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RELATED DOCUMENTS	Catholic Diocese of Maitland Newcastle Reporting Concerns for Children Code of Conduct Complaints Policy Risk Management Process Diocesan Safeguarding Framework Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To demonstrate and establish the commitment of the agency to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
2. To establish the obligations and provide guidance to our leaders, staff and volunteers to ensure ethical practice and processes regarding the safety and well-being of children and young people are enacted across all areas of the organisation
3. to ensure that children and young people under CatholicCare responsibility are safe and protected from harm.

Policy Statement

CatholicCare is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people involved or connected with our agency.

Definitions

In the context of this document, and in accordance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations:

- a. abuse in relation to a child is intended to have its broadest meaning and includes:
 - i. physical abuse
 - ii. sexual abuse or other exploitation of a child, including child grooming
 - iii. emotional/psychological and verbal abuse
 - iv. neglect of the child
 - v. exposure to violence, including family and domestic violence

b. a child or young person is a person under 18 years of age or a person apparently less than 18 years of age if the person's age cannot be proven

Child Protection is the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or stop children from being abused or mistreated.

Scope

This policy applies to all CatholicCare employees, subcontractors, volunteers and carers and is applicable in all settings working directly or indirectly with children and young people.

Policy Context & Principles

This policy must be read in conjunction with CatholicCare's endorsed Mission and Vision Statement and the Catholic Diocese of Maitland Newcastle Reporting Concerns for Children or People with a Disability Policy, produced by Zimmerman Services.

To achieve the commitment of this policy, CatholicCare will:

- Maintain an awareness of our responsibilities to protect the children and young people in our care.
- Regularly (at least annually) and systematically assess all activities of the organisation and its controlled entities that involve known and potential contact and interactions with children and young people to identify and evaluate risks to child safety, and implement appropriate risk treatment methods to manage or mitigate the identified risks (see Risk Management Framework)
- Ensure the need to protect children and young people from abuse and harm underpins all areas of the agency's work with children and young people, including safe care environments and the management of carers and staff
- Develop and maintain our systems such that our approach to child protection is consistent with current legislation and relevant government requirements
- Adopt and implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and in doing so:
 - Ensure, so far as reasonably possible, our physical and online environments promote safety and well-being for children and young people and minimise harm
 - Seek participation from communities and families in promoting and protecting child safety and well-being
 - Ensure staff, volunteers and carers are aware of and committed to upholding diversity and equity in practice
 - Ensure staff and carers are made aware of their responsibilities and reporting obligations and are supported to fulfil these obligations
 - Provide training to staff and volunteers regarding their obligations for child safety and wellbeing and develop their skills, knowledge and awareness through ongoing education and training
 - Assess people who work with and care for children and young people for suitability prior to being engaged by CatholicCare
 - Ensure people who work with and care for children and young people receive training on child protection and child safety

- Provide appropriate mechanisms to inform children and young people about their rights and the decisions that affect them including a child friendly complaints mechanism
- Support children and young people when making allegations or raising concerns
- Report, record and manage allegations within the required timeframes
- Support children and young people to develop knowledge and skills to recognise behaviour that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable and are encouraged to report concerns
- Regularly review and report on compliance with the National Principles

Responsibilities

All staff, subcontractors, carers, volunteers and their families are responsible for upholding the principles of this policy.

Program Managers are responsible for communication of this policy to staff

The Manager Quality and Compliance is responsible for the review and report on compliance

The Director is responsible for the implementation of the policy.

Legislative / Professional Guidelines

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[NSW Child Safe Standards](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

[Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care in NSW](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Regulation 2012](#)

[Adoptions Act 2000](#)

[Adoptions Regulation 2015](#)

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012](#)

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013](#)

[Ombudsman Act 1974](#)

[NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care, Standard 3- Child Protection & Child Safety](#)

[Ministerial Code of Conduct for Authorised Foster, Relative and Kinship Carers](#)

[Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

http://declaration.humanrights.gov.au/?_ga=2.34052710.633686681.1519165711-1867571060.1519165711