



Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an overarching policy statement which guides and gives structure for Catholic Church agencies, parishes and communities with the development of procedures and policies which establish and maintain child safe environments.

Policy Statement

The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide is a child safe organisation which recognises the welfare of children and young people as paramount. The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide will always act in the best interest of the child and young person as demonstrated by our Commitment Statement for Safeguarding Our Children and Young People which integrates the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child as the foundation for child protection.

Principles

The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide is committed to:

1. The care, wellbeing and protection of all children and young people through our pastoral care of all church members, our professional duty of care and legislative requirements
2. Safeguarding as a shared responsibility
3. Building an aware culture which promotes and maintains safe environments for all
4. Acknowledging and responding to the particular needs of children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including children with disability and children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage
5. Open and transparent practices
6. Planning for safe and supportive environments
7. Delivering relevant safeguarding training and education programs
8. Developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing protective systems and safe practices which are both preventative and responsive
9. Raising, reporting and responding appropriately to disclosures of abuse and concerns of inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people

Scope

This policy applies to all Archdiocesan clergy, religious, employed staff and volunteers.

Responsibilities

All Catholic Church agencies, parishes and communities are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of procedures and practices which demonstrate a safe environment for all and work collaboratively to ensure effective achievement of a child safe organisation.

All Archdiocesan clergy, religious, employees and volunteers are required to:

- Hold a current Department of Human Services child related clearance or working with children check approved by the Screening and Verification Authority.
- Have approved certification in mandatory notification training.
- Adhere to codes of conducts which establish standards of behaviour and practices.

General Definitions¹

In South Australia, child abuse and neglect is categorised in four ways:

Physical Abuse The child has suffered or is at significant risk of suffering serious physical trauma or inflicted injury due to the actions of their caregiver.

Emotional Abuse The child's social emotional, or cognitive development is impaired or seriously at risk as a direct result of persistent caregiver behaviour or attitude towards the child, whereby the child's self-esteem and social competence are undermined or eroded over time.

Neglect Serious, ongoing failure to provide for a child's basic needs, to the extent that the child is not receiving the care and supervision necessary to protect them from harm, has suffered serious physical injury or illness, or there is risk of serious harm to the child's well-being and development.

Sexual Abuse Any sexual activity or behaviour that a child is subjected to. Sexual abuse occurs when someone is in a position of power uses that power to involve the child or young person in sexual activity.

Anyone under the age of 18 is classified as a 'child or young person'.

Review

This policy will be reviewed initially in the first 12 months then every three years and monitored through the Archdiocese of Adelaide Child Protection Council.

Legislation

Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017

Supporting Documents:

- Safe Environments for All Framework
- Working with Children Checks Screening Policy
- Procedure for Mandatory Notification Responsibilities
- Best Practice Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Young People
- Centacare Child Protection Policy 2018
- Catholic Education South Australia child protection procedures
- National Committee for Professional Standards, Integrity in the Service of the Church
- National Committee for Professional Standards, Integrity in Ministry
- National Committee for Professional Standards, Towards Healing



¹Safe Environments for Children and Young People – Through their eyes, Government of South Australia, Department for Education 2018