

## Whistleblower Protection Guidelines – Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults

All clergy, staff and volunteers in the Catholic Diocese of Lismore must bring safeguarding matters of concern to the attention of their supervisor/manager. This may be the Parish Priest or Head of Relevant Entity (Safeguarding Manager). You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong, but you may not feel comfortable in expressing your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear being victimised or harassed by the subject of your concerns. However, your hesitation must never result in a child, young person or vulnerable adult continuing to be unnecessarily at risk of harm.

**Be assured, your concerns will be dealt with in confidence and you will not be harassed or victimised for bringing this information to our attention.**

**Do not think “what if I am wrong?” – Think “what if I am right!”**

### Reasons for whistle blowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To protect or reduce the risks to others
- To prevent the problem from worsening and to prevent yourself from being implicated

### What stops people from whistleblowing

- Fear of getting it wrong or not being believed
- Fear of repercussions and disruption to work
- Fear of starting a chain of events that could get out of control

### How to raise a concern

- Approach your parish priest or, if you are not comfortable talking to your parish priest, contact the Safeguarding Office
- If the concern is about the parish priest contact the Safeguarding Office
- Make sure a satisfactory response is secured – don't let your concerns rest
- You are not expected to prove the truth of your concerns, but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for your concern

### What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries resulting from your concern
- The Diocese of Lismore has a responsibility to protect you from any harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if your concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith
- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence