

## **DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING OFFICE CHARTER (Endorsed by Bishop Long on 24/10/19)**

### **1. Background**

The Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards in the Diocese of Parramatta (OSPS) was established in July 2014 to give contemporary expression to its commitment to the safety and well-being of children and other vulnerable persons as they engage in the ministry of the Dioceses.

Since that time emphasis has been given to the delivery of services that progressed its core functions which are:

- Prevention (including Education)
- Compliance (including screening and audit)
- Complaint management (including investigations)
- Outreach (including Healing & Support services)
- Legal (including civil litigation, criminal matters, information exchange and REDRESS)
- Research (to ensure implementation of contemporary best practice)
- Collaboration (internal and external)

Since that time the Diocese has engaged in processes to ensure that all Diocesan agencies and ministries have acquired the capacity to embed safeguarding practices locally and within a more decentralised structure. The structure of a new Diocesan Safeguarding Office is designed to embed the safeguarding principles into the culture, leadership, decision-making, and practices of each agency and ministry of the Diocese. The key purpose of the revised model is to ensure local Church environments are capable and accountable in creating safe environments for children and vulnerable people.

### **2. Diocesan Safeguarding Office 2020**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Office 2020 (the DSO) is established to support and monitor the establishment of a more evolved model of service delivery that is concerned with



empowering agencies and ministries of the Diocese to successfully embed safeguarding principles and practices as set out in the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

The scope of implementation of the National Safeguarding Standards includes vulnerable people and children.

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards are summarised below:

*Standard One: Committed leadership, governance and culture*

*Standard Two: Children are safe, informed and participate*

*Standard Three: Partnering with families, carers and communities*

*Standard Four: Equity is promoted and diversity is respected*

*Standard Five: Robust human resource management*

*Standard Six: Effective complaints management*

*Standard Seven: Ongoing education and training*

*Standard Eight: safe physical and online environments*

*Standard Nine: Continuous improvement*

*Standard Ten: Policies and procedures support child safety*

The DSO will be responsible for supporting a localised approach to safeguarding service delivery by providing a monitoring and educative role. The new structure establishes greater accountability at the local level for the integration of safeguarding principles into the culture, leadership, decision-making and practices within of each agency and ministry. It increases the voices of diversity and expertise including the appointment of a Diocesan Safeguarding Champion.

The DSO is responsible for managing centralised analysis of safeguarding data and legal matters for accountability and continual improvement.

### **3. The Diocesan Safeguarding Model**

Each Agency and Ministry will operate in close relationship with the DSO which is responsible for building the capacity of personnel to embed the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (for children and vulnerable people) into their organisations in a manner that reflects the specific features of their local context. The Head of that Agency and Ministry reports on this directly to the Bishop as per established reporting arrangements.



Each agency and ministry shall appoint a Safeguarding Manager or equivalent who will collaborate with the DSO on projects, initiatives and critical incidents that relate to children and vulnerable people.

Designated Agency and Ministry safeguarding managers or equivalent have dotted line reporting to the Head of DSO for safeguarding.

The DSO oversees all agencies and ministries within the Diocese.

The Head of the DSO will report directly to the Bishop.

#### **4. Accountability**

From January 2020, the Bishop will authorise each agency and ministry to apply appropriate resources and wisdom to assume responsibility for successfully embedding safeguarding principles into their practices in accordance with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (for children and vulnerable people).

Through the development and presentation of an Annual Safeguarding Plans each agency and ministry will account to the Bishop for the implementation of strategies, programs, projects and other initiatives that respond to the Bishop's mandate. The role of the DSO is to support agencies to develop and implement their Annual Plans.

Reports on the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards as set out in the Annual Plans will be submitted quarterly to the Bishop and reviewed by the Professional Standards Consultative Committee and Diocesan Safeguarding Champion which will make recommendations to the Bishop.

#### **5. Review**

The Bishop will review this charter before June 2021 in consultation with the Bishop's Professional Standards Consultative Panel.

**See DOS and Diocesan Safeguarding service delivery diagram attached.**