinary Proceedings

A disciplinary process relating to an allegation of physical sexual or psychological harm, sexual misconduct or violence in the workplace that has been finalised and reported, if required, to the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

Reportable Conduct

Any complaint of physical, sexual or psychological abuse, sexual misconduct or violence in the workplace.

Risk Assessment

Process of anticipating and evaluating potential for harm or injury associated with a situation, activity or individual.

Risk Management

Strategies developed in response to identified risks so that the risk is minimised or controlled.

Risk of Harm

When there is a potential that a child or young person may be injured or harmed as a result of physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or exposure to violence.

Risk of Significant Harm

Statutory threshold that is sufficiently serious to warrant a mandatory report to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services and a response from a statutory authority, irrespective of a family's consent.

Sexual Assault

Any uninvited or reckless interference or abuse of a sexual nature against a person.

Sexual Misconduct

Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including inappropriate conversations, comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner, unwarranted and inappropriate touching, sexual exhibitionism, correspondence of a sexual nature.

Working with Children Check

Comprehensive screening process to determine suitability for child related employment, including checks of referees, relevant completed disciplinary proceedings and criminal record.



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