



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BUNBURY

SAFEGUARDING MASTER POLICY



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1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding is at the core of the mission of the Catholic Diocese of Bunbury. The Diocese upholds the inherent dignity and fundamental right of every person, especially Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities, to feel safe and protected.

This Policy is grounded in scripture, theology, and human rights principles, and is informed by both national and state child-protection and safeguarding frameworks. It outlines the Diocese's coordinated approach to prevention, response, compliance, and continuous improvement, and should be read alongside the Diocese's wider safeguarding resources and Code of Conduct.

The Diocese is dedicated to safeguarding emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing, safety, and dignity of every person, with particular care for Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities. *"In this regard...there can be no tolerance for any form of abuse in the Church", Pope Leo XIV October 2025*

The Diocese welcomes and values people from all backgrounds and supports their right to participate in decisions that affect them. This Policy is designed to safeguard Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities from harm and to ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.

The Diocese recognises that vulnerability does not stem from an individual's inherent qualities, but from the interaction between their personal circumstances, the environments they encounter, and the power dynamics or risks to which they may be exposed. A person's level of vulnerability may change over time. This understanding informs a safeguarding approach that is strengths-based, rights-focused, and attentive to structural, relational, and situational factors that contribute to risk.

Although the term "vulnerable adult" is commonly used in legislation and regulatory guidance, this Policy uses it solely to describe circumstances in which additional safeguarding considerations are necessary, rather than to define or label a person.

This Policy must be read alongside the supplementary documents developed by the Diocese (see Annexure A "Governance Framework").

2. GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

This Policy is supported by a comprehensive Governance Framework that aligns the Diocese's safeguarding practices with civil law, canonical responsibilities, and the guiding principles of the NCSS and Western Australian Child Protection Requirements.

The Governance Framework ensures that safeguarding is embedded across all aspects of the Diocese's mission and governance, rather than being treated as a standalone activity.

It comprises the key materials outlined in Annexure D, "Governance Framework":

- Commonwealth and State Legislation
- NCSS, National Child Safety Standards
- National Response Protocol Version 3
- The Diocesan Commitment Statement (included in this Policy)
- Diocese Procedures and Guidelines, as applicable within this Policy.

3. COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The Bunbury Catholic Diocese holds and preserves a **zero-tolerance** stance toward any behaviour that threatens the safety, dignity or wellbeing of children and vulnerable people in our community. Grounded in our faith in Jesus Christ, we commit to uncompromising vigilance, mandatory training and education, and firm accountability in all moral, legal and spiritual responsibilities. Aligned with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, we will implement safe, respectful and transparent practices across every parish, ministry and agency. We will act decisively and without hesitation when concerns arise, responding early, effectively and with unwavering responsibility. Together, we stand with courage and faith to protect every person in our care, ensuring a community where harm is neither ignored, excused nor tolerated.

4. APPLICATION

Safeguarding is the shared responsibility for the protection of Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities by all people acting on behalf of the Diocese.

This section clarifies who is subject to the Policy and outlines the settings in which safeguarding obligations apply, including online and off-site environments. It also clarifies the scope of this policy and draws a line of distinction between this policy and the separate entities, the Catholic Education WA (CEWA) and Catholic Development Fund (CDF), both accommodated within the Diocesan offices. This Policy applies to the following:

- all Clergy, Religious, Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers of the Diocese.
- Work Experience Students on placement within Diocesan Parishes and the Chancery; and
- visitors or third parties engaged in Child or Vulnerable Adult related activities.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Policy applies to the abovementioned individuals across the following settings:

- Parish churches, halls, presbyteries.
- Diocesan Mission Areas.
- online environments (webinars, livestreams, social media).
- off-site activities and excursions involving Children and/or Adults with Vulnerabilities.

This Policy does not apply to:

- Catholic Education WA (CEWA), as it operates under its own Safeguarding Policy; and
- Catholic Development Fund (CDF), as it operates under its own Safeguarding Policy.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability are critical in a culture of safeguarding.

This section confirms the shared responsibility of all individuals covered by this policy to uphold a culture in which safeguarding is central to our mission and daily operations. It outlines the leadership structures that ensure consistency, accountability, and collaboration across all levels.

Safeguarding is more than a compliance obligation; at its core, safeguarding is the moral and spiritual duty towards creating a safe environment for all. It requires proactive leadership, transparent communication, and strong local commitment.

General Responsibilities

All Applicable Individuals must:

- Sign and comply with the Diocese Code of Conduct
- Act respectfully towards Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities;
- Actively promote a Safeguarding culture;
- Comply with Mandatory Reporting requirements;
- Comply with Reportable Conduct requirements;
- Comply with screening requirements;
- Complete all relevant training.

Specific Leadership Roles

Position	Role and Responsibilities
Bishop	The Bishop is the head of the Diocese, its Parishes and Agencies, and is responsible for overall strategic responsibility for safeguarding leadership. The Bishop is classified as the Head of Organisation as set out in the Reportable Conduct Scheme
Diocesan Safeguarding Committee (SC)	The is a Committee of invited representatives including the Bishop (or delegate), Vicar General, Chancellor, representatives from Clergy, Parish Pastoral Council and community, Evangelisation Coordinator and Safeguarding Coordinator; using their collective expertise to implement and review effective safeguarding practices, policies, and procedures.
Vicar General	Responsible for assisting the Bishop in overseeing safeguarding compliance. The Vicar General has delegated authority from the Bishop in respect of the Chancery and Parishes for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
Diocese Risk Coordinator	The Diocesan Risk Coordinator has the responsibility for supporting, advising and assisting executive management to maintain appropriate risk management consistent with this Policy.
Safeguarding Bunbury/Safeguarding Coordinator	Is the Chancery representative responsible for coordinating safeguarding NCSS implementation, training, reporting, investigations, and compliance for clergy and parishes. Safeguarding Coordinator is generally responsible for supporting the Bishop, Vicar General, clergy and parishes, to report Reportable Conduct, Reportable Convictions, and Mandatory Reporting and overseeing the Diocese's safeguarding reporting obligations and audit compliance. safeguarding@bunburycatholic.org.au
Parish Priests	Parish Priests are responsible, where applicable, for managing safeguarding compliance at a local level, including but not limited to the verification of WWCCs, the implementation of this policy, and where applicable its ancillary policies, and the referral of any safeguarding complaint to Safeguarding Bunbury.
Heads of Mission Areas	Heads of Mission Areas are responsible generally for the implementation of this policy (and where applicable its ancillary policies) during specific

Position	Role and Responsibilities
	activities and events, and the referral of any safeguarding complaint to Safeguarding Bunbury.
Relevant Individuals	Unless separately detailed above or by way of this policy and its ancillary policies, all remaining Relevant Individuals are under a general responsibility to report to the Safeguarding Bunbury any instance of Concern, Reportable Conduct or Reportable Offence.

6. EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND EMPOWERMENT

The Diocese commits to fostering inclusive, culturally safe, and equitable environments where all people are respected, empowered, and supported to fully participate in Church life, free from discrimination, inequity, or harm.

In line with its obligations under the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*, *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*, *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*, and *Equal Opportunities Act 1984 (WA)* and the thresholds set out in the NCSS and WA Child Safety Standards, the Diocese does not tolerate discrimination of any kind, recognises the particular needs of Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities from diverse backgrounds and experiences, and expects all people visiting, engaging, or working in the Diocese to practice inclusion, acceptance, and respect.

Equity and Inclusion

The Diocese is committed to:

- actively identifying and addressing barriers to participation or safety for children, young people, and those from equity-deserving groups who may face additional barriers to safety and participation;
- recognising that treating everyone the same does not necessarily result in equitable outcomes; instead additional supports may be required for individuals facing barriers and those in vulnerable circumstances to thrive; and
- implementing this Policy to account for intersectional vulnerabilities, including those related to disability, culture, language, socioeconomic status, family violence, or trauma backgrounds.

Cultural Safety

The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)* and *Equal Opportunities Act 1984 (WA)* prohibit discrimination against another person because of their race, colour, descent or nationality. The Diocese commits to fostering culturally safe environments for all people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by:

- respecting cultural knowledge and traditions;
- encouraging expressions of culture and identity;
- providing training in cultural competence and racial equity to support inclusive and respectful engagement across diverse communities.

Gender and Sexual Diversity

The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (NSW)* and *Equal Opportunities Act 1984 (WA)* prohibit discrimination against another person on the basis of their sex, gender identity, or sexual preference.

The Diocese supports these obligations by:

- ensuring all individuals of diverse sexuality and gender identity are welcomed, affirmed, and protected from discrimination, bullying, or exclusion;
- reflecting on the dignity of all persons in pastoral and safeguarding practices, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.

Empower Participation and Decision-Making

The Diocese intends to empower all people, particularly Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities, in keeping with the teachings and values of the Catholic Church: *Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.*” (Psalm 82:3-4)

The Diocese is committed to involving Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities in decisions affecting them by:

- creating opportunities for expression that are appropriate to their age and level of understanding;
- listening seriously to concerns and ideas raised; and
- facilitating informed decision-making in line with the principle of dignity of risk.

The Diocese practice of engaging Children and Adults with Vulnerabilities to inform its decisions extends to carers, families, and communities.

Accessibility and Communication

The Diocese is committed to ensuring that its safeguarding message – and the broader mission of the Church – is accessible to all people, regardless of language, ability, or circumstance. In doing so, the Diocese seeks to remove barriers that prevent full participation in the life of the Church and the safeguarding of its members.

Accordingly, the Diocese shall:

- Provide safeguarding materials and information in plain language and accessible formats, which may include, translations, Easy Read versions, and AUSLAN or other alternative communication methods.
- Ensure that physical spaces and digital platforms used for ministry, worship, and safeguarding are designed or adapted to support inclusion and dignity for people with disabilities or diverse access needs.
- Engage with individuals, families, and communities to understand and implement reasonable adjustments that enable the safe, active, and informed participation of all, in line with the Church’s mission to proclaim the Gospel to every person.

7. WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

This part of the Policy sets out the requirement for every person in the Diocese to retain a valid Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) and clearance prior to undertaking Child-Related Work.

- 1) **Application** All Workers that engage in Child-Related Work must:
 - hold a current and verified Working with Children Check (**WWCC**);
 - be subject to appropriate interview, reference checks, and suitability assessment for Child-Related Work.
 - Contractors must ensure all staff working with Children meet the above requirements.
 - For the avoidance of doubt, the use of the word “Worker” is not to be taken to have any effect on a person’s status under the Fair Work or at common law.

- 2) **Purpose** The purpose of this part of the Policy is to ensure that Workers and affiliates (which includes visitors engaging in Child-Related Work who are not covered by any exemption under the Fair Work Act) engaged in Child-Related Work have had the appropriate background screening and risk assessments undertaken prior to and during their engagement with a Parish, Agency and/or the Chancery.

- 3) **What is Child-Related Work?** Religious services, including those provided by the Diocese, are considered by law to be a designated child-related sector.

Accordingly, a WWCC is required for all Child-Related Work undertaken in or by the Diocese.

For more details about the child-related sector, refer to Part 1, Section 6 of the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA).

The relevant delegate of the Diocese must assess whether a position, duty or professional placement is Child-Related Work, and accordingly, whether a Clearance (see **Part 5, “Verifying a WWCC”**) is required prior to undertaking recruitment or appointment procedures.

- 4) **Who must hold a WWCC?** The Diocese has identified the following Workers as being required to undertake a WWCC (noting that this list is not an exhaustive list) based on Factsheet CAT11 Categories of child-related work 11: a religious organisation. For the avoidance of all doubt, the Diocese includes all Parishes, Agencies and Diocesan Offices and includes all roles where there is potential for interacting with a child and may request a WWC be applied for at any time.
 - Parish Priest, Parish Administrator, Assistant Priest or Deacon;
 - Catechists/Coordinator;
 - Director/Parish Secretary/Office Manager/Business Manager/Coordinator/Administrative Assistant;
 - Children’s Liturgy of the Word Leader/Coordinator;
 - Youth Ministry Leader/Coordinator;
 - Children’s Choir Leader/Coordinator;
 - Sacramental Ministry Leader/Coordinator/Seminarian/Sacristan
 - Sacramental Program Leader/Coordinator;
 - RCIA+RCIC Coordinator/Leader
 - Catechist/Coordinator;
 - Photographer/Video technician/Hospitality or Transport Worker;

- Extraordinary Minister;
- Safeguarding Officer/Coordinator; and
- Acolytes/Adult Altar Servers.

5) **Verifying a WWCC**

Workers engaged in Child-Related Work are responsible for holding a current WWCC.

The Diocese must not commence employing, or continue to employ, a Worker in Child-Related Work unless it has obtained and verified the Worker's Relevant Details and made a record of those Relevant Details.

The Worker's Relevant Details are as follows:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- the WWCC Number of the Worker's Clearance or the application number of the Worker's current application; and
- the expiry date of any WWCC Clearance of the Worker, being the due date on which the Clearances ceases to have effect.

Where a Worker is engaged in Child-Related Work with the Diocese through a Placement Agency (**Placement Agency**), the Placement Agency must ensure that the Worker has a WWCC Clearance or current application, prior to the Worker commencing Child-Related Work with the Diocese.

The Diocese should also verify the WWCC Clearance prior to the Worker engaging in Child-Related Work.

The result of a WWCC is either:

- a **Clearance** to work with children in WA for three (3) years, with the Worker continually monitored for relevant new records during the life of the Clearance (noting that relevant new records may result in a Clearance being revoked); or
- a **negative notice** against working with children (or an **interim negative notice** or **not found**), which means it is a **criminal offence** to engage in any Child-Related Work, whether paid or unpaid. Substantial fines may be imposed for individual breaches.

The Diocese will not engage a person with a negative notice in Child-Related Work and will remove any such person from Child-Related Work.

The Diocese will assess the risk and may suspend or terminate the employment or relationship with the Worker or appointment of a person who has been issued with a negative notice in accordance with the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA).

6) **Timeframe for applying for a WWCC**

The Diocese must ensure that new and existing Workers in Child-Related Work, have a WWCC Number, verify that WWCC Number, and record that the Worker has been cleared to work with Children before the Worker starts working in the relevant position.

Existing staff engaged in Child-Related Work at the Diocese must apply for a WWCC when advised by the Diocese.

The Diocese must ensure the record of the Worker's WWCC verification and Clearance is recorded within 5 working days after each Clearance.

7) Exemptions

Some of the types of Workers engaged in Child-Related Work at the Diocese who are not required to apply for a WWCC include (but are not limited to):

- a Worker under 18 years of age who carries out 'volunteer' work or unpaid work as part of educational or vocational course of study with an education provider;
- a parent as defined in the Act (who volunteers in the same activity in which their child participates, or ordinarily participates)
- A parent volunteering at the childcare service at which the child is enrolled;
- A parent volunteering at the kindergarten at which the child is enrolled;
- A parent volunteering at the educational institution at which the child is enrolled;
- A parent volunteering on a transport service in which their child is a passenger or is ordinarily a passenger.
- Short term visitors to WA where the person is not ordinarily resident in WA and only applies during the two-week period after the person arrives in WA, cannot exceed a total of two weeks in any period of 12 months
- One-off national events or national tours as detailed in WWCC Act Factsheet CRW02

The list of exempt Workers outlined above is not an exhaustive list of exempt Workers. For the complete list of work that is not child-related and is therefore exempt from requiring a WWCC, see Factsheets CRW02-04 of the WWCC Act as found on wa.gov.au working with children resources page.

8) Roles and Responsibilities

The Parish Priest is responsible for administering the WWCC procedures for those engaged in Child-Related Work in the Parish.

The Bishop of Bunbury (or delated person) is responsible for determining if a Diocesan/Chancery role requires a WWCC, with the assistance of the Safeguarding Coordinator.

Safeguarding Coordinator Bunbury Diocese is responsible for administering the WWCC procedures for those engaged in Child-Related Work in the Chancery and all Clergy.

If advice is required regarding the legislative requirements of a WWCC, Safeguarding Coordinator Bunbury Diocese should be consulted.

9) Offences

The Diocese will be guilty of an **offence** if it employs a person in child-related employment where:

- a) that person has been employed by the employer in the employment for more than 5 days in a calendar year; and
- b) the person does not have a current assessment notice and has not made an application for an assessment notice that is pending.

Penalty for this subsection: a fine of \$12 000 and imprisonment for 12 months.

The Diocese will be guilty of an **offence** if it employs a person in child-related employment where:

- a) the employer-
 - 1. is aware of a Class1 offence or Class 2 offence of which the person has been convicted: or
 - 2. is aware that the person has a pending charge in respect of a Class 1 offence or Class 2 offence;
- and
- b) the person does not have a current assessment notice and has not made an application for an assessment notice that is pending.

Penalty for this subsection: a fine of \$60,000 and imprisonment for 5 years.

The Diocese will be guilty of an **offence** if it employs a person in child-related employment if the employer is aware that the person has withdrawn an application for an assessment notice.

Penalty for this subsection: a fine of \$12 000 and imprisonment for 12 months.

The Diocese will be guilty of an **offence** if it employs a person in child-related employment if the employer is aware that a negative notice or an interim negative notice has been issued to the person and is current.

Penalty for this subsection: a fine of \$60 000 and imprisonment for 5 years.

10) **Record Keeping**

The Parish Priest is responsible for administering the WWCC procedures in the Parish and required to keep records of the Worker's Relevant Details in accordance with the WWC Act.

Safeguarding Coordinator Bunbury Diocese is responsible for administering the WWCC procedures for the Diocesan staff, Chancery and Clergy and required to keep records of the Worker's Relevant Details in accordance with the WWC Act.

These records are to be retained during the period in which the Worker carries out Child-Related Work and for 7 years after the Works ceases to carry out Child-Related Work for the Parish or Chancery.

A person who holds a Clearance or who has made a current application for a Clearance must notify the Working with Children Screening Unit of any change to the person's Personal Details as soon as practicable of the change occurring.

Failure to do so is an **offence** under the WWC Act.
Penalty for this subsection: a fine of \$5 000

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 11) Internal References | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screening Guideline• Procedure – Working with Children Check• Procedure – Visitors (Clergy, Religious and Lay People)• Policy – Recruitment• Policy – Engaging Volunteers |
| 12) Legislative References | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004</i>• <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> (Cth) |

8. **NATIONALLY COORDINATED CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS (National Police Certificate)**

This part of the Policy sets out the requirements of the Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (National Police Check) screening practice to obtain a National Police Certificate, a necessary check to be undertaken by all those engaged to work or volunteer in the Parishes and/or the Chancery.

- 1) Application** This part of the Policy applies to:

- **Clergy** of the Diocese;
- **Employees** of the Diocese (including trainees);
- **Relevant Individuals** of the Diocese (including contractors, volunteers and work experience students),

together, the **Workers** of the Diocese. Workers under this Policy includes those individuals visiting the Diocese or its Parishes.

For the avoidance of doubt, the use of the word 'Worker' is not to be taken to have any effect on a person's status under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth), or at common law.

The Bishop of Bunbury is responsible for the Workers of the Chancery, the Parish Priest is responsible for the Workers of his respective Parish, and the Vicar General, at the delegation of the Bishop, is responsible for Clerics.

- 2) Purpose** The purpose of this part of the Policy is to ensure that Workers have undergone appropriate background screening prior to and during their engagement with the Diocese in order to:

- Minimise the risk of appointing a Worker to a role where the inherent requirements of the role mean that the role is not suited to a person with a particular background or history.
- Promote a safe Church environment.
- Protect the people, property and reputation of the Diocese.
- Mitigate risk to the Diocese.

- 3) Workers to also have WWCC** Workers who engage in Child-Related Work must obtain a Working with Children Check (**WWCC**).

The WWCC is separate to a National Police Certificate.

Refer to **Chapter 7, “Working with Children Check”**.

The results of a National Police Check may raise issues of Reportable Conduct.

**4) National Police
Certificates are
Mandatory**

The Diocese, and its entities, may require a Worker or prospective Worker to undergo a National Police Check to obtain a National Police Certificate because of the nature of the duties and responsibilities to be undertaken by the Worker.

National Police Certificates are required where an individual's integrity and honesty is integral to the inherent requirements of the role.

Without limiting the application of this part of the Policy, the Diocese, and its entities, will require a Worker or prospective Worker to undergo a National Police Check where it is envisaged that:

- the Worker's duties and responsibilities include a significant leadership role within the Diocese, or its entities, including without limitation the Heads of Mission, Parish Finance Committee members, Diocesan panel members and Diocesan committee members;
- the Worker has or may have unsupervised access to Adults with Vulnerabilities as part of their role;
- the Worker has or may have unsupervised access to Diocesan/Parish money;
- the Worker is responsible for the administration of financial accounts of the Diocese/Parish;
- the Worker is responsible for the regular handling of and access to other Worker's personal or sensitive information; or
- the Worker is responsible for obtaining a National Police Certificate through an accredited body on behalf of the Diocese/Parish.

Without limiting the application of this part of the Policy, the Diocese/Parish will also require a Worker or prospective Worker to undergo a for National Police Check in the following roles:

- Clergy appointed or incardinated Clergy available for regular supply/ministry;
- Prospective Seminarians and candidates for the Permanent Diaconate; and
- Workers assessed by the Diocese/Parish at its absolute discretion as requiring a National Police Certificate to ensure a safe Church environment.

Workers who are not Australian citizens may be asked to provide a National Police Certificate as part of their citizenship application. In these circumstances, a request for any National Police Certificates provided as part of their citizenship application should be made. If a National Police Certificate did not form part of the citizenship application and is required under this Policy, the Worker should be referred to the website for the Department of Home Affairs for instructions on obtaining a certificate from an overseas government or law enforcement authority.

- 5) **Appointment Documentation** Where a prospective Worker is required to undergo a National Police Check, the appointment is conditional upon attainment of a clear National Police Certificate and the Diocese/Parish being satisfied of the prospective Workers suitability for employment based on the outcome of the National Police Check.
- Any advertising for the role, the position description and letter of appointment will identify the requirements of this Chapter as a condition of their appointment.
- 6) **Applications for National Police Certificates** Refer to the **Procedure – Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Checks**.
- 7) **How often is a National Police Certificate required?** National Police Certificates are required to be obtained at least every three (3) years from the date of appointment or the date of transfer to the Worker's current role.
- A Worker may be required by the Diocese/Parish to undergo a National Police Check where they are in a role that was previously not assessed by the Diocese/Parish as requiring a National Police Certificate, and changes to the inherent requirements of the role require a National Police Certificate on the incumbent.
- A National Police Certificate is valid for 90 days, and as to ensure currency of information, the Diocese reserves the right to request a Worker undergo a National Police Check at any time.
- 8) **Assessing Outcomes** Refer to the **Procedure – Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Checks**.
- 9) **Refusing to Consent to obtain a National Police Certificate** **IMPORTANT: this section applies only to those Workers who are NOT Clerics.**
- Where the appointment of a Worker is conditional upon the attainment of a satisfactory National Police Certificate and the individual does not consent to a check being undertaken, the applicant will no longer be eligible for appointment to the role.
 - If the inherent requirement of the role changes and the Worker does not consent to obtaining a National Police Certificate, the Worker's role and ongoing employment with the Diocese/Parish will be assessed having regard to any relevant consideration, including without limitation:
 - the frequency and duration of the duties and responsibilities in relation to which the National Police Certificate is sought; and
 - whether retaining the Worker in the role without a National Police Certificate presents an unacceptable risk to the Diocese/Parish or vulnerable persons within its care.

**10) Spent
Convictions**

In relation to spent convictions in WA, a conviction generally becomes a 'spent conviction' if a person has had a ten-year crime free period from the date of the conviction; and after application is made to the Commissioner of Police on the Prescribe Form.

However certain convictions may not become spent convictions. These are determined by the Spent Conviction Act 1988 (WA) and include some convictions recorded under the Young Offender Act 1994, the Offenders Community Corrections Act 1963, the Child Welfare Act 1947 and sentences where the penalty imposed by the court is or includes a sentence of life imprisonment.

The Spent Conviction Act 1988 (WA) also places restrictions on the disclosure of information about spent convictions.

Once a conviction has been spent a Worker is not required to disclose the conviction to the Diocese/Parish. Spent convictions are not reported in the results of National Police Check and details of a spent conviction are not required to be disclosed to the Diocese as part of the National Police Certificate application process.

Where a conviction occurs in another State, the relevant legislation (**Spent Conviction Legislation**) of that State will apply. Subject to specific exceptions, the disclosure of someone's spent conviction, without their permission, is an offence.

**11) Legislative
Considerations**

Where an appointment is subject to an applicable law that requires a National Police Check, the current or prospective Worker will be required to undergo that check.

**12) Record
Keeping**

A person's criminal history is classified as Sensitive Information consistent with the provisions of the Privacy Act.

This means the collection and storage of a person's criminal history, regardless of whether there are no convictions recorded, is subject to a higher level of privacy protection than other Personal Information.

It may only be collected with consent and must not be used or disclosed for a secondary purpose unless the secondary purpose relates directly to the primary purpose of collection and within the reasonable expectations of the individual.

National Police Certificates contain details of a person's criminal history and are therefore classified as Sensitive Information.

A record of a National Police Certificate having been undertaken is recorded on the Worker personnel files or Screening and Monitoring Database by recording the following details:

- Worker's name;
- date of National Police Certificate;
- National Police Certificate Number.

There are limitations on who can access and view a National Police Certificate. When a National Police Certificate is required, the Diocese will request a copy of the certificate be sighted only by the recruiting party, Parish Priest/Administrator or Safeguarding Coordinator and the details of the certificate recorded in the Screening and Monitoring Database.

The National Police Certificate **MUST NOT** be retained unless express consent has been given by the Worker. If the worker consents to the National Police Certificate being retained, this will only relate to the period of their employment and will be disposed of after any separation of employment.

Disclosure of content of the certificate will be restricted to Reportable Conduct/Conviction purposes in accordance with the Diocese record management policy (refer to **Chapter 18, “Record Keeping and Sharing”**) and any application requirements under Australian privacy law.

**13) Internal
References**

Screening Guideline
Procedure – Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check
Procedure – Visitors (Clergy, Religious and Lay People)
Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct
Policy – Recruitment
Policy – Engaging Volunteers

**14) Legislative
References**

- *Spent Conviction Act 1988 (WA)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*

9. MANDATORY REPORTING

Clergy and Ministers of Religion are identified as Mandatory Reporters and have an obligation to make a report if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child as been the subject of sexual abuse or is subject to ongoing sexual abuse. This part of the Policy sets out the Mandatory Reporting requirements, the limitations of reporting and how to submit a Mandatory Report.

1) Application

This Policy applies to:

- **Clergy/Ministers of Religion** of the Diocese identified as Mandatory Reporters under the Children and Community Services Act 2004 effective 1 November 2022 and defined as:
 - a) a person who is recognised in accordance with the practices of a faith or religion as a person who is authorised to conduct services or ceremonies in accordance with the tenets of the faith and religion; and
 - b) includes such a person regardless of how the person’s position or title is described (for example, member of the clergy, priest, minister, imam, rabbi or pastor)”
- **Clergy/Ministers of Religion** are **NOT** excused from making a report if:

- a) the belief formed is based on information disclosed to the minister during a religious confession; or
- b) disclosing that belief, or the information on which the belief is based, would be contrary to the tenets of his/her faith or religion.

2) Purpose

The Diocese and its Parishes are committed to ensuring Mandatory Reporting obligations are complied with under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*.

Failure to make a mandatory report is an offence with a maximum penalty of \$6,000

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that these reporting obligations are complied with and to provide assistance in determining when and how to report.

3) What is Mandatory Reporting

Section 124B of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* requires certain persons in Western Australia to make a Mandatory Report if the person forms a belief on reasonable grounds in the course of their work on or after **commencement day** (whether paid or unpaid) as a 'specified person', that a **child**:

- has been the subject of sexual abuse that occurred on or after the **commencement day**; or
- is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

Commencement day means the day on which the person became a mandatory reporter under the law. Commencement day for the purpose of this policy is 1 November 2022.

Sexual abuse, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where –

- (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence; or
- (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
- (c) there is a significant disparity in the development function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Belief on Reasonable Grounds means that a reasonable person, doing the same work, would have formed the same belief on those grounds. Grounds for forming a belief are matters of which you have become aware, and any opinions in relation to those matters.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- your own observations of a child's behaviour
- your own observations of the behaviour of an adult interacting with the child
- when a child tells you they, or another child, has been harmed
- when you hear about it from someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour or sibling of a child who is at risk.

4) What is Sexual Abuse?

The *Children and Community Services Act 2004* defines a **child** as 'under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence of age, means a person apparently under 18'.

Child sexual abuse is defined as involving a child in any form of sexual activity beyond their understanding or developmental capabilities, or any sexual act that violates the law or community standards.

Child sexual abuse commonly involves unequal power (such as age, physical size, authority, cognitive ability) and grooming strategies and can involve force.

These behaviours can include grooming, exposure to pornographic material, sexual penetration, inappropriate touching, exposure to other sexual acts and soliciting children for sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse occurs when a child has been exposed or subjected to sexual behaviours that are exploitative and/or inappropriate to his/her age and developmental level.

Child sexual abuse may be perpetrated by adults, though may also occur as a result of harmful sexual behaviours between children.

In most cases, coercion and fear is common in child sexual abuse.

Coercion involves a power imbalance between the alleged abuser and the child which may relate to:

- age and developmental level
- intellectual ability
- knowledge
- experience, and
- gender.

Fear inducing behaviour may include:

- threats of negative consequences or blackmail
- threats of harm to the child, family members or pets if they don't comply
- confusing the child into feeling responsible, and
- blaming the child.

Harmful sexual behaviours can be defined as any behaviours of a sexual nature demonstrated by a **child** that:

- are outside of what is socially accepted as typical sexual development and expression
- are obsessive, coercive, aggressive, degrading, violent or causes harm to the child or others, and/or
- involves a substantial difference in age or developmental ability of participants

Grooming is defined as 'actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child' and includes online grooming where an adult makes online contact with someone under the age of 16 with the intention of establishing a relationship to enable their sexual abuse

For more detailed descriptions and examples of Child Sexual Abuse, refer to the Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Mandatory Reporting Guide: Western Australia May 2025.

5) *Receiving Information or Disclosure and determining if a Mandatory Report is required?*

If a child (or other person) is disclosing sexual abuse, the initial reaction must be calm to prevent impacting the willingness to disclose, protect the psychological safety of the person making the disclosure, and allow the disclosure to continue.

The following steps will support a disclosure;

- Give the child (or other person) your full attention;
- Maintain a calm appearance;

- Believe the child/disclosure;
- Don't be afraid of saying the 'wrong' thing;
- Reassure the child (or other person) that they have done the right thing in telling you;
- Accept the child (or other person) will disclose only when they are comfortable in doing so;
- Let them take their time;
- Let them use their own words;
- Don't make promises you can't keep;
- Tell the child (or other person) what you plan to do next;
- Never criticise the offending parents/involved person;
- Check the child's emotional state and immediate safety;
- Don't confront the perpetrator;
- Document the disclosure verbatim.

Determine if the abuse disclosed is on or after the 1 November 2022.

If based on the disclosure, a Mandatory Reporter forms a **belief on reasonable grounds** that abuse has occurred;

- a) on or after 1 November 2022, then a Mandatory Report **is** required.
- b) Prior to 1 November 2022, and there is ongoing concern for safety of children arising from historical abuse (which may also include when a person who is now an adult was a child) a Mandatory Report **is not** required. A report should still be made to the Communities' Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889 or by completing a Child Protection Concern Referral Form.
- c) Prior to 1 November 2022 where historical abuse is disclosed and no current ongoing concern, a Mandatory Report **is not** required. A report to Police should still be made for investigation after seeking approval to do this from the person over 18 years of age.

6) **Safeguarding Bunbury to be Notified**

The Diocese requires that all Mandatory Reporters who make a report also promptly notify Safeguarding Bunbury and complete a Safeguarding Concern Report.

- If a report is made via an online report, the Mandatory Reporter must download the report and email it to Safeguarding Bunbury as soon as possible after making the Report.
- If a report is made via telephone, the Mandatory Reporter must complete a Safeguarding Concern Report and email to Safeguarding Bunbury as soon as possible after making the Report and then complete the online Mandatory Report within 24 hours.

If the Parish Priest has concerns about whether the matter is reportable, they should contact Safeguarding Bunbury to seek guidance.

If there are any concerns or queries about obligations to report, contact:

- Safeguarding Coordinator for assistance:
Email: safeguarding@bunburycatholic.org.au
Phone: 97210517

Safeguarding Coordinator will also assist you to determine if there are any further reporting obligations to other authorities and assist you as required.

7) Feedback to Mandatory Reporters

The Mandatory Reporting Line will provide feedback to Mandatory Reporters on whether a report meets the statutory threshold of Significant Harm or not. If the feedback indicates that the threshold of Significant Harm is not met, Mandatory Reporters must inform Safeguarding Bunbury (Chancery & Parishes) as soon as possible who will then complete a Professional Referral.

8) How to submit a Mandatory Report

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, call WA Police Force on 000.

Once a mandatory reporter forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child has been or is being sexually abused, they must make a report to Communities Mandatory Reporting Service.

The service can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone on 1800 708 704 to discuss the report or provide advice to the reporter.

The preferred reporting method is online via the Mandatory Reporting Web Portal. When making a mandatory report via the Portal, the user will be guided through the system to assist with providing the required information to the Mandatory Reporting Service.

A blank Mandatory Reporting form can be accessed with the assistance of Safeguarding Coordinator.

An oral report can be made if there is belief that the child is at immediate risk, but this must be followed by a written report as soon as practicable (preferably within 24 hours) after the oral report is made in accordance with section 124C (1) Children and Community Services Act 2004.

Failure to submit the written report is an offence with a \$3,000 fine.

Under section 124C of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*, a mandatory report must contain the following information:

- the reporter's name and contact details
- the name of the child, or, if this cannot be obtained after reasonable inquiries, a description of the child, and
- the grounds on which the reporter believes that the child has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

The following information must also be provided to the extent that it is known:

- the child's date of birth
- where the child lives
- the names of the child's parents or other appropriate persons (e.g., adult relative or person who the child usually lives with), and
- the name of the person alleged responsible, their contact details and their relationship to the child.

9) Internal References

- Screening Guideline

Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct

Procedure – Complaints Management

Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish
Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)
Procedure – Complaints Management
Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct

10) Legislative References

Children and Community Services Act 2004 2019 (WA)
Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Mandatory Reporting Guide (WA)

10. REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME WA

By law, under the Reportable Conduct **Scheme**, administered by the Ombudsman Western Australia (OWA), the Diocese must investigate and report allegations of Reportable Conduct and Reportable Convictions.

This part of the Policy introduces the Scheme, clarifies its broad scope, and outlines the Diocese's internal and external notification obligations. It details the importance of transparency and procedural fairness in managing these complex matters.

The Diocese is identified as an organisation that exercises care, supervision or authority over children and is therefore subject to the Scheme. The Organisation is required to have systems in place for preventing, detecting and dealing with allegations of reportable conduct and reportable convictions.

1) Application

This part of the Policy applies to:

- **Clergy/Ministers of Religion** of the Diocese;
- **Employees** of the Diocese (including trainees);
- **Relevant Individuals** of the Diocese (including contractors, volunteers and work experience students)

together, the **Workers** of the Diocese.

For the avoidance of doubt, the use of the term 'Worker' is not to be taken to have any effect on a person's status under the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)* or at common law.

This is further defined by the Ombudsman at Section 7.

2) Purpose

The purpose of this part of the Policy is to:

- contribute to a framework for creating safe and supportive environments throughout the Diocese, particularly for children (under 18 years of age);
- identify the systems that the Diocese has in place regarding Reportable Conduct; and

- support and guide Workers to meet their legislative obligations under the Children's Guardian Act.

This part of the Policy identifies the way in which the Bishop (or delegate), Safeguarding Coordinator, Parish Priests and Workers are to work together to comply with the requirements in relation to Reportable Allegations and Reportable Convictions under the Children's Guardian Act.

This part of the Policy identifies the need to:

- Ensure that everyone within the Diocese understands what they are required to do in order to protect children from harm by reporting Reportable Allegations and Reportable Convictions.
- Recognise the role of Workers reporting Reportable Allegations and Reportable Convictions to Safeguarding Coordinator as an important strategy for actively monitoring the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Recognise the role of Safeguarding Coordinator in receiving reports from Workers regarding Reportable Allegations and Reportable Convictions and making appropriate reports to the Ombudsman of Western Australia as an important strategy for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children.

3) ***What is Reportable Conduct***

Reportable conduct includes certain criminal convictions (reportable convictions) and reportable allegations.

A reportable allegation is any information that leads you to form the belief on reasonable grounds that an 'employee' of an organisation covered by the Scheme has engaged in reportable conduct.

There are currently five types of reportable conduct detailed by the Ombudsman is an offence or allegation 'against, with or in the presence of a child', namely:

- Sexual Offences
- Sexual Misconduct
- Physical Assault
- Significant Neglect
- Any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm

4) ***Immediate Reporting Required***

Workers must **immediately** report all Reportable Allegations, Reportable Convictions, and all other allegations, complaints or convictions involving any inappropriate or unsafe conduct towards or in the presence of Children by another Worker, to a Parish Priest or to Safeguarding Coordinator.

If that conduct constitutes Child Sexual Abuse, Mandatory Reporters must make a Mandatory Report to the Department of Community Services. A Worker, who is not a Mandatory Reporter, shall report to Safeguarding Coordinator for further information and advice as per Section 9 of this Policy, **Mandatory Reporting**.

5) ***Roles and Responsibilities***

The **Bishop** of the Diocese is the 'head of organisation' for the purpose of Reportable Conduct Scheme. This responsibility can be delegated to the **Vicar General**, of the Diocese of Bunbury.

The Bishop, assisted by his Vicar General, has a legal obligation to report Reportable Allegations and Reportable Convictions to the Ombudsman.

The Diocese acknowledges its responsibility to establish and maintain appropriate procedures that support the Bishop, Delegate and Workers in fulfilling their reporting obligations.

All WWCC holders and those identified on the Screening Guidelines as being under the Reportable Conduct Scheme within the Diocese have a legal obligation to report Reportable Allegations and Reportable Convictions. All other Workers within the Diocese are required to make a report to Safeguarding Coordinator if they become aware of allegations or complaints involving inappropriate or unsafe conduct towards or in the presence of Children involving a Worker.

This part of the Policy also addresses the role of Safeguarding Coordinator, on behalf of the Bishop, in investigating and making findings in relation to Reportable Allegations and Reportable Conduct and in managing the risks involved in such investigations.

6) General Provisions

Organisations WA are required to comply with the Reportable Conduct Scheme and compels heads of organisations that exercise care, supervision and authority over children to notify allegations of, or convictions for, child abuse by their employees to the Ombudsman and then investigate these allegations.

There is requirement for the head of organisation to undertake and investigation and take appropriate action, which is subject to monitoring by the Ombudsman, intended to protect children by ensuring their complaints are not dismissed, minimised, ignored or mishandled and, where appropriate, action is taken to prevent further reportable conduct.

7) Application of the Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme applies to all 'employees' which is defined under the scheme to include many different types of workers and volunteers which includes any person over 18 years of age:

- An officer or employee of the organisation (whether or not they provide services to children).
- Volunteers and contractors for the organisation (only if they provide services to children).
- A minister of religion or a religious leader if the organisation is a religious body.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme includes all employees at the time, and also includes historical conduct of current employees, even if the individual was not an employee at the time the conduct occurred.

The Scheme does not cover historical conduct of former employees.

Advice should be sought from Safeguarding Coordinator if there is any uncertainty about whether or not a person comes under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

8) Safeguarding Bunbury may facilitate Bishop's obligations from time to time

The Bishop is the 'Head of Organisation' for all parishes and agencies in the Diocese.

In practice, Vicar General, Chancellor or Safeguarding Coordinator, under delegated authority may from time to time carry out the obligations of the Bishop and his delegates under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, specifically relating to parishes and agencies and deals directly with the Ombudsman on behalf of the Bishop and his delegates. The Safeguarding Coordinator plays a pivotal role in overseeing the reporting obligations and communication with the Ombudsman on behalf of the Bishop and the delegates.

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| 9) | Reporting Obligations of the Head of Organisation | <p>Safeguarding Coordinator must, on behalf of the Bishop, notify the Ombudsman immediately of any Reportable Allegation or Reportable Conviction of which it becomes aware.</p> <p>There are strict timeframes for reporting, and on-line reports must typically be filed within seven (7) business days of the Head of Organisation becoming aware of the Reportable Allegation or Reportable Conviction.</p> |
| 10) | General obligations of Employees | <p>To comply with the Scheme, the Diocese requires all 'employees' as defined in Section 7 to notify a 'Head of Organisation' via the Parish Priest or Safeguarding Coordinator immediately of reportable allegations or reportable convictions as soon as they become aware.</p> <p>Timely reporting enables the matter to be investigated, and appropriate action taken to protect children.</p> |
| 11) | Internal References | <p>Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct</p> <p>Procedure – Complaints Management</p> <p>Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish</p> <p>Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)</p> <p>Screening Guideline</p> |
| 12) | Legislative Resources | <p><i>Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)</i></p> <p><i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)</i></p> <p><i>Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 (WA)</i></p> <p><i>Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</i></p> |

11. REPORTING A CHILD WHO IS AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

All Clergy, Employees, and Relevant Individuals of the Chancery, Parishes and agencies of the Diocese who are or may not be 'Mandatory Reporters' or where the threshold of a Mandatory Report is *not* met and who have an obligation to make a report if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a Child is at Risk of Significant Harm.

The Diocese acknowledges its responsibility to establish and maintain appropriate procedures to support Professional Referral Reports.

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| 1) | Application | <p>This Chapter applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clergy of the Diocese; • Employees of the Diocese (including trainees); and • Relevant Individuals of the Diocese (including contractors, volunteers, and work experience students) who are not employees or trainees, including those working in or visiting its Parishes. |
| 2) | Purpose | <p>The purpose of this Chapter is to contribute to a framework for creating safe and supportive environments throughout the Diocese, particularly for Children and Young People.</p> |

This Chapter identifies the need to:

- Ensure that everyone within the Diocese understands what they are required to do when reporting concerns that a Child is at Risk of Significant Harm.
- Recognise the importance of reporting concerns about Children at Risk of Significant Harm in promoting the safety and wellbeing of Children and Young People.
- Understand the importance of providing support to Children and Young People at risk in accordance with the Diocesan Safeguarding Commitment.

3) Risk of Significant Harm

A Child or Young Person is at Risk of Significant Harm if current concerns exist for their safety, welfare or well-being because of the presence, to a significant extent, of any one or more of the following circumstances:

- Physical Abuse when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or child's caregiver. It may also be the result of putting the child at risk of being injured.
- Sexual Abuse when a child is exposed to, or involved in, sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and development level.
- Emotional Abuse when an adult harms a child's development by repeatedly treating and speaking to a child in ways that damage the child's ability to feel and express their feelings and includes threats of harm to loved ones as experienced through exposure to Family and Domestic Violence.
- Neglect where a child does not receive adequate food, shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged, or they are injured.

4) Completing a Professional Referral

All Clergy, Employees, and Relevant Individuals have an ethical responsibility to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of Children regardless of the context, and any concerns about situations arising within or outside their working environment can be discussed with a Parish Priest, a direct line report or Safeguarding Bunbury.

The Children and Community Services Act provide a mechanism for voluntary reports to be made where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a Child or Young Person is or may be at Risk of Significant Harm. All Clergy, Employees, and Relevant Individuals, whether or not they are Mandatory Reporters, are encouraged to make voluntary reports via a Professional Referral where they hold concerns about a Child being at Risk of Significant Harm.

5) Notifications of Professional Referrals

The Diocese requires that all Clergy, Employees, and Relevant Individuals immediately notify their Parish Priest, direct line report or Safeguarding Coordinator all concerns that a Child may be at Risk of Significant Harm.

The Risk of Significant Harm does not need to arise at a parish or agency in order to be reported. It is more likely that it will relate to the relevant Child's home life, which parish or agency personnel may come to understand as a result of their conversations with and observations of the Child.

No Clergy, Employees, and Relevant Individuals should attempt to undertake their own investigation.

**6) Safeguarding
Bunbury to be
Notified**

The Diocese requires that all Voluntary Reports through a Professional Referral form promptly notify Safeguarding Bunbury and complete a Safeguarding Concern Report.

- If a report is made via an online report, the Referrer must download the report and email it to Safeguarding Bunbury as soon as possible after making the Report.
- If a report is made via telephone, the Referrer must complete a Safeguarding Concern Report and email to Safeguarding Bunbury.

If the Parish Priest has concerns about whether the matter is reportable, they should contact Safeguarding Bunbury to seek guidance.

If there are any concerns or queries about obligations to report, contact:

- Safeguarding Coordinator for assistance:
Email: safeguarding@bunburycatholic.org.au
Phone: 97210517

Safeguarding Coordinator will also assist you to determine if there are any further reporting obligations to other authorities and assist you as required.

**7) Responding to
other Child
wellbeing
concerns**

Clergy, Employees, and Relevant Individuals who have a concern about the wellbeing of a Child or Young Person, but do not suspect that the Child or Young Person is or may be at Risk of Significant Harm, are encouraged to connect the Child, Young Person and/or their family with:

- resources available within the church environment; and
- external services, which may include services offered by Catholic social care agencies.

**8) Protection for
Reporters
(Mandatory and
Voluntary)**

Section 124F of the Children and Community Services Act 2004 has strict provisions relating to the confidentiality of the identity of a mandatory reporter. Anyone who becomes aware of the identity of a mandatory reporter must not disclose identifying information to another person unless an exception under that section applies. The maximum penalty is a fine of \$24,000 and imprisonment for 2 years.

**9) Internal
References**

Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish

Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)

Procedure – Complaints Management

Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct

**10) Legislative
References**

Children and Community Services Act 2004 2019 (WA)

Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

*Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities,
Mandatory Reporting Guide (WA)*

Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 (WA)

12. INTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 1) ***Reportable Notification to the Ombudsman***

Safeguarding Bunbury must determine whether the alleged conduct or conviction is required to be reported to the Ombudsman. In making this determination, Safeguarding Bunbury may seek advice from the Ombudsman's Department, WA Professional Standards Office or the Diocesan Legal Counsel.

If Safeguarding Bunbury decides that the alleged conduct or conviction is not reportable to the Ombudsman, or if the Ombudsman indicates the matter does not fall within its jurisdiction, Safeguarding Bunbury will determine whether by legislation or its discretion an Internal Investigation or report to WA Police should still be completed.

Depending on the circumstances, Safeguarding Bunbury may choose to seek advice from persons including the Bishop, Vicar General, WA Professional Standards Office or Diocesan Legal Counsel.

In responding to Reportable Conduct matters, Safeguarding Bunbury must have regard to the requirements for the management of safeguarding matters generally.
- 2) ***Internal Investigation required by the Reportable Conduct Scheme***

The Bishop must immediately, after receiving a report:

 - investigate or arrange for an appropriately qualified external investigator to investigate Reportable Allegations; or
 - determine whether a conviction considered to be a Reportable Conviction is a Reportable Conviction.

In practice, Safeguarding Bunbury will investigate or appoint an investigator to investigate Reportable Allegations.

Safeguarding Bunbury or investigator appointed by Safeguarding Bunbury, must (on behalf of the Bishop) make a finding that the Reportable Allegation in question is or is not, Reportable Conduct, on the balance of probabilities. Safeguarding Bunbury or investigator may take into account:

 - the nature of the Reportable Allegation and any defence; and
 - the gravity of the matters alleged.

Safeguarding Bunbury or investigator must also consider whether the conduct in question is in breach of established standards within the Diocese, and may have regard to:

 - professional standards;
 - codes of conduct, including any professional or ethical codes; and/or
 - accepted community standards.
- 3) ***Requests from the Ombudsman***

Safeguarding Bunbury must comply with any requests for information from the Ombudsman including in relation to procedures in place at the parishes and agencies to prevent, respond to, and handle Reportable Conduct.

If Safeguarding Bunbury is concerned about any request for information, it should seek advice from the WA Professional Standards Office or Diocesan Legal Counsel.

- 4) **Concurrent Investigation by the WA Police or other bodies**
- If the WA Police Force or another body investigating the conduct advises the head of the organisation that a reportable conduct investigation or finding is likely to compromise an investigation:
- The head of the organisation may suspend the reportable conduct investigation or finding; and
 - Take steps to manage any risks while it is suspended;
- The head of the organisation must consult with the WA Police Force or the other body undertaking the investigation before making a decision about the suspension and management of the risks;
- The head of the organisation must inform the Ombudsman of the suspension and the steps taken to manage risk if the investigation or finding is suspended, and
- If the head of the organisation decides not to suspend the investigation, they must ensure it is conducted in a way that will not compromise the WA Police Force or other investigation.
- These requirements also apply in relation to any court proceedings (including an appeal) arising out of the investigation.
- 5) **Determine other Immediate Actions**
- Safeguarding Bunbury must promptly consider the necessary action required to manage risks associated with the person who is subject of the allegation.
- If Safeguarding Bunbury has reported to Ombudsman in relation to the allegations, the person who is subject of the allegation must be informed that they are the subject of an investigation and of the reportable allegation made, or reportable conviction being investigated, and give them the opportunity to make submissions.
- Safeguarding Bunbury should promptly identify and assess the risks to the safety and wellbeing of a Child or Children posed by the person who is subject of the allegation in their role and responsibilities (including any role or responsibilities involving children outside of their engagement within the Diocese).
- Once the potential risks have been identified, Safeguarding Bunbury will discuss the matter with appropriate persons, including the Bishop or Vicar General, to determine the appropriate action to mitigate those risks.
- Factors to be considered in making this decision include, but are not limited to, the:
- nature and seriousness of the allegation;
 - vulnerability of the Children that the person who is subject of the allegation would be in contact with in their position or duties;
 - nature of the person who is subject of the allegation's position (e.g. level of contact with Children);
 - level of supervision available for the person who is subject of the allegation;
 - availability of support for, and supervision/monitoring of, the person who is subject of the allegation on a day-to-day basis if their duties are unchanged; and
 - person who is subject of the allegation's disciplinary history.

In making a determination as to the appropriate action to mitigate risks, Safeguarding Bunbury must take into consideration both the needs of the Child (and/or the complainant) and the person who is subject of the allegation. Action to address risks may involve:

- removing the person who is subject of the allegation from their position or duties where they may have contact with a Child or Children; or
- suspending the person who is subject of the allegation from their position or altering duties so that they are not permitted to have contact with Children, pending the outcome of a more thorough investigation.

Depending on the circumstances and following consideration of civil or canonical legal advice if they consider it desirable to obtain such advice, the Bishop, Vicar General, or the Parish Priest in consultation with the Vicar General, may exercise their discretion not to stand the person who is subject of the allegation aside.

Under canon law, a member of clergy or religious appointee may be stood aside, to protect the freedom of witnesses, and safeguard the course of justice (Canon 1722).

Depending on the circumstances, the Bishop and/or the Vicar General will consider any imposition or prohibition regarding the person who is subject of the allegation's place of residency during the course of the investigation.

A decision to suspend or remove a person who is subject of the allegation on the basis of a risk assessment should not influence the investigation, particularly the findings of an investigation. It merely reflects the seriousness of allegations or risks that have been identified pending a determination of facts by the investigator. Until the investigation is completed and a finding is made, any action, such as restricting a Worker's duties, is not considered to be an indication that the alleged conduct by the employee did occur.

Before taking action in relation to any person who is subject of the allegation (such as altering duties or standing the person aside from their position pending investigation of the allegation), the person who is subject of the allegation must be notified of the allegation.

The person who is subject of the allegation may, during any investigation or determination, provide a written submission to Safeguarding Bunbury (or any investigator), in relation to the conduct in question in order to determine what disciplinary action should be taken against them (if any).

**6) Internal
References**

Canon – 1722

Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct

Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish

Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)

Procedure – Complaints Management

**7) Legislative
References**

Children and Young Person's Care and Protection Act 1998 (Cth)

13. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

- 1) **Disclosure of Information**
- In the context of fulfilling obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme (detailed at **Chapter 10, “Reportable Conduct Scheme”**), there are circumstances that may allow for information to be obtained from or shared with other agencies or bodies.
- The Reportable Conduct Scheme under the *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971 (WA)* considers the exchange of information between certain bodies that have responsibilities relating to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young persons.
- The Scheme allows for ‘heads of organisations’ to exchange information despite other laws that prohibit or restrict the disclosure of personal and private information, for example, which would normally be prohibited from being shared under the Privacy Act.
- 2) **Disclosure information to child or person with parental responsibility**
- The Scheme provides for certain information to be disclosed to a child the subject of conduct that forms a basis for a report and to persons with parental responsibility for that child. The matters that can be disclosed are:
- The progress of the investigation;
 - The findings of the investigation; or
 - Any action taken as a result of the investigation.
- As a general principle, information should be disclosed unless there is a good reason not to disclose the information. Under the Scheme, information must not be disclosed if the disclosure would:
- Put the wellbeing of the child, or the safety of any other person, at risk;
- Contravene the Children and Community Services Act 2004, section 124F (Confidentiality of reporter’s identity) or section 240 (Restrictions on disclosing notifier’s identity);
 - Compromise an investigation under the Scheme, a police investigation, or another investigation; or
 - If the disclosure would be to a person with parental responsibility and the head of the organisation is satisfied that the child has sufficient maturity and understanding to consent to the disclosure and the child does not consent to the disclosure.
- 3) **Prohibition on publishing certain information**
- The Scheme specifically prohibits the publishing of certain information.
- Publish means to disseminate to the public by any means, including in a written publication or other mediums such as radio broadcast, television, a website, or other electronic means.
- A person must not publish, or cause to be published, information that identifies or is likely to identify:
- A person who has made a report of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction; or

- A child who is the subject of conduct that forms the basis of a report or a finding of reportable conduct.

If you experience difficulties obtaining information you consider falls within the parameters of Chapter 16A of the Care and Protection Act to the extent that they relate to fulfilling your obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and this Policy, please contact Safeguarding Bunbury who may seek advice from the Children's Guardian or the Diocesan General Counsel.

4) Consultation in relation to the Scheme

The Scheme provides for the head of the organisation to consult with certain persons or bodies regarding:

- A reportable allegation or reportable conviction;
- Any investigation conducted for the purposes of the Scheme; or
- Any other matter that is relevant to the functions of the head of the organisation under the Scheme.

Information obtained by the head of the organisation or an investigator conducting an investigation for the purposes of the Scheme may be disclosed for the purposes of any consultation by the head of the organisation with:

- The Commissioner of Police;
- The Commissioner for Children and Young People; or
- The Director General of the Department of Communities.

If there is any uncertainty about disclosing information, contact the Ombudsman's office for guidance and to discuss any issues of concern before proceeding.

5) Internal References

Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish

Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)

Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct

Procedure – Complaints Management

6) Legislative References

Children and Young Person's Care and Protection Act 1998 (Cth)

Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 (WA)

14. SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINT IDENTIFICATION

1) *Complaint Categories*

Classifying complaints by severity allows the Diocese to triage, investigate, and respond proportionately and consistently. This section introduces a tiered framework that aligns with the nature and seriousness of the complaint, ensuring appropriate oversight and resolution. It supports timely referral to statutory authorities and ensures internal alignment with pastoral, legal, and procedural obligations.

The Diocese categorises Safeguarding Complaints into three levels, where Level 1 refers to severe complaints, and Level 3 refers to minimally severe complaints.

Category	Risk	Conduct	Type of Complaints
Level 1	High	Allegations of abuse of Children or Adults with Vulnerabilities, Allegations of Sexual Abuse which are required to be reported under Mandatory Reporting Scheme, Reportable Conduct and Reportable Offences.	This category of complaint requires external investigation and immediate referral to Safeguarding Bunbury, Department of Child Protection, Ombudsman and/or WA Police.
Level 2	Medium	Boundary violations, potential breaches of this Policy or the code of conduct, inappropriate communication or conduct, neglect of supervisory duties, poor conduct during Ministry, and inadequate record keeping.	This category of complaint requires internal management with support from Safeguarding Bunbury. It may be necessary, following internal management, for Level 2 complaints to be elevated to Level 1 complaints, and immediately referred to the WA Police.
Level 3	Low	Administrative failures concerning WWCC and procedural lapses.	This category of complaint is to be addressed via internal pastoral care or performance management.

2) *Internal References*

Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct
 Procedure – Complaints Management
 Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish
 Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)

15. CONDUCTING RISK ASSESSMENTS

- 1) **Generally**
- Prevention is at the heart of safeguarding. This section mandates the completion of safeguarding risk assessments prior to any activity involving Children or Adults with Vulnerabilities and provides criteria for assessing risks and securing approvals. It reflects the principle that every context is different and that risks must be actively anticipated, minimised, and reviewed to keep people safe.
- The Diocese requires a formal safeguarding risk assessment be conducted prior to all events or activities. This includes those involving Children and/or Adults with Vulnerabilities. This is a preventative measure designed to identify, assess, minimise, and manage any foreseeable risks, including risks of harm or abuse.
- This requirement applies to:
- parish-based activities (e.g. altar server training, youth ministry events);
 - Diocesan programs (e.g. outreach services involving home visits or transport);
 - off-site excursions or overnight stays;
 - events involving Volunteers, guest speakers, lay ministers, or external providers; and
 - online or virtual events involving Children or Adults with Vulnerabilities.
- 2) **Who must Compete the Risk Assessment**
- The responsibility for completing a Risk Assessment rest with the event organiser (e.g. parish employee, Volunteer coordinator, staff member) in collaboration with the Parish Priest, Head of Mission, or Safeguarding Representative.
- The Diocese's Risk Assessment checklist is available via Safeguarding Bunbury.
- For any Risk Assessment pertaining to an event organised by a Parish, the Risk Assessment must be approved in writing by the Parish Priest.
- For any Risk Assessment pertaining to an event organised by the Chancery, the Risk Assessment must be approved in writing by the Head of Mission for the event or Safeguarding Coordinator.
- 3) **What the Risk Assessment must Include**
- A Risk Assessment must consider the following factors, where applicable:
- the nature of the activity; the type of interaction with Children or Adults with Vulnerabilities that is intended to occur; and whether the activity is physical, online, or off-site;
 - the venue and environment; whether there are sufficient exits, visibility, lighting, and privacy controls; whether there are secluded areas where misconduct could occur;
 - the supervision and ratios of Relevant Individuals in attendance; whether there are sufficient trained adults supervising the event; whether there are gender-appropriate supervisors available;
 - the Relevant Individuals involved; whether all Relevant Individuals have undergone WWCC and required screening checks; and whether any guest speakers or visitors appropriately cleared;

- the needs of participants; whether there are any cultural, disability-related, behavioural, or language needs among participants that need to be accommodated;
 - transport arrangements; whether transportation will be provided; and who is responsible for driving and supervision of transportation;
 - accommodation arrangements; whether the accommodation is appropriate and gender-separated; and whether supervision procedures are in place overnight;
 - photography and media; whether photos or videos be taken; and whether parental/guardian permissions have been obtained;
 - emergency preparedness; and whether there are procedures in place for medical emergencies, injuries, evacuations, or circumstances where a child goes missing;
 - persons of concern; and whether there is a known Person of Concern (PCON) attending the parish, event, or activity.
- 4) **Record Keeping** In addition to applicable requirements set out in **Chapter 18, “Record Keeping and Sharing”**, all completed Risk Assessments must be reviewed annually for recurring events and recorded in the Risk Register.
- 5) **Monitoring and Review** After each event, the organiser must:
- review whether risk controls were adequate;
 - document any incidents, near misses, or lessons learned; and
 - update the risk assessment accordingly for future use.
- 6) **Internal References**
- Procedure – Visitors (Clergy, Religious and Lay People)
- Policy – Social Media
- Policy – Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications Systems
- Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct
- Procedure – Complaints Management
- Procedure – Mandatory Reporting (including Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm)
- Risk Assessment Checklist/s
- Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish
- Diocese of Bunbury – Risk Management and Framework Policy 23
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16. VISITORS – GUEST PRESENTERS AND LAY PEOPLE

- 1) **Application** This Policy applies to:
- Clergy of the Diocese;
 - Workers of the Diocese (including employees, contractors, volunteers, work experience students and trainees).

For the avoidance of doubt, the use of the word 'Worker' is not to be taken to have any effect on a person's status under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) or at common law.

Where an Agency within the Diocese (such as the Catholic Missions) has its own policy, the relevant Agency policy will apply to Agency Workers.

2) Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- define the responsibilities of both Parish and Chancery personnel; and
- ensure the Visiting Guest Speaker or Lay Person engaged with the Diocese for a set period of time aligns with the mission of the Diocese as guided by the Bishop of Bunbury.
- This document highlights and provides guidance of the required Safeguarding practices, legal obligations and subsequent administration processes.
- The Parish Priest or relevant Head of Mission Area (HoMA) is to determine if the visiting lay person meets the definition of Lay Minister, Lay Guest Speaker or non-Lay Guest Speaker, as set out in the Definitions of this Policy.
- If the categorisation of a lay person is unclear, advice is to be sought from the Vicar General.
- Following categorisation, the Parish Priest and the relevant HoMA is to then proceed with the balance of the procedures set out below.

3) Categorising Lay Ministers and Lay Guest Speakers

4) Safeguarding Responsibilities in relation to Lay Ministers

- If the Parish Priest or relevant Head of Mission Area (HoMA) identifies that the lay person presents with public ministry, such as a healing ministry or an occasion of worship of some form, a reference from the layperson's Bishop is to be requested and made available to the Parish Priest or HoMA for review.
- The Parish Priest or HoMA is to notify the Vicar General and request the permission for the lay person to visit the Parish or Diocese (Chancery) in their capacity as a Lay Minister.
- The Vicar General will determine suitability and, if deemed appropriate to proceed, will send the requisite information to Safeguarding Bunbury. Safeguarding Bunbury will ensure the relevant Professional Standards documentation is completed prior to the Lay Minister conducting ministry, and in order to meet civil and Church requirements.
- Lay Ministers must provide a WA WWCC Clearance or be eligible for a WWCC exemption.
- Safeguarding Bunbury will provide the outcome of the assessment to the Vicar General who will determine the permission.
- Upon the granting of permission, Safeguarding Bunbury will inform the Lay Minister, and Parish Priest or HoMA via email, attaching to that correspondence a supporting letter of permission.

- 5) ***Safeguarding Responsibilities in relation to Lay Guest Speakers***
- The Parish Priest or HoMA has sole discretion to determine the suitability of lay people to be categorised as Lay Guest Speakers.
 - The Bishop or delegate must confirm the categorisation of a lay person as a Lay Guest Speaker.
 - There is no requirement to seek permission of the Vicar General; it is at the discretion of the Parish Priest or HoMA, with the Bishop confirming.
 - The Parish Priest and HoMA must consider if a WWCC is required:
 - a valid WWCC is required if the visiting Lay Guest Speaker (such as a visiting speaker, adjudicator, performer, assessor, or similar) is specifically addressing an audience of Children at which their parents or guardians are not present. This is classified as child-related work under the Act.
 - visiting Lay Guest Speakers are not required to provide a valid WWCC if their role is to address an audience of adult participants (even if the audience includes children for whom adults present are parents or guardians) and is therefore not child-related work under the Act, or they meet criteria for exemption under the Act.
- 6) ***Assessing WWCC Requirements***
- Steps for a Parish Priest***
- The Parish Office is required to verify the WWCC and update the Screening Register to include the details of the Lay Guest Speaker or Lay Minister.
- If the visitor does not have a WA WWCC, consideration should be made to determine if an exemption can be applied, and record details of any exemption.
- Steps for the Head of Mission Area (HoMA)***
- The HoMA should inform Safeguarding Bunbury, who will verify the WCCC and update the WWCC Register held in the Chancery on behalf of the HoMA.
- Safeguarding Bunbury will assist the HoMA if the Lay Guest Speaker or Lay Minister requires a WWCC exemption.
- Safeguarding Bunbury will retain a record of the relevant process applied.
- 7) ***General Responsibilities of Parish Priest and Head of Mission Area (HoMA)***
- The Parish Priest, HoMA (or the HoMA delegate) should always be present at any occasion in which a Lay Minister or Lay Guest Speaker ministers or presents in the Parish.
- The Office supports and promotes Parish and Diocesan (Chancery) events. It may be that surrounding communities wish to attend and participate in the event. The Parish Priest and HoMA should inform the Diocesan Office for Communications about the event.
- 8) ***Reportable Conduct Scheme***
- Lay Persons visiting the Diocese who are required to have a WWCC for their ministry or activity may fall under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- For Lay Persons who are subject to exemptions refer to Safeguarding Bunbury for advice on whether they fall under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

- Refer to **Chapter 10, “Reportable Conduct Scheme”** for more information.
- 9) **Mandatory Reporting** Lay Ministers, and Lay Guest Speakers providing religious based ‘guest speaking’ (religious-based activity) to Children may be considered Mandatory Reporters.
- If a Lay Minister or Lay Guest Speaker has reasonable grounds to suspect that a Child may be at Risk of Significant Harm, the Lay Minister or Lay Guest Speaker does hold a legal obligation to report this via the Professional Referral Form.
- If there is uncertainty as to the classification as a Mandatory Reporter, contact Safeguarding Bunbury for more information and guidance.
- Refer to **Chapter 11, “Reporting a Child who is at Risk of Significant Harm”** for more information.
- 10) **Internal References** Procedures – Visitors (Clergy, Religious, and Lay People) Procedure
- 11) **External References** *Children and Community Services Act 2004 2019 (WA)*
Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Mandatory Reporting Guide (WA)
Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 (WA)

17. VISITORS – CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS

- 1) **Application** This Policy applies to:
- Clergy** incardinated in another Diocese;
- Religious** of the Diocese;
- Visitors**, being:
- Clergy Incardinated in another Diocese; and
 - other Religious,
- each for the purpose of carrying out a Ministry within the Diocese, or who have assumed residence in the Diocese, as relevant.
- 2) **Purpose** It is necessary for all Clergy and Religious who Minister in Australia to comply with the Australian Catholic Church Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures.
- There are specific requirements for Clergy not incardinated in the Diocese, and Religious, who wish to exercise public ministry in the Diocese or who assume residence in the Diocese. In addition to Church requirements, Clergy and Religious are also required to be fully compliant with the:
- Children and Community Services Act 2004 2019 (WA)
 - Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)
 - Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Mandatory Reporting Guide (WA)

- Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 (WA),

and any other relevant amending or repealing statutes.

- 3) **National Response Protocol**
The National Response Protocol (**NRP**) is a document providing principles and procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia. The NRP requires that all Church personnel act with integrity and accountability and systems are in place to account for the appointment and movement of Clergy in Good Standing.
- 4) **Good Standing Declarations**
A Safeguarding Personal Declaration is the individual Clergy or Religious declaring their status of Good Standing.

A declaration of Good Standing provided by the Church Authority of the individual Clergy or Religious is evidence of the entity's support of this declaration if they do not have an ACMR identification number.

Upon receipt of the required Declarations referred to above, an assessment of the information is completed by Safeguarding Bunbury in consultation with the Vicar General of the Diocese.

The outcome of the assessment is then communicated in writing to the Clergy or Religious, the relevant Church Authority, and the Parish to be visited or the Parish in which the Clergy or Religious have assumed residence.
- 5) **Australian Catholic Ministers Register (ACMR)**
ACMR is to be monitored and administered by the Manager of Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd.

Once a Clergy or Religious is registered and given an ACMR identification number (ID Number), Clergy and Religious are able to use this ID Number in any Archdiocese or Diocese throughout Australia to confirm their Good Standing.

Safeguarding Bunbury must then verify the ID Number for the Clergy and Religious visiting and/or residing in the Diocese and undertaking public ministry.

Note: Confirmation of this ID Number does not verify any WWC Clearance.
- 6) **Visiting Clergy and Religious Providing Supply for Greater than 1 Week**
A Priest appointed of the Diocese prior to their leave period must seek permission from the Vicar General to engage a Priest for supply where their engagement in the Parish is longer than one (1) week.

The Priest appointed will provide the curriculum vitae (CV) of the suggested supply Priest, along with the necessary screening documents. If the visiting Priest is internationally domiciled, his Ordinary must provide a letter of recommendation and the Priest must provide a copy of their visa.

The supply Priest is to complete a Safeguarding Level 1 Induction online training within the first week of the period of supply.
- 7) **Visiting Clergy and Religious from Overseas**
A Safeguarding Personal Declaration is required to be submitted by Visitors.

The Church Authority declaring the Good Standing of the Clergy or Religious must submit a completed declaration or a Celebret cf. (Canon 903).

The requisite form of the Declarations referred above are to be requested by Visitors from Safeguarding Bunbury and returned once completed.

Safeguarding Bunbury assesses if a WA Working with Children Check exemption applies to Visitors, and if so, Safeguarding Bunbury will ensure

appropriate detailed records are maintained which outline the type of exemption applied.

Upon receipt of the requested documents referred to above, an assessment of the information is completed by Safeguarding Bunbury in consultation with the Vicar General of the Diocese.

Prior to the visit by the Visitor, the outcome of the assessment is communicated in writing to the Visitor, their Church Authority and the Parish to be visited.

8) Visiting Clergy and Religious

Visitors providing service will be required to request permission from the Vicar General to visit the Diocese. The Vicar General must then, in its absolute discretion, provide the relevant Visitor with Faculty approval.

The Visitor will provide details of the visit, including the mass or sacrament of marriage times.

The Vicar General will require Safeguarding Bunbury to conduct the assessment and prepare a draft Faculty approval letter for endorsement.

Upon receipt of the assessment and letter, the Vicar General will notify the Visitor (via email) confirming the visit, any relevant particulars, and a copy of the Faculty approval.

9) Sacristy Ministry Register (Clergy Only)

All appointed and incardinated Visitors to the Diocese are required to sign the Sacristy Ministry Register of the church or non-parochial chapel in which they exercise their ministry, if they are ministering outside their own place of appointment.

The Parish must assess the Sacristy Ministry Register regularly and update the Parish Office Register of Visiting Clergy.

Safeguarding Bunbury will review the Parish Office Register of Visiting Clergy Register annually.

10) Administration Responsibilities of the Parish Priest / Administrator

The Parish Priest or Administrator has the responsibility to ensure that Visitors of their Parish have undertaken the necessary pre-screening requirements, via Safeguarding Bunbury, prior to performing Ministry.

The Parish Priest or Administrator must also ensure that the relevant Visitor understands the Visiting Clergy Processes, and that those processes are understood and followed by Parish personnel. This assurance requires the Parish Priest or Administrator to:

- review Parish records of Visitor permissions as provided by Safeguarding Bunbury. Records are entered by the delegated Parish Office personnel and held in the Visiting Clergy Parish Office Register or Visiting Clergy Master Register if supported by Safeguarding Coordinator;
- undertake and review a 3-monthly review of the data held in the Visiting Clergy Register/s and the Sacristy Ministry Register. This review to be completed by the delegated Parish Office personnel or Safeguarding Coordinator;
- discuss with Parish Office personnel and immediately follow up with Safeguarding Bunbury if an anomaly is identified at the review stage;
- implement any suggested actions as a result of the review to mitigate future risk of anomaly. The Parish Office to be supported by Safeguarding Bunbury with the implementation.

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|-----|--------------------------------|--|
| 11) | Internal
References | Procedures – Visitors (Clergy, Religious, and Lay People) Procedure
Screening Guideline |
| 12) | External
References | <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)</i>
<i>Children and Community Services Amendment Act 2021 (WA)</i>
<i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)</i>
<i>Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Mandatory Reporting Guide (WA)</i>
<i>Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 (WA),</i> |

18. RECORD KEEPING AND SHARING

Safeguarding records are critical to maintaining the integrity of investigations, monitoring compliance, and responding to legal and pastoral requests. This section sets out the Diocese's expectations around what must be recorded, who is responsible, how records are to be stored, and when information may be shared. It reflects the Royal Commission's emphasis on clear, timely, and secure documentation as an essential safeguard in itself.

The Diocese recognises that high-quality record keeping is fundamental to effective safeguarding and the protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. All Workers are required to keep full and accurate records relating to child safety and safeguarding matters in accordance with this Policy and associated guidance.

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|----|----------------------------------|---|
| 1) | What Must be
Recorded | <p>A record must be created when any of the following occurs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a person is screened or engaged to work with Children or Adults with Vulnerabilities; a safeguarding concern, disclosure, allegation, or suspicion is raised; a mandatory report is made; a reportable conviction is identified as part of a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (National Police Certificate); a risk assessment (involving children, young people) is completed; an incident, injury, behavioural concern, or complaint arises at an event; an internal investigation or review is undertaken; a person of concern (PCON) is being managed under an Individual Safety Agreement (ISA). |
|----|----------------------------------|---|

Each record must include:

- the date and time of report, event, or observation;
- who was involved and present;
- what was said or observed (in clear, objective terms);
- any action taken and by whom;
- any internal discussions or referrals;
- names of those informed or consulted (e.g. Safeguarding Bunbury, Department for Communities, Ombudsman of WA, WA Police).

2)	Who is Responsible for Record Keeping?	<table><tr><th>Entity</th><th>Recording Responsibilities</th></tr><tr><td>Relevant Individuals</td><td> - Recording incidents of Reportable Conduct or allegations of Reportable Offences, including any other notifications provided under this Policy. - Recording disclosures made in relation to Reportable Conduct or Reportable Offences by other Relevant Individuals, including any disclosures relevant to upholding the objects of this Policy. - Recording suspicions of Reportable Conduct, Reportable Offences, breaches of this Policy. </td></tr><tr><td>Parish Priests</td><td> - Accurate completion and submission of safeguarding and other records. - Safe and secure storage of safeguarding and other Records are safely stored and only accessed by authorised Relevant Individuals. - Maintenance of a local safeguarding records register, and provision of updated copies of the register to Safeguarding Bunbury. </td></tr><tr><td>Safeguarding Bunbury</td><td> - Review of critical incident records and concern reports. - Maintenance and oversight of master safeguarding registers. - Provision of record keeping training and templates to Parish Priests for use in its local level record keeping. - Advice on retention, access, and disposal of records in consultation with the Chancellor. </td></tr></table>	Entity	Recording Responsibilities	Relevant Individuals	- Recording incidents of Reportable Conduct or allegations of Reportable Offences, including any other notifications provided under this Policy. - Recording disclosures made in relation to Reportable Conduct or Reportable Offences by other Relevant Individuals, including any disclosures relevant to upholding the objects of this Policy. - Recording suspicions of Reportable Conduct, Reportable Offences, breaches of this Policy.	Parish Priests	- Accurate completion and submission of safeguarding and other records. - Safe and secure storage of safeguarding and other Records are safely stored and only accessed by authorised Relevant Individuals. - Maintenance of a local safeguarding records register, and provision of updated copies of the register to Safeguarding Bunbury.	Safeguarding Bunbury	- Review of critical incident records and concern reports. - Maintenance and oversight of master safeguarding registers. - Provision of record keeping training and templates to Parish Priests for use in its local level record keeping. - Advice on retention, access, and disposal of records in consultation with the Chancellor.
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Safeguarding Bunbury	- Review of critical incident records and concern reports. - Maintenance and oversight of master safeguarding registers. - Provision of record keeping training and templates to Parish Priests for use in its local level record keeping. - Advice on retention, access, and disposal of records in consultation with the Chancellor.									
3)	Record Creation and Timelines	All safeguarding records must be created as soon as practicable, and ideally within 24 hours of the event, disclosure, or suspicion. Handwritten notes must be transcribed into formal documentation if required. All records must be signed and dated by the person making the entry.								
4)	Storage and Security	Records must be: - physically stored in a locked filing cabinet or secured storage room with restricted access; - digitised and digitally stored in password-protected, encrypted systems with audit tracking (e.g. user access logs); and - labelled clearly and stored in a structured format to enable retrieval (e.g. by date, parish, individual). Safeguarding records must never be: - stored in public folders; - taken offsite without authorisation; or - shared through unsecured communication platforms.								
5)	Sharing of Safeguarding Records	Information must be shared only on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with the Privacy Act, child protection legislation, and this Policy. Information, records, and documentation may be shared, as applicable, with: - WA Police; - the Department of Communities; - the Ombudsman of WA; - external legal representatives (where compelled by law); - other Diocesan or Church authorities (as appropriate and lawful). Any external sharing of Safeguarding records must be authorised by Safeguarding Bunbury and documented with a clear rationale for disclosure.								

- 6) ***Retention and Disposal*** Records must be kept for the minimum periods set by law and the Diocese's Records Retention Policy.

The following minimum periods are included as a guide, and should be cross-referenced with any overriding requirements at law:

Record	Retention Period
Safeguarding complaints and incidents	Retained permanently or at least 50 years.
WWCC records	Retained for at least 7 years after termination of engagement.
Screening records	Retained for at least 7 years from the date of screening.

- No record may be destroyed unless:
- it has reached its retention expiry; and
- authorisation is granted by Safeguarding Bunbury in consultation with the Chancellor; and
- the destruction is secure and permanent (e.g. shredding or digital wiping).

A Disposal Register must be maintained and updated to record:

- description of the record;
- date of disposal;
- method used; and
- authorising person.

- 7) ***Historical Safeguarding Matters must be digitised*** Records relating to deceased Clergy or historical safeguarding matters must be stored by the Bunbury Diocese in digital form, saved electronically in full, and access restricted.

- 8) ***Access to Safeguarding Records*** Access to Diocese Safeguarding records is limited to:
- Safeguarding Bunbury;
 - the Parish Priest, Bishop or delegate (as relevant);
 - individuals to whom the record pertains, in accordance with the Privacy Act and the Diocese privacy procedures.

- 9) ***Training and Awareness*** Workers are required to be trained in:
- proper documentation practices regarding incidents and disclosures;
 - where and how to store records securely; and
 - legal and ethical considerations relevant to the handling of sensitive information.

- 10) ***Confidentiality*** Confidentiality is a fundamental right and a vital expression of respect for every individual within the Diocese. Maintaining confidentiality is essential not only for protecting privacy, but also for fostering a culture of trust, safety, and mutual respect.

For this reason, all Relevant Individuals of the Diocese are expected to uphold the highest standards of confidentiality in their roles and responsibilities.

- 11) **Internal References** Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern
Policy – Privacy Policy
Records Retention Policy

19. REVIEWING THIS POLICY

Safeguarding is not static. This section mandates scheduled and event-driven reviews of this Policy to ensure it remains current, compliant, and effective. It also commits the Diocese to meaningful consultation with stakeholders – including Children, Adults with Vulnerabilities, families, and survivors – in keeping with national and state standards.

By embedding review as a routine discipline, the Diocese affirms its commitment to learning, improving, and evolving in service of safety and justice.

- 1) **Review Triggers** This Policy will be reviewed:
 - at least every three (3) years; and
 - following:
 - any critical safeguarding incident (including a breach, complaint, or investigation outcome); **OR**
 - any change in relevant laws, regulations, or safeguarding standards, including updates to the WA Mandatory Reporting or Reportable Conduct Schemes or NCSS.
- 2) **Responsibility for Review** The review will be coordinated by Safeguarding Bunbury in consultation, as applicable, with:
 - the Bishop and Vicar General;
 - personnel of the Safeguarding Committee;
 - parish Safeguarding representatives;
 - relevant legal and compliance advisors.
- 3) **Consultation and Continuous Improvement** Consistent with Standard 9 of the NCSS the review process will:
 - actively seek feedback from Children, families, carers, volunteers, and community members;
 - consider input from complainants, survivors, and support services (where appropriate and consented to);
 - incorporate learnings from case reviews, external audits, or serious incident responses; and
 - identify areas for clarification, expansion, or policy change.

The Diocese applies itself under this Policy to extend the standards outlined above to the safeguarding of Adults with Vulnerabilities.
- 4) **Version Control and Accessibility** All amendments will be documented and published via a Version Control Register. Updated versions will be disseminated to all parishes and Agencies and be made publicly available via the Diocesan website. A summary of key changes will accompany each new release.

20. GLOSSARY

Adult with Vulnerabilities	Also frequently referred to as a Vulnerable Adult and refers to any person aged 18 or over who is experiencing circumstances that increase their risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This may include factors such as disability, mental illness, cognitive impairment, ageing, or situational pressures like bereavement, relationship breakdown, transiency or social isolation. The Diocese uses this term with the clear understanding that vulnerability is situational and relational, not an inherent characteristic of the individual. People may move in and out of vulnerable circumstances over time, and our safeguarding approach is therefore grounded in recognising context, promoting rights, and supporting individual strengths.
Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR)	means the online system with the purpose of enabling a Catholic Authority to verify the Good Standing of a Clergy or Religious, or a Visiting Clergy or Visiting Religious.
Bishop	means the Bishop of the Diocese, being the head of the Diocese, its parishes, and agencies; the Bishop is taken to be the Head of the Organisation within the Diocese for the purposes of the <i>Reportable Conduct Scheme</i>
Child / Children	means a person who is under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who is apparently under 18 years of age, as defined by the <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)</i>
Child Abuse Offence	means an offence defined in the <i>Children's and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)</i> (also called Failing to protect child from harm), and includes any similar, repealing, or amending instruments.
Child-Related Work	means paid or unpaid work involving regular, direct contact by a worker with a child under a child-related role or access to confidential child-related records; for the avoidance of doubt, religious services where children form part of the congregation is considered child-related work.
Church Authority	In the case of a deacon or priest, the Bishop of the Clergy member. In the case of a Bishop, the Bishop of the Diocese from which the Bishop has retired. In the case of a Religious, their Provincial or Regional Delegate.
Clergy	means individuals ordained or appointed to perform religious duties and lead religious services for the Diocese and within its parishes, including diocesan priests, ministers, pastors, and visiting clergy.
Clergy Incardinated in another Diocese	Deacons, Priests, and Bishops who have incardination in a Diocese other than the Diocese of Bunbury.
Complaint	means any complaint concerning reportable conduct, a reportable offence, a serious indictable offence, or any other conduct or concern event reasonably captured by this policy and raised to the Diocese under its procedures.
Contractors	means any individual or body corporate engaged to provide services to the Diocese and considered a contractor (and not an employee) at common law.

Department of Communities	is the Government Department responsible for Mandatory Reporting and other services including Child Protection, Community Services, Disability Services, Early Childhood Education, Homelessness, Seniors, Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Volunteering, Women and Young People.
Diocese	means the Catholic Diocese of Bunbury, being the employer for the purposes of the relevant Acts; an employer includes a person who engages another under a contract to perform work or as a volunteer under an agreement.
Direct Personal Response (DPR)	is one of three components of redress that is offered to a person who is eligible to receive redress under the National Redress Scheme. A DPR is optional for the person receiving redress and they can choose, upon accepting their offer of redress, whether they would like to participate in a DPR with the institution/s.
Disclosable Court Outcome (DCO)	means a police check result that includes all disclosable court outcomes recorded under an applicant's name and any other aliases provided from police records in all Australian states and territories.
Employees	means any individual engaged by the Diocese under an employment agreement or otherwise considered an employee of the Diocese under the <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> (Cth) or at common law.
Good Standing	A Clergy, Religious or Visitor in Good Standing implies the Clergy, Religious, or Visitor: - has no criminal record; - has no substantiated complaints of abuse against them; - has no criminal charges brought against them; and - is not suspended or canonically disciplined so as to prevent the exercise of their priestly ministry. Further, Good Standing with respect to Clergy, Religious, or Visitor implies that the Church Authority: - is not aware of any circumstances that could lead to a complaint of abuse against the Clergy, Religious or Visitor; - has the considered view that there would not be an unacceptable risk to Children, or Vulnerable Adults if the Clergy, Religious, or Visitor ministered in the Diocese; - has the considered view that the Clergy, Religious, or Visitor has no untreated alcohol or substance abuse problem; and - is not aware of anything in the Clergy, Religious, or Visitor's background or conduct that would render them unsuitable to work in ministry, or that would adversely affect the performance of their ministry.
Government school	means a school established under the <i>School Education Act 1999</i> by the Minister and any amending or repealing instruments.
Head of Organisation	means the person primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Institution	means anybody, entity, group of persons, or organisation that has opted into the National Redress Scheme; in this policy it relates specifically to the Diocese and those responsible for responding to applications under the scheme.
Lay Guest Speaker	means a person who has not been ordained and is invited to deliver a presentation either at a Parish or at a Diocesan level.
Lay Minister	means a person who has not been ordained and is authorised to perform ecclesial ministry or service.
Mandatory Reporter	has the meaning set out in Chapter 9, "Mandatory Reporting".
National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS)	means the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.
National Police Certificate	means the checking process undertaken by WA Police and results received by an accredited body commonly known as a National Police Certificate, including reference to international police or criminal history certificates.
National Redress Scheme (NRS)	means the scheme established in response to the <i>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse of 2017</i> , allowing victims to apply for counselling, a redress payment, and/or a direct personal response from an institution.
NRS Act	means the <i>National Redress Scheme for Institution Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018</i> (Cth).
NCSS	means the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.
Non-government school	means a registered non-government school under the <i>School Education Act 1999</i> (NSW) and any amending or repealing instruments.
Ombudsman	means the Office of the Ombudsman Western Australia, who serves the Parliament and is independent of the Government of the day who is responsible for monitoring, overseeing and reviewing investigations by organisations as required by the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment Act	means the <i>Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022</i> (WA)
Parish	means the local community of the faithful within the Diocese.
Person of Concern (PCON)	Means an individual that has been charged with, convicted, or reasonably suspected of, a criminal offence against a child or adult or who has disclosed that they are prohibited from having contact with children.
Personal Details	for the purposes of the Act include a person's name, address, contact details, and any other information prescribed by regulation.
Placement Agency	means a business that arranges for the placement of a person in employment with others, including the Diocese.
Policy	means this Master Safeguarding Policy and any amended or updated versions.

Privacy Act	means the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) and any amending or repealing instruments.
Privacy Laws	means the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth), <i>Privacy Regulation 2013</i> (Cth), and relevant State and Territory laws governing the management of personal or sensitive information.
Procedural Fairness	means workers who are the subject of reportable allegations are entitled to be afforded procedural fairness during the investigation into their conduct. Procedural fairness requires that a fair and proper procedure be followed by an agency during the decision-making process of a reportable conduct investigation.
Religious	means a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life or a Society of Apostolic Life.
Religious Based Ministry	means any activity within, or delivered by, a religious organisation that is designed to carry out the good works of the Catholic Church.
Relevant Details	for the purposes of the Act include a worker's name, date of birth, WWCC number or application number, and the expiry date of any WWCC clearance.
Relevant Individuals	means any clergy, employee, religious, volunteer, work experience student, or contractor of the Diocese.
Reportable Allegation	means any information that leads a person to form the belief on reasonable grounds that an employee (as defined under the Act) of an organisation covered by the Scheme has engaged in reportable conduct, whether or not the conduct is alleged to have occurred in the course of the employee's employment.
Reportable Conduct	means conduct, whether or not criminal proceedings have been commenced or concluded, that involves sexual offences (against, or within the presence of, a child), sexual misconduct (against, or within the presence of, a child), physical assault (against or within the presence of a child), significant neglect of a child and significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.
Reportable Conduct Scheme	means the mechanism for implementation of key recommendations from the <i>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i> to protect children from harm as set out in <i>Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022</i> .
Reportable Conviction	means a conviction in Western Australia or elsewhere of an offence of a sexual nature committed against, with, or in the presence of a child as set out in Chapter 10 – "Reportable Conduct Scheme"
Reportable Offence	means an offence of a sexual nature under a law of Western Australia, another State, Territory, or the Commonwealth committed against, with or in the presence of a child and as set out in Chapter 10 – "Reportable Conduct Scheme".
Risk Assessment	means the Risk Assessment form to be completed and submitted in accordance with Chapter X "Conducting Risk Assessments".
Risk of Significant Harm	has the meaning set out in Section 3, Chapter 11, "Reporting a Child Who is at Risk of Significant Harm".
Royal Commission	means the <i>Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse of 2017</i> .

Safeguarding Bunbury	means the Diocesan entity responsible for coordinating safeguarding training, reporting, investigations, and compliance. Also referred to as Safeguarding Coordinator.
Safeguarding Coordinator	Also referred to as Safeguarding Bunbury.
Scheme	means The Reportable Conduct Scheme.
Safeguarding Committee	means a committee of invited representatives including the Bishop (or delegate) Vicar General, Chancellor, representatives from Clergy, Parish Pastoral Council and community, Evangelisation Coordinator and Safeguarding Coordinator using their collective expertise to implement and review effective safeguarding practices, policies, and procedures.
Screening	means the Safeguarding practices in place to ascertain the professional standard status and suitability of a person.
Screening Register	means a register that retains current information of Child related ministries, associated roles, and details of Worker screening information of a Parish.
Sexual Offence	means an offence of a sexual nature under a law of Western Australia, another State, Territory, or the Commonwealth committed against, with or in the presence of a child and as set out in Chapter X – “Reportable Conduct”.
Spent Conviction Legislation	means the <i>Crimes Act 1914</i> (Cth), <i>Spent Convictions Act 1988</i> (WA), <i>Criminal Records Act 1991</i> (NSW), <i>Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986</i> (QLD), <i>Spent Convictions Act 2000</i> (ACT), <i>Criminal Records (Spent Convictions) Act 1992</i> (NT), and <i>Annulled Convictions Act 2003</i> (TAS).
Suspected Person	means a person who is suspected to have engaged in conduct that may be reportable conduct or to have been convicted of an offence involving reportable conduct.
Survivor	Survivor is the person that has experienced child sexual abuse and has applied for redress through the National Redress Scheme. Survivor and Victim are terms that may be interchangeable based on personal preference; however, survivor has been adopted as language used by the National Redress Scheme.
Vicar General	means the individual responsible for assisting the Bishop in overseeing safeguarding compliance; the Vicar General has delegated authority from the Bishop in respect of the Chancery and Parishes for the purposes of the <i>Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022</i>
Visiting Clergy	means any clergy (including religious) visiting the Diocese from another diocese or religious order.
Volunteers	means any volunteer of the Diocese.
Vulnerable Adult	Also referred to in this policy as an <i>Adult with Vulnerabilities</i> as set out in this Glossary.

Work Experience Students	means any student engaged to undertake work experience or training at the Diocese.
Worker	means all clergy of the Diocese, employees, contractors, volunteers, work experience students, and trainees of the Diocese, including those working in or visiting the Diocese or its parishes; for the avoidance of doubt, the use of the term worker is not to be taken to have any effect on a person's status under the <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> (Cth) or at common law.
Workers	has the same meaning as worker.
Working With Children Check (WWCC)	means the mandatory screening process for anyone engaging in child-related work, governed by the <i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004</i>
WWCC Act	means the <i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004</i>
WWCC Clearance	means an authorisation that is in force under the <i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004</i> to engage in child-related work.
WWCC Holders	means individuals who hold, or are required by the Diocese to hold, a WWCC clearance for the purpose of engagement with the Diocese; individuals exempt from holding a WWCC clearance as set out in the WWCC policy are not WWCC holders.
WWCC Number	means the number given for a WWCC clearance under the <i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004</i>
WWCC Verification	means a check completed in accordance with <i>Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004</i> to ensure the WWCC is valid.
Young Person	means a person who is aged 12 years or older but under the age of 18 years. For the avoidance of doubt, a young person is under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who is apparently under 18 years of age.

ANNEXURE A – GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Australian Law

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth);*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)*
- *Children's and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)*
- *Children and Community Services Amendment Act 2021 (WA)*
- *Children and Young Person's Care and Protection Act 1998 (Cth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*
- *Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)*
- *Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Spent Convictions Act 1988 (WA),*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)*
- *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004*

International Law

- *Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989* as ratified by the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*
- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006* as ratified by the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*
- *Principles for Older Persons 1991* as adopted by General Assembly in 1991.

Canon Law

- *Code of Canon Law (1987)*
- *Revisions of the Code of Canon Law, Book VI: Penal Sanctions in the Church (8 December 2021)*
- *Vademecum, on certain points of procedure in treating cases of sexual abuse of minors committed by clerics (5 June 2022)*
- *Vos Estis Lux Mundi (9 May 2019)*
- *Tutela Minorum Universal Safeguarding Guidelines Framework*

Standards

- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS)*
- *Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) Integrity in Our Common Missions (November 2023)*
- *ACBC National Response Protocol Framework (1 February 2021)*
- *ACBC National Response Protocol (1 February 2021)*

Safeguarding Policies

Master Documents

- Safeguarding Master Policy (this document)
- Safeguarding Commitment Statement
- Code of Conduct

Policies

- Recruitment
- Diocesan Risk Management
- Safeguarding Complaints Management Policy
- Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Systems
- Social Media

Procedures

- Procedure – Working with Children Check – Application and Renewal
- Procedure – Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check;
- Procedures – Visitors (Clergy, Religious, and Lay People) Procedure
- Procedure – Responding to Reportable Conduct
- Procedure – Mandatory Reporting
- Procedure – Managing a Person of Concern in a Parish
- Procedure – Reporting a Child or Young Person at Risk of Significant Harm
- Procedure – Complaint Management
- Procedure – Completing Risk Assessments

Protocols

- National Redress Scheme (NRS) Management of Redress Claims

Guidelines (*pending review and revision*)

- Engaging with adults at Risk
- Engaging with Families and Communities
- Engaging with Children
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion
- Recruiting and Screening
- Safe online Environments

Other Materials (*pending review and revision*)

- Right of the Child Framework
- Children's Code of Behaviour

ANNEXURE B – ADMINISTRATIVE SCHEDULE

Name of policy	Master Safeguarding Policy.
Description	This Policy sets out the considerations, requirements, and obligations of the Diocese, its Relevant Individuals, and related entities regarding the safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
Application	This Policy applies to the Diocese, its Relevant Individuals, and related entities. See further to Chapter 4, “Application”.
Approval authority	Bishop of the Diocese
Document owner	Safeguarding Bunbury safeguarding@bunburycatholic.org.au
Approval date	20 August 2026
Approved by	Bishop George Kolodziej SDS DD Bishop of Bunbury
Next Review date	March 2027 – Initial Review See further Chapter 19, “Reviewing this Policy”.

Documents repealed as result of this policy.

Policies	Documents/Guidelines
Safeguarding Policy (Diocese Safeguarding 2023)	Screening Matrix
Screening and Monitoring Policy (Diocese Safeguarding 2023)	Responding and Reporting Abuse
	Risk Assessment
	Safeguarding commitment statement (Diocese Safeguarding 2023)
	Forms – • Parent Carer Consent • Safeguarding Concern Report Form • Safeguarding Officer Nomination Form • Safeguarding Officer – unpaid church worker Job Description • Safeguarding Personal Declaration • Safeguarding Prayer • Safeguarding Sample survey for Parents Carers • Safeguarding Survey Sample for Parish Participants • Safeguarding Survey Sample for Youth

Revision/Modification History

Date	Version	Current Title	Summary of Changes	Approval Date	Commenced Date
February 2026	1	Safeguarding Master Policy	Revised Policy	20 August 2026	20 August 2026