



<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	1 October 2020
<b>REVIEW DATE</b>	1 October 2023
<b>POLICY OWNER</b>	Chancery
<b>APPLIES TO</b>	This Policy applies to clergy, members of religious institutions, employees, board members, contractors (as defined and in relation to WHS and Children's Guardian legislation and a one member corporation), volunteers, work experience students and trainees ( <b>Workers</b> ) of the Diocese.
<b>EXCLUSIONS</b>	Where an agency or entity of the Diocese has its own policy, the relevant agency or entity policy will apply to Workers engaged by those agencies or entities. In the event of conflict between the policies of agencies or entities and the Diocesan policy, the Diocesan policy prevails.
<b>RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	Code of Conduct Child Protection Policy
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)</i> <i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 (NSW)</i> <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)</i> <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 (NSW)</i> <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) (Child Employment) Regulation 2015 (NSW)</i> <i>Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)</i> <i>Children's Guardian (Transitional) Regulation 2020 (NSW)</i> <i>Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)</i>
<b>RELATED FORMS</b>	There are no forms related to this policy
<b>HEADINGS</b>	Safeguarding Commitment Gospel Values Definitions Core Principles Compliance Relevant legislation, Standards & references Breaches of this Policy Revision/ Modification History Approval Date/ Revision History
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## COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The emotional, physical and spiritual well-being and dignity of all people is an integral part of the Catholic Church. The Diocese of Lismore is committed and dedicated to safeguarding all those within our community, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Diocese of Lismore is committed to fostering communities of safety and care. We acknowledge our legal, moral, and spiritual responsibilities to care for - and uphold the dignity and rights of - children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

The Diocese of Lismore has:

1. a zero tolerance to the abuse or neglect of children, young people or vulnerable adults and commit to acting in their best interests at all times;
2. established a policy and developed a range of procedures that work together to protect, and, where required, to respond immediately and compassionately to any harm, or risk of harm; and
3. safeguarding procedures and practices underpinned by legislation – ensuring ongoing compliance, accountability and transparency in all ministries undertaken by the Church.

Creating safe environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by parishes, schools, families and communities. Safe environments are marked by collaboration, vigilance and a proactive approach to safeguarding. Workers have a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and the vulnerable through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment. All workers, including clergy, employees and volunteers are to be educated as to their responsibilities to undertake their roles in a way that enhances a safe and caring environment.

## GOSPEL VALUES

The values of love, dignity, and justice as demonstrated by Jesus underpin this policy. Jesus especially showed care for the poor, powerless, and vulnerable. He particularly loved children in their purity and innocence: “...for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs...” (Mark 10:14). All people are called to cherish and safeguard children, young people and the vulnerable from anyone who would harm them.

## DEFINITIONS

**Abuse:** There are different forms of abuse including emotional (psychological), neglect, physical, sexual

**Emotional (Psychological) abuse:** happens when a child's, or vulnerable adult's, social, emotional or intellectual development is damaged or threatened. It can include constant: rejection, teasing or bullying, yelling, withholding of affection, criticism or exposure to domestic or family violence;

**Neglect:** is when a child's, or vulnerable adult's, health and development are affected because their basic needs are not met. These needs include: food, housing, health care, adequate clothing, personal hygiene, hygienic living conditions, medical treatment and adequate supervision;

**Physical abuse:** is when a child, or vulnerable adult, suffers physical trauma or injury that is not accidental. It doesn't always leave visible marks or injuries. What matters most is the act itself that caused the trauma or injury. Physical abuse can include: hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, biting and poisoning;

**Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse occurs when a person involves a child or vulnerable adult in sexual activity, or deliberately puts the child or vulnerable adult in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age development. Considering the child or vulnerable adult to have consented to the activity is irrelevant.

**Child or Children:** for the purpose of this policy, a person under the age of sixteen (16) years.

**Diocese:** means the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lismore and includes without limitation any Diocesan agencies, corporations, entities, parishes, parish corporations and parish entities where the Worker is employed or otherwise engaged.

**Harm:** means any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect; or sexual abuse or exploitation. It may be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance; or a series or combination of acts, omission or circumstances.

**Volunteer:** for the purpose of this policy, a volunteer includes a person working in a regulated industry (i.e. aged care facility), a position of authority or responsibility (i.e. board member), a parish liturgy or sacramental role and/or a person who volunteers their time to assist with recreational activities such as cooking a bbq.

**Vulnerable Adults:** those aged 18 years or over who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

**Worker:** means clergy, employees, board members, religious, volunteers, contractors, work experience students and trainees of the Diocese.

**Young person:** a person who is aged sixteen (16) years or above but who is under the age of eighteen (18) years.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured and safeguarded by all.

The Diocese of Lismore is committed to taking the necessary steps to:

- demonstrate that the right to protection from harm for all people is paramount;
- safeguard children, young people and the vulnerable;
- foster known best practice that contributes to a safe environment;
- demonstrate accountability through establishing effective structures and practices;
- ensure prompt responses to any concerns raised;
- uphold safe recruitment and selection practices as a means to protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm;
- uphold and maintain standards of conduct which set our clear guidelines regarding ethical behaviour as an essential part of reducing risk of harm for all people; and
- operate safe environments.

## COMPLIANCE IN PARISHES

The primary person with responsibility for dealing with child, and vulnerable, protection issues in the Diocese of Lismore is the Bishop in his relevant capacity, or his delegate. However safeguarding is a shared responsibility and all persons within the parishes and agencies who have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults are accountable for helping ensure the safety, well-being and dignity of those children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Key responsibilities of all workers to which this policy applies include:

- Being caring, respectful and compassionate towards children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Complying with all legal requirements relating to protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults; including;
  - Complying with relevant screening obligations; and
  - Reporting matters of concern relating to the safety, well-being and dignity of children, young people and vulnerable adults to the appropriate person, including the NSW Police, where appropriate;
- Complying with the Diocese's *Child Protection Policy* and procedures;
- Cooperating with any internal or external investigation regarding the safety, well-being and dignity of a child, young person or vulnerable adult; and
- Complying with the Diocese of Lismore's *Code of Conduct*.

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION, STANDARDS AND REFERENCES

The Diocese recognises its obligations under relevant legislation, while striving to promote the well-being, safety and protection of children, young people and the vulnerable. This policy and its procedures are governed by current legislation including:

- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) (Child Employment) Regulation 2015 (NSW)
- Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)
- Children's Guardian (Transitional) Regulation 2020 (NSW)
- Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)

This policy and its procedures uphold the principles and standards set out in

- Integrity and Service in the Church (September 2011)
- Towards Healing (revised January 2010)
- Integrity in Ministry (reprinted April 2010)
- Office of Children's Guardian (Child Safe Standards)

## BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Breaching this Policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include the termination of employment or engagement and, notification to external agencies including without limitation professional standards associations, regulatory agencies and police.

## REVISION/ MODIFICATION HISTORY

Date	Version	Current Title	Summary of Changes	Approval Date	Commencement Date
25 February 2020	1	Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy	Initial Policy	<b>1 October 2020</b>	<b>1 October 2020</b>

## APPROVAL DATE/ REVISION HISTORY

Approved by: Bishop Gregory Homeming

Date: 1 October 2020

To be revised: 1 October 2023

I have read, understood and will be compliant to the Diocese of Lismore Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for the duration of my employment/engagement.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_