

A GUIDE TO THE

Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE



Acknowledgment of Country

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong, Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin nation, who are those appointed by God as the traditional custodians of this precious land within the area called Naarm, which we now know as Melbourne.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, for the way they have stewarded the Lord's good creation. We extend that respect to all Indigenous people across this country we now call Australia, who we pray will continue that task of stewardship, trusting that our Creator will continue reconciling all things to himself in Jesus Christ.



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Acknowledgments

The Safeguarding Unit wishes to sincerely acknowledge and thank the Safeguarding Parish Reference Group, clergy, parish staff and members of the Archdiocesan Catholic community for their feedback and guidance in the development of this Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool.

Commitment statement

The Archdiocese is committed to the safety, wellbeing and human dignity of children, young people and adults.

Version control

This Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool replaces the Parish and Entity Child Safety Assessment Tool (version 1, 2019) and the Parish and Entity Child Safety Assessment Tool (version 1.1, 2022).

Contact details

Safeguarding Unit
(03) 9926 5621
safeguardingunit@cam.org.au
melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding

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Acknowledgment of survivors

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne acknowledges and accepts the pain and harm caused to the victims and survivors of abuse in the Catholic Church.

We pay our respects to all victims and survivors who have shared their personal witness, so that we may learn to better protect children, young people and adults.

We also acknowledge with deep respect those who felt unable to bring their voices forward due to the enormity of the trauma they suffered as children, and those whose voices can no longer be heard.

We dedicate our ongoing efforts in safeguarding to all the victims and survivors of sexual, physical, emotional and spiritual abuse and neglect.

Foreword

Dear friends,

Since November 2019, when the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework was rolled out across Archdiocesan parishes, the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool has been a central component of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's commitment to ensure the safety of our children and young people. This tool allows parishes to assess and monitor their safeguarding efforts in relation to the requirements of the Safeguarding Framework, consistent with the obligations of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*.

While understanding that compliance with the Child Safe Standards is an important part of the makeup of our safeguarding culture—a culture that is formed from the very heart of Gospel teaching—safeguarding should never become synonymous with an obligatory, bureaucratic, tick-box exercise. As neighbourhoods of faith, our response comes directly from our shared Baptismal call to care for all God's children, particularly the most vulnerable.

I am delighted to share with you the second edition of the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool. This has been developed by collating feedback over the last few years, and in consultation with the Safeguarding Parish Reference Group, comprising both clergy and parish representatives.

Designed to accompany parishes on their safeguarding journey, the self-assessment tool has been revised to continue to assist and support parishes as they strive to ensure that a range of safeguarding elements are present and operational, ultimately creating the foundation for a safeguarding culture in all that they do.

My sincerest hope is that the self-assessment tool, coupled with this guide, will not only lighten some of the administrative tasks our parishes face, but also strengthen our approach to safely engaging with our youth while creating time and opportunities for us to accompany our children and young people as they encounter Christ.



Congratulations to the parishes and their communities on their safeguarding efforts thus far. You have demonstrated commitment and done significant work. Let us continue in these efforts as we move forward, engaging purposefully and wholeheartedly as Christ's light into the world.

The Safeguarding Unit will continue to support the implementation and ongoing understanding of safeguarding. Parishes are encouraged to complete the self-assessment tool on an annual basis and share this with their regional Safeguarding Officer.

Please be assured of my gratitude and my prayers for all that you do. May the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen you daily.

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

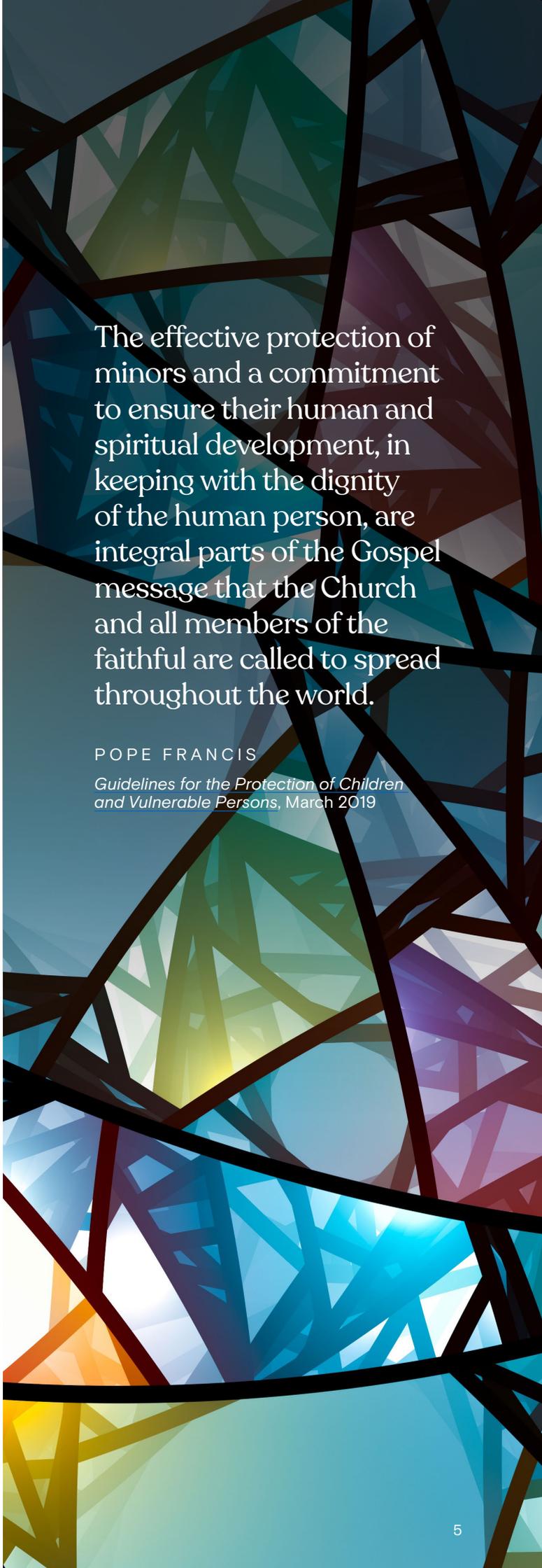
Purpose

Self-assessment is often thought of as an act of reflection, discernment and evaluation that informs our practices and procedures.

When it comes to a self-assessment of safeguarding practices and procedures, this also involves a parish or other entity identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement. Through self-assessment, we are also critically reflecting on how we engage with children and young people within our parish or entity.

The Victorian Child Safe Standards require all organisations that provide services or facilities to children to put children's safety and wellbeing first, embedding a commitment to child safety in every aspect of the organisation. According to the Victorian Government's Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), 'Building a child safe organisation is a dynamic and ongoing process of learning, monitoring and reviewing' (*A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation*, 2023, p. 7).

By following the process of self-assessment, engaging in regular reviews and working to embed the standards in our organisational culture, we strive to reduce the opportunity for harm to occur. This has been further emphasised in Standard 9 of the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, which requires parishes, agencies and entities to regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children and adults safe.



The effective protection of minors and a commitment to ensure their human and spiritual development, in keeping with the dignity of the human person, are integral parts of the Gospel message that the Church and all members of the faithful are called to spread throughout the world.

POPE FRANCIS

Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons, March 2019

Therefore, the purpose of this Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool is to assist parishes, agencies or entities within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to self-assess and monitor their safeguarding efforts in relation to the requirements of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework (encompassing all safeguarding documents). In doing so, parishes, agencies or entities are striving to ensure that child safety is embedded within the culture of the parish or entity and is reflected in the way the parish or entity conducts its ministry.

This self-assessment tool also enables parishes, agencies or entities, through their safeguarding committees, to document their progress in relation to creating safe environments for children and young people, and to facilitate their readiness to be audited by the CCYP and/or Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited (ACSL).

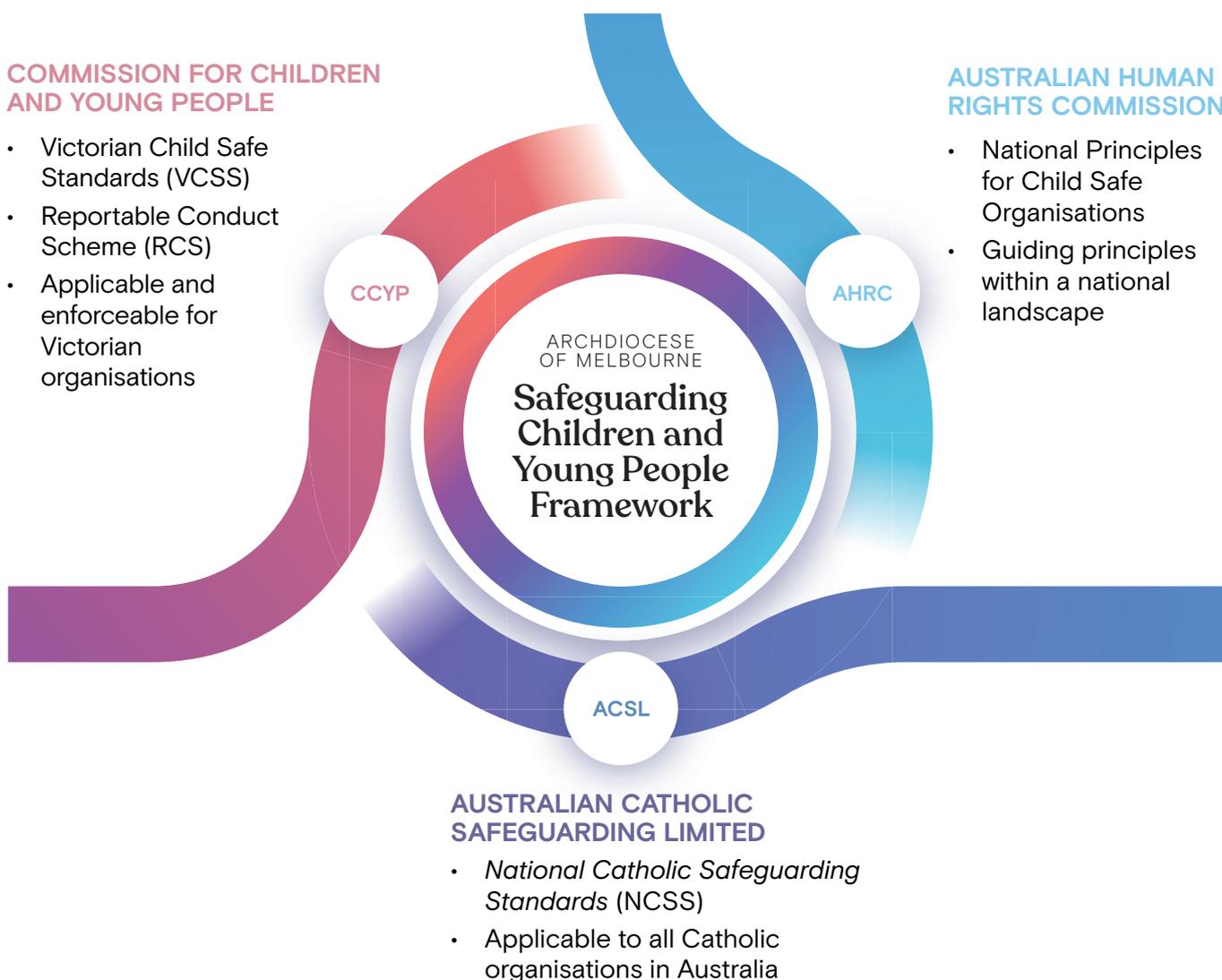


Figure 1 represents the organisational child safety frameworks that have informed the development of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework.

About the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool

This self-assessment tool is based on ACSL's [Parish Safeguarding Checklist: Meeting the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#), which reflects the requirements of the second edition of their *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards* (NCSS).

This tool also includes references to the NCSS, which are aligned with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. These are indicated underneath each indicator—for example, NCSS 1.1.

This self-assessment tool also includes references to the CCYP's Victorian Child Safe Standards (VCSS), and these are also indicated underneath each indicator—for example, VCSS 1.1.

Under the Victorian *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*, the VCSS are mandatory for select organisations, including religious bodies. A new set of standards to strengthen child safety took effect on 1 July 2022, providing greater clarity around the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe. The new standards are also more consistent with the standards adopted throughout Australia.

Only those indicators of the NCSS that are pertinent to parishes or other Church agencies or entities have been included in this document. Other criteria that relate to measures that need to be implemented at an Archdiocesan level have been omitted for ease of use but have been mapped for compliance purposes.



The self-assessment tool has been condensed, with standards grouped into four capability areas that are aligned to the second edition of the NCSS. This approach is outlined in the table below.

If you are viewing this as a PDF, clicking on a capability area below will take you to the beginning of that section.

Capability area	NCSS standard
<p>1 Leadership, monitoring and improvement </p>	<p>Standard 1 Committed leadership, governance and culture</p> <p>Standard 9 Continuous improvement</p>
<p>2 Engaging with children, adults, families and communities </p>	<p>Standard 2 Children and adults are safe, informed and participate</p> <p>Standard 3 Partnering with families, carers and communities</p> <p>Standard 4 Equity is promoted and diversity is respected</p>
<p>3 Right people, right role, right knowledge </p>	<p>Standard 5 Robust human resource management</p> <p>Standard 7 Ongoing education and training</p>
<p>4 Systems, policies and procedures </p>	<p>Standard 6 Effective complaints management</p> <p>Standard 8 Safe physical and online environments</p> <p>Standard 10 Policies and procedures support the safety of children and adults</p>

The four NCSS capability areas



Leadership, monitoring and improvement

STANDARDS 1, 9



Engaging with children, adults, families and communities

STANDARDS 2, 3, 4



Right people, right role, right knowledge

STANDARDS 5, 7



Systems, policies and procedures

STANDARDS 6, 8, 10

Source: adapted from Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd,
National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, 2nd edn, 2022, p. 7.

The self-assessment tool and this guide should be read in conjunction with other safeguarding documents of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework (the Safeguarding Framework), including various implementation guidelines, information sheets and templates.

A full list of definitions used throughout the self-assessment tool can be found at the end of this document.



How to use the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool

In response to feedback from parishes and consultation with the Archdiocese’s Safeguarding Parish Reference Group, the Safeguarding Unit has developed this updated version of the self-assessment tool. The tool is designed to help parishes, agencies and entities assess and monitor their safeguarding efforts in relation to the Archdiocese’s Safeguarding Framework.

When conducting a self-assessment of safeguarding efforts across a parish, agency or entity, the safeguarding committee should work collaboratively with leadership to implement, maintain and review safeguarding processes and procedures.

Each parish, agency or entity is unique, so having a shared understanding of the specific programs, activities and events that your parish or entity runs is a crucial element in reducing the likelihood of abuse and/or misconduct occurring and ensuring that children and young people are protected from harm.

The self-assessment tool requires each parish, agency or entity to assess itself against each indicator using a streamlined compliance assessment scale adapted from the scale used by ACSL and set out in the following table.

<p>Yet to develop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are unable to demonstrate that the requirements of the indicator are in place. • Resources are yet to be assigned to address the specific requirements of the indicator. • We will implement the necessary strategies and actions developed through the implementation plan.
<p>Developing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have begun to address the requirements of the indicator. • Processes are developing and not universally applied. • Some relevant processes have been implemented that align with the requirements of the indicator, but they are siloed, undocumented, inconsistent and/or lacking clarity. • Personnel capabilities vary across the entity, and resources and responsibilities are not formally assigned.
<p>Developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are addressing the indicator and are in the process of implementing its requirements. • Relevant processes and systems have been defined and developed but are yet to be implemented across the full operation of the entity. • Resources have been assigned and responsibilities defined, but there has been no formal training or communication of standard procedures and it is likely that deviations will be detected.
<p>Developed and embedded</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can demonstrate that indicator requirements are formally embedded. • Processes are operating effectively, and opportunities are provided for continuous improvement. • Relevant processes are integrated and coordinated, including in remote operations, and reviews or audits of activities are undertaken. • Personnel are trained to detect and report on deviations or breakdowns in the processes. • Resources have been assigned to monitor and address requirements.

For each indicator, the following questions will also need to be answered:

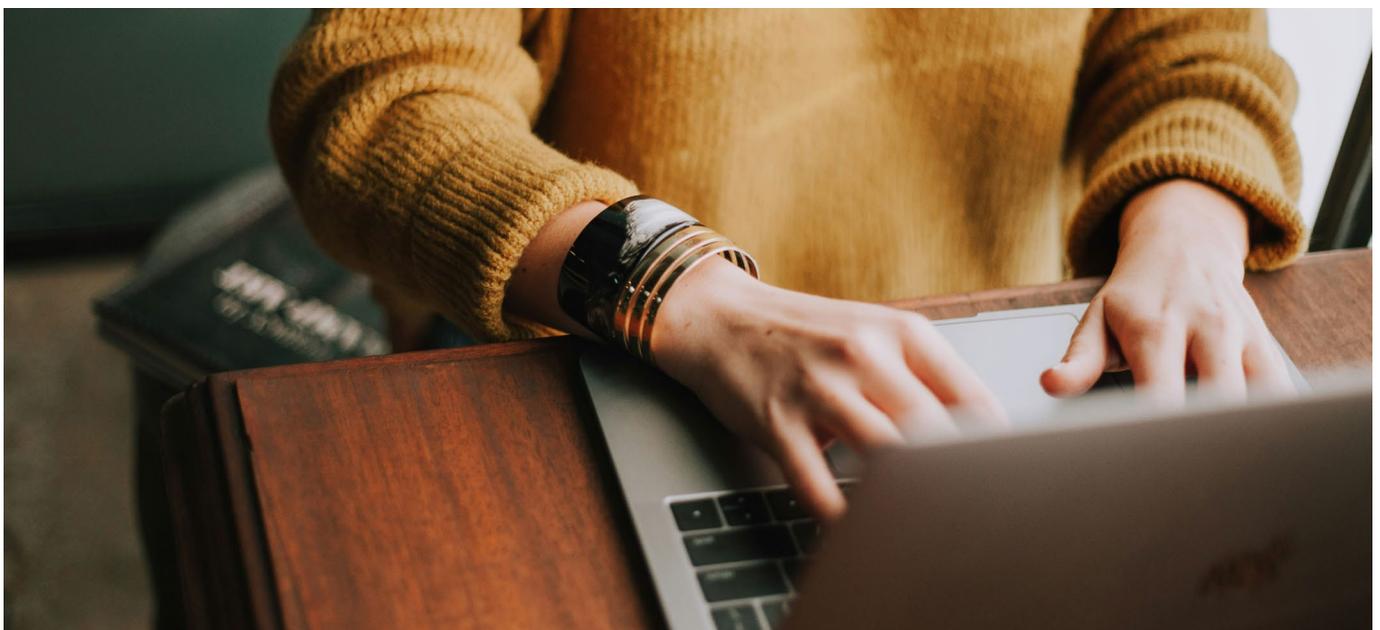
- **What is already in place?**
What evidence do we have of this?
 - Can you provide details of how this specific indicator is met—for instance, through policies, procedures, documents, activities (planned and/or in progress) and strengths.
- **What more do we need to do?**
 - What tasks may still need to be undertaken to meet this indicator? Are there any opportunities for improvement?
- **Who is responsible?**
What is the timeframe?
 - Who is leading or supervising the completion of this standard? When is the expected completion date?

If your parish, agency or entity believes an indicator is not applicable, please provide an explanation.

As you work your way through each of the sections, it may be helpful to use the following reflective questions to assist you to think about *how* and *why* things are done in a particular way. This is an important step in promoting the safety of children and young people.

Reflective questions

- What practices do we implement that demonstrate this standard?
- How are our practices improving safeguarding outcomes for children and young people?
- How do we engage with children, families and the community?
- How do we communicate our practice to our community?
- What are the areas where we need to take immediate action?
- What are the opportunities for quality improvement?



The following example shows the various elements of the self-assessment tool.

Refers to the relevant Victorian Child Safe Standard (VCSS) and National Catholic Safeguarding Standard (NCSS). See Appendix 1—Comparison between Victorian Child Safe Standards, National Principles and National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

Details of how this specific indicator is met e.g. policies, procedures, documents, activities (including those planned and in progress) and practices

Tasks that may still need to be undertaken to meet this indicator

Allocating tasks and timeframes

COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT SCALE					IMPLEMENTATION PLAN			
Self-assessment tool Indicator	Yet to develop	Developing	Developed	Developed and embedded	Evidence <i>What is already in place?</i>	What more do we need to do? <i>Areas for improvement and action required</i>	Who is responsible? <u>What is the timeframe?</u>	Completed
3.6 Church personnel complete appropriate induction and are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations. <u>(VCSS 6.3; NCSS 5.3)</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All volunteers are given volunteer induction packs upon commencing in their role and come to a volunteer induction evening. Induction evenings are held once a month and people can not be rostered on prior to attending. All volunteers are required to complete the <i>Safeguarding Essentials</i> training every three years. This is monitored through PACEM Reporting posters are displayed in the church, hall and presbytery office. Employees and volunteers working directly with children and young people, have position descriptions that outline the safeguarding responsibilities of their role. The parish uses templates and resources from the Archdiocese that explain privacy and confidentiality requirements. All new volunteer positions are advertised in the parish bulletin and accepted with the position descriptions. The parish has adopted the Archdiocesan Record Keeping Policy, and this is made known to all office staff and the safeguarding committee. 	Areas for improvement and action required If updates become available, these are to be replaced. Look into updating parish website to include the reporting posters. Other volunteers already in positions need to be retrospectively provided with position descriptions regarding their role.	Parish priest and safeguarding committee Parish secretary and safeguarding committee Parish priest, safeguarding committee, ministry leaders Safeguarding committee, parish staff and parish priest	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Implementation hints

In this guide, implementation hints are provided for each capability area. These hints (indicated by the lightbulb/gear icon, as seen above) are intended as examples of how you might meet the requirements of each indicator. They are not an exhaustive list, and there may be other forms of evidence and practices that are relevant to demonstrating compliance with different indicators. The goal is to encourage a comprehensive self-assessment, considering a variety of practices that reflect your commitment to safeguarding.

At the start of each section, you will find a link to access further resources via the Safeguarding section of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's website: melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-framework-resources

Contact

If you require further information or assistance, please contact your regional Safeguarding Officer or the Safeguarding Unit on 9926 5621, or email us at safeguardingunit@cam.org.au.

Disclaimer

This resource provides an approved self-assessment tool that has been mapped to the Victorian Child Safe Standards, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards* and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. It takes into account the relevant legislative requirements for parishes, agencies or entities within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to assist them to self-assess their compliance.

CAPABILITY AREA 1

Leadership, monitoring and improvement



STANDARD 1

Committed leadership, governance and culture

- The safeguarding of children and adults is embedded in the entity's leadership, governance and culture.

STANDARD 9

Continuous improvement

- Entities regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children and adults safe.

These Standards are about making sure that a safeguarding culture is embedded in every aspect of Church life—in dioceses, parishes, religious congregations, ministries, schools, social, health and community services.

They ask our Church leadership and governance structures to be transparent and accountable, to set clear expectations, regularly monitor and review policies and practices, make improvements, and take actions to provide a safe environment for all people, especially children and adults at risk.

—ACSL, [*National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Safeguarding children and adults at risk*](#), Edition 2, 2022, p. 8

Further resources

melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-framework-resources/



Implementation hints for Capability Area 1

Self-assessment tool indicator	Examples of evidence: what might this look like in practice?
<p>1.1</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity has endorsed the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy, which is publicly available and reflects an understanding and identification of diverse circumstances and experiences that increase a child or young person’s vulnerability to abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy is publicly available on the parish, agency or entity website and is promoted and actively communicated to individuals and groups (e.g. culturally and linguistically diverse communities) within the parish, agency or entity in several formats (e.g. newsletters or bulletins, noticeboards, website, hard copies available). • The parish, agency or entity has an open culture that supports the safe disclosure of risks of harm to children.
<p>1.2</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity has endorsed the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People, which is publicly available and displayed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment statement is endorsed and signed by the head of entity and is available to the community (e.g. displayed online and in the parish, agency or entity). • The commitment statement is communicated to the community and celebrated (e.g. discussed, shared and explained at, before or after Mass).

1.3

A culture of safeguarding children and adults is championed and modelled at all levels of the parish, agency or entity by:

- appointing a safeguarding committee to the highest level of leadership, who are promoted within the parish, agency or entity and will oversee and support the compliance and monitoring of child and adult safety
 - leadership setting clear expectations around child safety, so that Church personnel understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and are given opportunities to provide input
 - leadership modelling attitudes and behaviours that demonstrate their commitment to the safety of children and young people. They express support for keeping children safe, taking action when they have concerns about children's safety, and they prioritise the safety of children as part of everyday practice, ensuring that the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework is implemented.
- A safeguarding committee has been established (or the parish pastoral council assumes responsibility for safeguarding). The safeguarding committee communicates its ongoing progress to the parish pastoral council or leadership on a quarterly basis.
 - Committee members have read and understood their role descriptions and obligations and participate in training and development opportunities to support them in their roles.
 - At least four safeguarding committee meetings are held annually, and meeting minutes are documented and retained.
 - Access to, and communication with, safeguarding committee members and the Safeguarding Unit are promoted to the community.
 - Safeguarding information is provided and widely available.
 - Ongoing communication occurs between the safeguarding committee and their respective Safeguarding Unit regional Safeguarding Officer.
 - Posters promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people are displayed.
 - Leaders speak about child safety at Mass in a welcoming and age-appropriate manner, being mindful of the language that is used in these public addresses, as direct reference to abuse may be confronting to families of young children.
 - A procedure is established and documented within the parish, agency or entity to ensure that all programs, activities and events (including those held interstate and overseas) involving children and young people have a risk-management plan in place, that is overseen by the safeguarding committee. It is good practice to extend this requirement to all activities that are high risk or involve vulnerable adults to help parishes fulfill their duty of care obligations.

<p>1.4</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity's governance arrangements are clear. There is a clear list of all the programs, groups, activities and ministries that exist to define which they have responsibility over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For external groups, contractual third-party arrangements are in place. • Where the parish, agency or entity's governance includes countries other than Australia, the parish, agency or entity must apply these standards, taking into account relevant international declarations and local legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear list or organisational chart of programs and groups that operate within or under the governance of the parish, agency or entity. • There are clear safeguarding processes and procedures for third parties that are separate from the parish, agency or entity. Processes and procedures may be outlined in the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's hire agreement document for one-off hires or ongoing leases. • International programs governed or supported by an Archdiocesan parish, agency or entity are considerate of international, federal and local laws and legislation. These considerations are documented and recorded. • Lines of authority, responsibility and accountability for safeguarding across the parish, agency or entity are clear and communicated.
<p>1.5</p> <p>The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct is communicated, endorsed and signed by all Church personnel. The Code of Conduct provides guidelines on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities in accessible formats and languages, and takes into account the particular needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people; children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds; children and young people in out-of-home care or those who are homeless; children and young people of diverse sexuality; and children and young people with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan has been developed to implement and communicate the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct to all Church personnel. • Alternative methods for signing the Code of Conduct have been provided (e.g. electronically through the <i>Safeguarding Essentials</i> online training portal or by signing a hard copy). • Records are maintained and reviewed to ensure Code of Conduct documentation is endorsed and signed, and renewal dates are monitored for all Church personnel.

<p>1.6</p> <p>Church personnel understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping as identified in the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and subsequent safeguarding documents, and the Safeguarding Children and Young People Record Keeping Policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All records relating to safeguarding are kept for 100 years in line with the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and the Safeguarding Children and Young People Record Keeping Policy. This includes personnel records, safeguarding committee meeting minutes, registration forms, attendance logs, incident reports, risk-management plans etc. Records are kept securely and electronically on Archdiocesan approved systems and technologies. • All Church personnel understand their information-sharing and record-keeping obligations. • Schedules and processes ensure the <i>Safeguarding Essentials</i> training for clergy, employees and volunteers is completed, documented and recorded in personnel files, along with any other safeguarding training undertaken.
<p>1.7</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity's safeguarding practices are regularly reviewed, including the completion of an annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool, which assists the parish, agency or entity's creation of an implementation plan to help monitor, track and improve safeguarding practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish, agency or entity undertakes to complete the Safeguarding Self-assessment Tool annually, providing evidence that can be used for external audits. • Spot checks are conducted periodically across the parish, agency or entity. • The parish, agency or entity shares its annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool with the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Unit and participates in a progress-review meeting. This is coordinated by the safeguarding committee and overseen by the parish priest or head of entity.
<p>1.8</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity reports to leadership, staff, volunteers, families, and children and young people, providing a summary of the annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool and relevant reviews (e.g. risk-assessment reviews).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates from the safeguarding committee meetings and the Safeguarding Unit are included in newsletters and bulletins and on notice boards etc. • Parents and carers are informed that risk assessments have been completed for programs, activities and groups involving their child/ren, and information on how to access the risk assessments is communicated. • A summary of the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool and/or safeguarding updates are communicated to Church personnel and to the community. • Any information shared takes into account the cultural backgrounds and English language skills of the audience (e.g. information is translated into relevant languages, where appropriate; plain English is used; results are communicated using images or audio).

CAPABILITY AREA 2

Engaging with children, adults, families and communities



STANDARD 2

Children and adults are safe, informed and participate

- Children and adults are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

STANDARD 3

Partnering with families, carers and communities

- Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting the safeguarding of children and adults.

STANDARD 4

Equity is promoted and diversity is respected

- Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Every person has the right to be protected from harm, to be listened to, to be taken seriously, and to have a say in matters that affect them. We know that some children and some adults experience greater vulnerability than others. Organisations that understand these needs and respect and uphold the dignity of all people, provide safer environments in which everyone can thrive.

Empowering children and adults to have a say in decisions that affect them is an integral part of every safe organisation. Connecting with families, carers and communities is also important, so that everyone can understand how and why decisions are made, where to go for information and help, and how to raise concerns. Recognising people's diverse needs and circumstances is essential to building a safeguarding culture where ministries and services are provided in culturally safe and inclusive ways, facilitating self-determination.

—ACSL, [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Safeguarding children and adults at risk](#), Edition 2, 2022, p. 8

Further resources

melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-framework-resources/



Implementation hints for Capability Area 2

Self-assessment tool indicator	Examples of evidence: what might this look like in practice?
<p>2.1</p> <p>Age-appropriate strategies are used to inform children and adults at risk about their rights, including their right to safety and information, enabling them to provide feedback and participate in decisions that affect them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An approach or plan has been developed to consult with children and young people, and to involve them in decision-making in formal and informal ways.• Children are prioritised in decision-making.• Child-friendly posters about children’s rights and responsibilities, and the parish, agency or entity’s commitment to children and young people are displayed.• Where appropriate, advisory groups (such as parish youth leaders or young people’s reference groups) are established and regularly engaged with about safeguarding, for example by seeking feedback on safeguarding and areas for improvement.• There is transparency with children about the extent of their involvement in decision-making processes, and feedback is sought and given on how their views have been actioned.

<p>2.2</p> <p>Children and adults at risk are made aware of, and have access to, information about complaints processes. Support is provided through proactive engagement strategies, such as providing age-appropriate information in accessible languages that is culturally safe and is in easy-to-understand formats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to the accessibility and transparency of safeguarding information, support and complaints processes for CALD communities is demonstrated by providing translated documents, consulting with the community and looking at different modes of communication to suit community needs, such as creating safeguarding videos. • Children and young people are provided with an age-appropriate information pack when they enrol in any programs, groups or ministries, including information about their right to safety and about how and to whom they can report concerns. • A Code of Conduct is established with children and young people across programs, groups and ministries in which they are involved. • Procedures and communication efforts have been reflected on to determine whether further initiatives or communication are required to inform the community of safeguarding complaints and risk-management procedures. • Safeguarding complaints-handling and risk-management procedures are transparent and communicated to the community.
<p>2.3</p> <p>The importance of friendships is recognised, and support from peers is encouraged, and this is communicated in an age- and developmentally appropriate manner to help children feel safe and less isolated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are advised about what they can do and who they can talk to if someone they know is being hurt. • Children are provided with education about safe and respectful peer relationships, including through social media. • Procedures have been considered to actively support children to develop and sustain friendships (e.g. through buddy systems, friendship circles, peer support groups). • Teamwork and peer support are fostered when children are engaged together in programs, activities and ministries. • Children are provided with information about safe and respectful peer relationships (e.g. by sharing anti-bullying information).
<p>2.4</p> <p>The importance of relationships and social connections for adults at risk is recognised, and such relationships and connections are encouraged, helping adults at risk to feel safe and less isolated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults at risk (or their carers, where appropriate) are provided with information about safe and respectful relationships.

2.5

Where relevant to the setting or context, children and families are provided with information and access/referral to abuse-prevention programs appropriate to the child or young person's age, development, ability and level of understanding.

- Contact details for independent child advocacy services, child helplines (such as Kids Helpline), family violence services and child protection are clearly displayed.
- Information about independent child advocacy services and child helpline telephone numbers are shared, and children and young people are informed about the services they provide.
- Information from support services about protective behaviour programs is provided on parish noticeboards and in parish publications. (For an up-to-date listing of approved programs, please contact your regional Safeguarding Officer.)
- Parental safeguarding awareness material—such as the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's parent resource *Protecting God's Children*—is shared with families.
- Children and families are provided with information about online safety and online safety risks.
- A strong prevention and awareness focus is maintained, through educating children, parents and Church personnel about online safety and security, including cyberbullying and online grooming.

2.6

Parents, carers and/or guardians are encouraged to participate in decisions affecting their child or an adult with diminished capacity in their care.

- Conversations are initiated with families and carers about the entity's safeguarding commitment and practices.
- Families and carers are supported to take an active role in monitoring children's safety across the entity's activities and services.
- Families and carers are fully informed of the details of services and activities and any risk mitigation that the entity has put in place, to assist them to provide informed consent (e.g. by providing details of youth camp activities, including travel and supervision).
- The roles and responsibilities of parents and carers in the entity's activities are clearly described and communicated to ensure the safe participation of children.

2.7

All families, carers and communities are engaged and provided with relevant and accessible information about the parish, agency or entity's approach to safeguarding.

- The safeguarding committee makes regular opportunities for consulting with—and seeking advice or feedback from—children, families, carers and communities (e.g. through a suggestion box, surveys, focus groups or meetings).
- Posters promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people are displayed.
- Child-friendly resources (hard copy and/or online) are displayed and promoted, including by providing explanations of the Code of Conduct to children enrolled in programs, groups and ministries, helping them to understand how adults should behave.
- Safeguarding messages are communicated in a way that accounts for and accommodates cultural relevance and different levels of English language skills (e.g. by being translated into relevant languages, using plain language and/or using images as much as possible).
- Barriers to communication are identified, and specific strategies are enacted to overcome them.
- Families from diverse backgrounds are asked about their preferred format for provision of information.

2.8

All families, carers and communities are informed about the parish, agency or entity's operations and governance, and are provided with an opportunity to have a say in safeguarding policies and practices.

- The safeguarding committee regularly offers all parishioners opportunities to discuss safeguarding policies and procedures (e.g. through meetings or focus groups).
- Efforts are made to include parents, carers and members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities on the safeguarding committee.
- Communication efforts are reviewed and reflected on to ensure that governance arrangements are effectively communicated within the community (e.g. that the St John's Tennis Club is a different entity from St John's Parish).
- Updates from safeguarding committee meetings and the Safeguarding Unit are included in newsletters and on notice boards.
- Information is provided to families and carers about the parish, agency or entity's approach to safeguarding (e.g. by distributing the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and Code of Conduct).
- Families are aware of the roles and responsibilities of those delivering services directly to their children, such as clergy, religious, employees, contractors or volunteers.
- Families are invited to information sessions where they can hear about the operations and governance of the parish, agency or entity, meet team members involved in the delivery of services and ministries to children, and provide their input.

2.9

The parish, agency or entity raises community awareness of the dignity and rights of all children, young people and adults.

- Communication materials promote and convey the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility (e.g. through posters, a newsletter footer, the parish website).
- The parish, agency or entity communicates with its community regularly and in an ongoing way about safeguarding, celebrating and using events such as Children's Week, Child Protection Week or other safeguarding events to mark a commitment or re-commitment to safeguarding.
- Opportunities to celebrate and showcase diversity (e.g. Harmony Day) are embraced and organised.
- Opportunities to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture for example, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) Week are embraced and organised.
- A representative from the parish, agency or entity with relevant expertise may consider taking a leadership role in raising community awareness about child safety, child dignity and/or safeguarding in organisations. This could be achieved in a variety of formats, for example:
 - hosting information sessions with guest speakers on a range of relevant topics, such as e-safety
 - promoting links to government and non-government websites that host safeguarding resources and information for parents, carers and communities
 - providing information from statutory child protection agencies.

2.10

The entity identifies steps already taken to recognise and celebrate Aboriginal peoples and their achievements, communities and cultures.

- The parish, agency or entity reflects on and identifies ways to establish an environment that demonstrates Aboriginal parishioners are welcome. These may include:
 - public displays recognising the land the parish is on and its people (specific to the area)
 - an Acknowledgement of Country and First Nations people in the newsletter and on the website
 - creating a physical environment that is respectful of culture (e.g. selecting representational symbols, objects and images in consultation with Aboriginal families, children and young people)
 - local symbols and signs from the land on which the community is meeting
 - a plaque acknowledging the traditional owners of the land.
- An Acknowledgement of Country and First Nations people is included before meetings and/or the celebration of Mass (but not during or as part of the liturgical rite).
- The parish, agency or entity has identified the traditional owner groups or registered Aboriginal organisations in its area and publicises this information to its community.

2.11

The diverse circumstances and backgrounds of all children, young people and adults at risk are acknowledged, understood and accommodated by providing appropriate support.

- Opportunities are provided in various forums to regularly acknowledge the diverse circumstances and experiences (such as foster care, domestic violence and homelessness) that may increase a child or young person's vulnerability.
- The physical environment reflects a positive and welcoming approach to children from diverse circumstances, cultures and backgrounds. This may be through displaying posters, symbols, decorations or artwork that nurture a sense of identity.
- Children and families are asked to share information about their culture and cultural support needs, if they are comfortable to do so.
- Children and young people are provided with information about safeguarding either verbally and/ or in written form at the commencement of programs, using accessible, child-friendly formats and translated documents where appropriate.

2.12

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework empowers all children by reflecting attitudes and behaviours that respect their inherent dignity, are inclusive and responsive to diverse needs, and promote a culturally safe environment, paying particular attention to those living with disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal children and young people, those who are unable to live at home, and children and young people of diverse sexuality.

- Opportunities are brainstormed for children to express their views and participate in decisions that affect them.
- Informal discussions or formal questionnaires, surveys and feedback forms are used to allow children to express their ideas, opinions and concerns.
- Opportunities, or missed opportunities, to hear from children and young people to seek their feedback are considered and identified as part of the parish, agency or entity’s risk-management approach.
- Diversity is welcomed by including positive images and references to race, disability, culture and diverse needs.
- Awareness training is implemented as part of induction and ongoing staff education, with specific content related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and others with particular experiences and needs.

2.13

A child or young person’s ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.

- Reports and census data are used to ascertain the cultural groups that might be represented in the parish, agency or entity, and to consider any measures that are (or should be) in place to ensure cultural safety for these groups.
- The local Aboriginal community is celebrated by sharing cultural learnings with staff, volunteers and families through existing communication channels at the parish, agency or entity (e.g. through bulletins, magazines, the website).
- Aboriginal organisations and multicultural organisations are consulted for guidance on how the parish, agency or entity can be culturally safe. Any Aboriginal people or people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are attending activities, groups and ministries are engaged in this process.

2.14

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's safeguarding documents are adopted by the parish, agency or entity, and describe the parish, agency or entity's commitment to respecting and valuing Aboriginal children and young people, while addressing how racism will not be tolerated and how instances of racism will be responded to, including potential consequences.

- The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy, its Commitment Statement and the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct are endorsed and implemented, reflecting attitudes and behaviours that respect and value Aboriginal children and young people.
- The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young People Anti-discrimination and Racism Policy is also endorsed, implemented and promoted.
- Opportunities are created in all child-centred programs to include information on inclusion and diversity and the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's zero tolerance of discrimination.

CAPABILITY AREA 3

Right people, right role, right knowledge



STANDARD 5

Robust human resource management

- People working with children and adults are suitable and supported to reflect safeguarding values in practice.

STANDARD 7

Ongoing education and training

- Personnel are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and adults safe through information, ongoing education and training.

This is realised through best practice human resource management covering the recruitment process, professional development and ongoing support and supervision of Church personnel. Providing appropriate and regular training to personnel so they are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to put policies and procedures into practice, helps protect children and adults at risk from abuse.

—ACSL, [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Safeguarding children and adults at risk](#), Edition 2, 2022, p. 8

Further resources

melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-framework-resources/



Implementation hints for Capability Area 3

Self-assessment tool indicator	Examples of evidence: what might this look like in practice?
<p>3.1</p> <p>Strategies are embedded within the parish, agency or entity that equip all Church personnel to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and to understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural safety training specific to Aboriginal culture is promoted among all Church personnel leaders of the parish, agency or entity. • Training is responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, children with a disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. • Presenters with specific knowledge and expertise are invited to train Church personnel and leaders of the parish, agency or entity. • Training may include the involvement of traditional elders (e.g. by providing a Welcome to Country, co-presenting or contributing their perspectives). • Training invites practical input and examples from families.
<p>3.2</p> <p>The Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct and position descriptions outline behavioural expectations of all Church personnel, including that children will be supported to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church personnel are provided with a position description outlining the person's role, any safeguarding expectations and any attributes relevant to supporting the safeguarding culture of the parish, agency or entity. • Code of Conduct expectations have been explained to Church personnel, and an opportunity to answer any questions has been provided. • Where possible, the knowledge and skills of diverse community representatives are drawn upon to nurture and support children's diverse needs and cultural safety.

<p>3.3</p> <p>The commitment to safeguarding and zero tolerance approach to abuse are explicit in advertising, screening and recruitment for Church personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job/role advertisements clearly articulate the parish, agency or entity’s commitment to child safety and a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse. • Screening requirements are communicated to potential candidates for roles. • Position descriptions set clear expectations about safeguarding responsibilities, including induction and ongoing training. • Interviews are conducted, and referee checks are completed. • Safeguarding requirements are integrated into policies and procedures such as selection and recruitment, and induction.
<p>3.4</p> <p>Recruitment and screening procedures and processes are fully documented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When recruiting for a role, child safety messaging is embedded throughout the advertising, selection, recruitment and onboarding processes, and the parish, agency or entity’s commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults is stated. • The selection processes of conducting referee checks, posing interview questions, checking qualifications and professional registration, and completing internet searches on an applicant are all performed through a safeguarding lens and documented accordingly.
<p>3.5</p> <p>Church personnel have current clearances (e.g. Working with Children Checks and, potentially, police checks) and/or equivalent background checks relevant to their roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Children (WWC) Checks for all Church personnel have been recorded and are registered to the parish, agency or entity. • WWC Checks for Church personnel are renewed every five years. • All relevant Church personnel as outlined in Archdiocesan policies and the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework have completed police checks, and are renewed every three years. • The parish, agency or entity has applied for the volunteer police check discount through the Victoria Police Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) program. • All Church personnel have signed the Code of Conduct, and their renewal dates have been recorded—every three years for volunteers and annually for employees and clergy.

<p>3.6</p> <p>Church personnel complete appropriate induction and are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The safeguarding induction process provides new Church personnel with information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – why safeguarding is important – the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework – the impacts and types of abuse – their reporting requirements – how to report abuse or safety-related misconduct—the Safeguarding Unit’s ‘Reporting Abuse or Safety-Related Misconduct’ flowchart poster is a great resource to provide to new Church personnel – who the safeguarding committee is, and other bodies or people they can contact with concerns. • The probationary period is outlined for new Church personnel, and support networks are provided and communicated to help promote development and confidence in their role.
<p>3.7</p> <p>Dependent on their role, Church personnel are provided with ongoing supervision and people-management that is focused on child safety and wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision and monitoring are organised for all new Church personnel. A mentoring or ‘buddy’ system might also be implemented for new personnel where appropriate. • A structured process for professional supervision and support is provided for personnel in key roles working with children, or where they manage or supervise personnel who work with children. This should also include those personnel who respond to and manage complaints. • A probationary period is in place for new employees and volunteers, to allow time to assess their suitability for the position.
<p>3.8</p> <p>All Church personnel complete the mandatory Safeguarding Essentials online training, and training records of this are maintained. Clergy and employees are required to complete this training annually, while volunteers are required to complete the module every three years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Safeguarding Essentials</i> training is rolled out by the parish, agency or entity to all Church personnel. Where required, the parish, agency or entity may conduct offline (face-to-face) sessions for Church personnel. • Records of any training undertaken by Church personnel are maintained and updated by the parish, agency or entity.

<p>3.9</p> <p>Records are maintained to ensure all Church personnel attend induction training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish, agency or entity records when Church personnel have completed their induction and <i>Safeguarding Essentials</i> training, along with their renewal date for training—every three years for volunteers, and annually for employees and clergy. • Where training requirements are not met or are out of date, processes are in place to ensure personnel do not work with children until refresher training is completed.
<p>3.10</p> <p>Guidance materials are tailored to the needs of different Church personnel. Examples of guidance materials provided may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying indicators of abuse • reporting requirements • how to support a person disclosing harm • how to create culturally safe environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders are provided with information about the factors that increase a child’s vulnerability to harm. This could be incorporated into training and education sessions, or even parish induction programs for those working directly with children and young people. • Training and professional development of Church personnel are tailored to meet the needs of the particular parish, agency or entity with respect to individual characteristics, cultural backgrounds and abilities, and the roles of personnel. • Training and professional development for Church personnel are designed and delivered in ways that take into account the roles of individuals and their engagement with children (e.g. a general overview might be given for roles with minimal child contact and/or responsibility, a more detailed and in-depth approach for pastoral workers, and a specialised approach for parish priests). • Training and professional development for Church personnel are tailored for various groups according to their activity in the Church (e.g. specific training is provided for those involved in recruitment to identify signs among applicants of any unusual attitudes towards children). • Any education and training provided about the online environment are consistent with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework, especially the Code of Conduct, and address the use of mobile phones and social media. • Church personnel attend training and professional development opportunities provided by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne.

<p>3.11</p> <p>Church personnel are supported through informal and formal training and education to recognise the factors that contribute to adult abuse, with a focus on adults at risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church personnel undertake the <i>Safeguarding Essentials</i> training module that covers the factors that may place adults at risk of abuse. • Church personnel attend training and professional development opportunities provided by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and other organisations addressing adults at risk.
<p>3.12</p> <p>Church personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children, young people and adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural safety training is promoted and encouraged among all Church personnel and leaders of the parish, agency or entity. • Cultural safety training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – shows how to identify the cultural barriers that prevent children from disclosing abuse or raising concerns – shows how to identify the barriers that prevent children with disabilities or from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds from disclosing abuse or raising concerns – shows how to identify culturally appropriate pathways to respond to concerns, disclosures or allegations – may include presenters with specific knowledge and expertise in these contexts – supports culturally and/or linguistically diverse families through education and capacity-building – invites families and carers to provide practical input and examples.

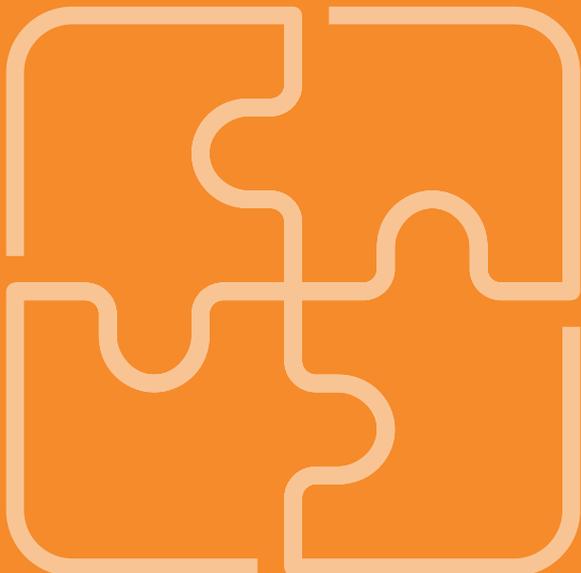
3.13

Church personnel understand and implement policies and procedures.

- Church personnel are aware of, have read, understand and intend to follow the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework documents, and can provide examples of this (e.g. through signing the Code of Conduct, answers to interview questions, conversations with the Safeguarding Unit, and conversations during induction and/or supervision sessions).
- Church personnel receive adequate training and education regarding the Safeguarding Children and Young People framework and how to implement it.
- Church personnel know that they are required to comply with reporting obligations concerning suspected or known child abuse.
- Church personnel know who to approach with concerns or questions.
- Church personnel are encouraged to engage in regular discussion and to give feedback on their understanding and practical implementation of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework.

CAPABILITY AREA 4

Systems, policies and procedures



STANDARD 6

Effective complaints management

- Processes for raising concerns and complaints are responsive, understood, accessible and used by children, adults, families, carers, communities, and personnel.

STANDARD 8

Safe physical and online environments

- Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children and adults to be harmed.

STANDARD 10

Policies and procedures support the safety of children and adults

- Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children and adults.

This includes implementing an effective complaints management system, maintaining best practice records management, ensuring concerns are responded to promptly and sensitively, supporting victims and respondents, and managing and communicating risks across ministries. Creating and maintaining safe physical and online environments for children and adults at risk occurs when personnel are proactive in recognising and mitigating safeguarding risks. Putting in place policies and procedures that place the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk at the centre of our thinking is a focus of these three Standards.

—ACSL, [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards: Safeguarding children and adults at risk](#), Edition 2, 2022, p. 8

Further resources

melbourncatholic.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-framework-resources/



Implementation hints for Capability Area 4

Self-assessment tool indicator	Examples of evidence: what might this look like in practice?
<p>4.1</p> <p>The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Procedure is endorsed and communicated by the parish, agency or entity to all personnel, children and families.</p> <p>Please note that the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes roles and responsibilities • covers different types of complaints • includes reporting obligations • covers breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct • includes the process of reporting complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, requiring cooperation with any statutory or contractual processes • is aligned and operates in conjunction with the Code of Conduct and other Archdiocesan policies • commits to an initial risk assessment if a complaint of abuse is received, in addition to ongoing risk assessments being conducted throughout the investigation process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish, agency or entity promotes a culture of reporting and responding to abuse, so that it is difficult for abuse to occur. • The ‘Reporting Abuse or Safety Related Misconduct’ flowchart poster is displayed or published in various formats, for example notice board, website and newsletter. • Support and guidance is sought from the Safeguarding Unit when there may be a breach of the Code of Conduct by Church personnel. • All Church personnel co-operate with law enforcement processes and directives. • All correspondence to and from statutory authorities, and any resulting actions or inactions by both the entity and the statutory authority as a result of the directives, are documented (e.g. when police may direct an entity not to inform personnel of an allegation until law enforcement has conducted a preliminary investigation).

<p>4.2</p> <p>Children, young people and adults have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that promote inclusion and that are culturally safe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish, agency or entity’s abuse- or safety-related misconduct processes are accessible and transparent to its linguistically and culturally diverse communities. • If required or requested, a translation service is made available when handling a disclosure and/or report of abuse or safety related misconduct. • Reporting processes are publicly available and are in a variety of formats (e.g. age-appropriate information for children and young people, translated documents). • Children, families and Church personnel know who to talk to if they are worried or are feeling unsafe. • Church personnel are trained to understand the different ways children express concerns or distress and disclose harm. • Timely feedback is provided to children, families, carers and Church personnel who raise concerns or complaints. • With the support of parents and carers, children with a disability are communicated with directly about what makes them feel safe, and about what to do and who to contact if they do not feel safe or have a complaint or concern . These processes take into account the child’s developmental level and communication requirements. • External expert advice is accessed when required (e.g. cultural advice or disability support) to assist in developing communication strategies.
<p>4.3</p> <p>Church personnel, children, young people and families understand the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Procedure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contact details for statutory organisations (e.g. Child Protection, Victorian Institute of Teaching) are readily available within the parish. • Any conversations with other relevant organisations and statutory authorities are documented and filed securely within the parish, agency or entity. • An information board for children and young people displays relevant information from independent child advocacy services and child helpline telephone numbers such as Kids Helpline, as well as displaying information about children’s rights.

<p>4.4</p> <p>Concerns and complaints are analysed to identify causes and systematic failures in safeguarding practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any recommendations stemming from a police investigation or independent investigation into child abuse and/or safety-related misconduct are implemented. • Once a complaint has been finalised, an internal review is undertaken to identify any root causes of the problem. • Once a need for improvement has been identified, the ways in which policies and practices have changed are communicated to stakeholders.
<p>4.5</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity, in consultation with the Archdiocese, ensures mechanisms are in place to support complainants of child and adult sexual abuse (e.g. pastoral care, Pathways Victoria, referrals to support services).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All reports, complaints and allegations are referred to the Safeguarding Unit and/or Pathways Victoria. (The Safeguarding Unit maintains a secure and centralised record of all safeguarding matters, in accordance with legislative and statutory requirements.) • Pathways Victoria is consulted to provide an independent case review of complaints received. Their recommendations are used as a basis for continuous improvement. • A compassionate response is provided to all complainants based on trauma-informed practices, respecting and facilitating their choices in all aspects of the process. • Appropriate pastoral care is offered to complainants. • A full explanation of the reporting process is provided to complainants.
<p>4.6</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity, in consultation with the Archdiocese, ensures respondents facing allegations are supported through counselling by appropriately trained professionals and pastoral carers, while also ensuring that arrangements are in place to monitor them throughout the duration of a complaint.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately trained personnel are engaged, in consultation with the respondent, to counsel and represent the pastoral needs of the respondent. • Arrangements are in place to monitor, supervise and support a respondent, where there is a complaint, until the finalisation of an investigation and/or the risk has been mitigated.
<p>4.7</p> <p>Risk-management plans address the range of settings, programs, groups, activities, events and physical and online environments in which ministry and/or services occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At senior leadership level, risk assessment and risk management are focused on identifying, preventing and reducing risks of child abuse and harm. • A range of factors are considered when developing risk assessments, including but not limited to, physical environments, activities, age of participants, persons of risk, and vulnerability and needs of children.

<p>4.8</p> <p>Risk assessments and risk-management plans developed by the parish, agency or entity address both physical and online risks without compromising the participant’s right to privacy or wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective safeguarding risk-management plans are in place, and are transparent and well understood. (They might vary in scope and detail depending on the complexity and size of the entity, the type of activities or services provided for children, and the age and vulnerabilities of the children engaged in those activities and services.) • Risk assessments include clear lines of accountability and are monitored and updated on a regular basis. • A procedure is established and documented within the parish, agency or entity to ensure that all programs, activities and events (including those held interstate and overseas) involving children and young people have a risk-management plan in place that is overseen by the safeguarding committee. (It is good practice to extend this requirement to all activities that are high risk or involve adults at risk to help parishes fulfill their duty of care obligations.) • All new programs, activities and events involving children and young people require a formal risk assessment prior to commencement. • Risk assessments are reviewed annually and after any child safety-related incidences. • Any child safety incidents or ‘near misses’ are always reviewed, helping to identify areas of activity or risks that require new, different or improved controls.
<p>4.9</p> <p>The online environment is accessed and used in accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The online environment is only engaged with in accordance with the Code of Conduct and relevant policies. • The parish, agency or entity routinely monitors the online environment, reporting breaches of its Code of Conduct and safeguarding policies in accordance with the entity’s complaint-handling processes. • Any online offences are reported to police in accordance with legislative reporting obligations. • The parish, agency or entity has clear processes in relation to search filters and firewalls. • The parish, agency or entity is proactive in keeping up to date with current online safety issues and avails itself of expert information, education and resources from specialist government and non-government bodies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner www.esafety.gov.au – Think U Know www.thinkuknow.org.au.

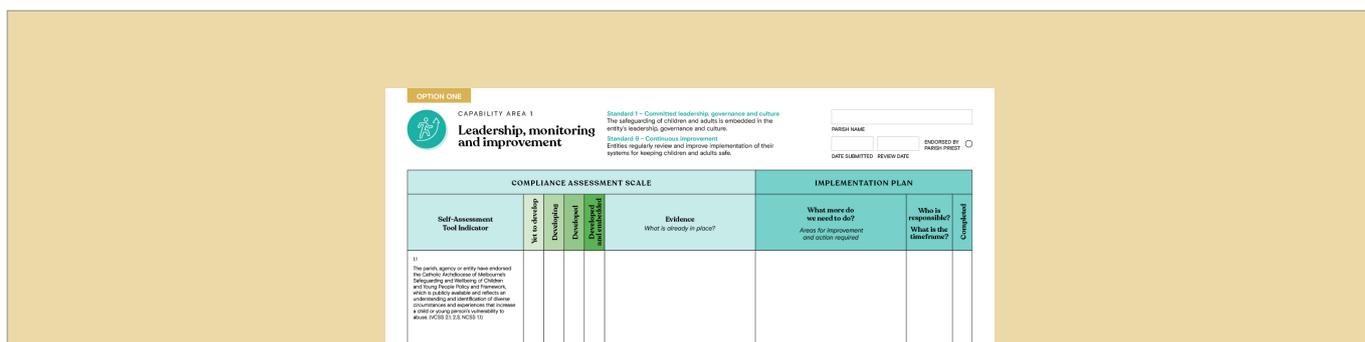
<p>4.10</p> <p>Where facilities and services are contracted to and from third parties, contractual arrangements specify safeguarding considerations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes and procedures may be outlined in the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s hire agreement document for one-off hires or ongoing leases and rentals. • There are clear safeguarding processes and procedures for third parties. These would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a written agreement articulating the parish, agency or entity’s expectations on safeguarding and its zero-tolerance approach to child abuse – the third party providing confirmation to the parish, agency or entity that they have policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children – a statement of compliance from the management of the third party stating that all personnel have current WWC Checks. This will form part of the hire agreement in use – the keeping of records of any third-party use of the parish, agency or entity’s facilities, either regularly or occasionally. • For one-off, private or single-use events, such as a private birthday party or family gathering, a written agreement is in place that indicates that this is a private booking and that the organiser will be responsible for keeping attendees safe.
<p>4.11</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity has endorsed and made publicly available the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne’s Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and any safeguarding documents that address the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. These policies and procedures for the parish, agency or entity are accessible to all Church personnel, are easy to understand and cover safeguarding approaches, requirements and responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and safeguarding documents are readily and publicly accessible. • The Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and safeguarding documents are provided to all Church personnel and volunteers at induction and are communicated further via education and training. • Any entity-specific policies and procedures that are not created by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne cover all the Victorian Child Safe Standards and address the risks to the safety of children that are specific to the parish, agency or entity and its environment. • Any entity-specific documents have been developed based on a consideration of who is going to read the policies and procedures, and the language is child-friendly and age-appropriate. • The parish, agency or entity commits to continuous improvement through reviews and updating policies and procedures to reflect current best practice. • The parish, agency or entity accesses appropriate experts and/or mentors when dealing with complaints.

<p>4.12</p> <p>Parish-, agency- or entity-specific policies, procedures and practices are regularly reviewed and updated, particularly for ministries and programs. Feedback from relevant stakeholders, including children, young people and families, is sought.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review dates for entity-specific safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are communicated to the parish, agency or entity. • Reviews on safeguarding procedures, practices and resources include feedback from all stakeholders and may be a combination of formal and informal feedback, and regular and ongoing feedback. • Provide regular opportunities to consult with and seek advice and feedback from experts, children, families, carers and communities (e.g. through surveys, focus groups and meetings). • Involve families in the development and review of any entity-specific safeguarding procedures and resources.
<p>4.13</p> <p>The parish, agency or entity encourages regular discussion and feedback from Church personnel on their understanding and the practical implementation of policies and procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church personnel are encouraged to reflect on their understanding and practical implementation of policies and procedures and to provide feedback. This may occur through formal and informal means such as supervision, surveys, debriefs or communication with the Safeguarding Unit. • Church personnel know the reporting procedure and who to approach with concerns or questions. • Following activities with children and young people, a process is set up in which parish leaders contact the activity leaders to check in and reflect on safety incidences that might have occurred. This information might be gathered in a variety of ways (e.g. formal or informal conversations with activity leaders, monthly electronic surveys, questionnaires, reports filled out regularly by leaders and submitted to the parish safeguarding committee). Some questions to prompt these conversations and reflections may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How did the activity go? – Did you notice anything that made you or participants uncomfortable? – Have you had any ideas of how to change the activity to make it feel safer or more comfortable for volunteers and participants? – Did you see any potential risks that have not been identified in the risk assessment? • Entity-specific procedures and resources related to safeguarding are developed, reviewed and updated using input from consultations and available information about creating a culture of child safety and wellbeing.

Accessing the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool

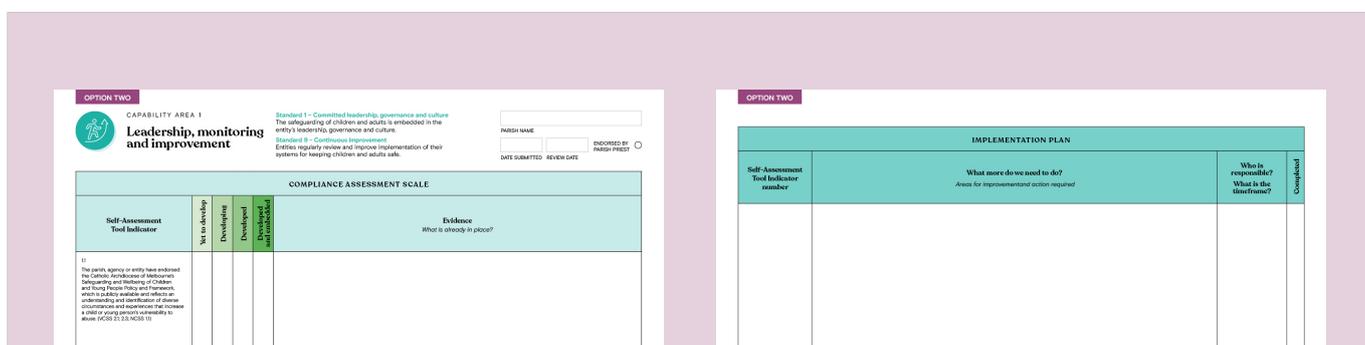
In consideration of feedback received, the self-assessment tool is now available in two different formats. Please refer to Appendix 2 for an example of the self-assessment tool completed in each format design option.

The self-assessment tool can be printed on A3-sized paper so that responses can be entered manually or, alternatively, can now be used as a fillable PDF that can be saved electronically. Please note, that if choosing to use the fillable PDF, it is recommended that the [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) software is used.



OPTION 1

The first design option has all columns fit to scale across one page, with both the compliance assessment scale and implementation plan displayed on one page. To access this option, [click here](#) or visit melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/self-assessment-tool



OPTION 2

The second design option is spaced across two pages, with the compliance assessment scale on one page and the implementation plan on the other. To access this option, [click here](#) or visit melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/self-assessment-tool

Definitions

When the following terms are used in the Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool and this guide, they are defined as follows:

accessible language information that is provided in multiple formats for individuals with different levels of English literacy and proficiency, modes of communication, languages, and cognitive abilities. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

adult at risk any person aged 18 years and over who is at increased risk of experiencing abuse, such as people:

- who are elderly
- with a disability
- who suffer from mental illness
- who have diminished capacity
- who have cognitive impairment
- who have suffered previous abuse
- who are experiencing transient risks
- who, in receiving a ministry or service, are subject to a power imbalance
- who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- who are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- who are of diverse sexuality
- who have any other impairment or adversity that makes it difficult for them to protect themselves from abuse.

(Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

applicant a person who applies for a paid or voluntary position or role at the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne or in any parish, agency or entity that involves engaging in or participating in child-connected work.

Archdiocese the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, including all Catholic parishes and services operated by the Archdiocese. This excludes other bodies such as Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, the Catholic Development Fund, Mannix College, CatholicCare Victoria, VMCH (Villa Maria Catholic Homes), Pathways Victoria, and services and activities undertaken under the auspices of other religious congregations.

child abuse or harm conduct towards, against, with or in the presence of a child and/or young person, or threatening to engage in such conduct, that includes:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse or conduct of a sexual nature, including a sexual offence against a child and/or grooming behaviour
- emotional or psychological harm, including spiritual abuse
- neglect
- discrimination
- bullying
- family violence.

child, children or young person a child or young person who is under 18 years of age, unless otherwise defined by law or noted in the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and Framework, in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct or the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Procedure.

child safety matters related to the Archdiocese exercising its duty of care to children and young people in its care, protecting all children from harm or a risk of harm, managing the risk of child abuse or harm, taking steps to identify, prevent and mitigate the occurrence of child abuse and harm, providing support and responding to a child who is at risk or has disclosed or made allegations of child abuse or harm.

Church personnel Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne employees and all those involved in Archdiocesan parishes, agencies and entities, including:

- clergy, including all canonical administrators of a parish (e.g. bishop, parish priest, assistant priest, migrant chaplains, visiting clergy, priests in residence, supply clergy, deacons)
- sisters, brothers and religious priests holding an appointment from the Archbishop to undertake work in parish or Archdiocesan entities
- employees (including casual employees)
- lay ecclesial ministers, including pastoral associates, those engaged in chaplaincy
- volunteers
- seminarians
- persons residing at the presbytery or on the grounds of the parish, agency or entity
- students on placement
- contractors.

Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) the Commission for Children and Young People as established by the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012* (Vic).

complainant any person who makes a complaint that may include any allegation, suspicion, concern or report of a breach of the entity's Code of Conduct. A complaint may also include disclosures made to an institution that may be about, or relate to, abuse in the entity's context. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

contractor any individual, business or company engaged by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne or a parish, agency or entity within the Archdiocese to provide services to the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne or the parish, agency or entity, including but not limited to building and maintenance workers, consultants, cleaners and caterers.

cultural safety a culturally safe environment that is safe for people of all ethnicities and cultural identities, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. Cultural safety requires shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening, and in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of all children and young people are respected and valued. This includes the distinctive history and experience of Aboriginal peoples and people who have come to Australia from diverse cultures and their children.

diverse sexuality all the diversities of sex characteristics, sexual orientations and gender identities, without the need to specify each of the identities, behaviours or characteristics that form this plurality. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

head of entity the head of entity pursuant to the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic), including the following definitions:

- The head of entity of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne is the Archbishop of Melbourne. The Archbishop is responsible for notifying the CCYP of reportable allegations under Section 16M of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) in relation to all Church personnel, including all clergy, bishops, parish priests, priests, deacons, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne employees and the employees of other organisations governed by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, excluding Church personnel who are engaged by a parish as described below.

- The head of entity of a parish is the parish priest. The parish priest is responsible for notifying the CCYP of reportable allegations under Section 16M of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) in relation to Church personnel who are engaged by the parish, including employees, volunteers and contractors engaged by the parish.

implementation plan a documented plan that articulates actions to be taken across the entity to ensure safeguarding practices are in place. It includes actions, strategies, responsibilities, delegations and accountabilities, and tracks review and progress. It is overseen by the safeguarding committee. The Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool is an example of an implementation plan. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

indicators of abuse the signs that a child or young person may display that indicates they may have been abused or harmed. Some children show no indications of harm, while others may show many; however, none of the indicators are determinative. Information in relation to indicators of abuse can be found on the Archdiocese of Melbourne's [website](#).

mentoring an arrangement where a senior or more experienced individual (the mentor) is assigned to act as an adviser or guide to a less experienced or new person. The mentor provides opportunities to share knowledge and foster the development of positive and supportive workplace relationships. The mentor understands that they should support the development, growth and confidence of the new person along with communicating any concerns they have observed or feel about the person's behaviour or suitability in the role. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

Pathways Victoria the independent entity that provides an alternative pastoral model for managing and responding to complaints of child abuse and harm on behalf of the Catholic

Archdiocese of Melbourne, in accordance with the Pathways Victoria Terms of Reference (TOR). Pathways Victoria seeks to offer victims/survivors a pastoral, trauma-informed and child-focused alternative to existing redress mechanisms and allegations of misconduct.

professional/pastoral supervision a professional activity in which personnel are engaged in reflection and learning, under the guidance of a supervisor. Supervision assists personnel in their accountabilities for professional standards, defined competencies for their role, and understanding and implementation of organisational policy and procedures. For clergy and religious, professional supervision assists in the maintenance of boundaries of the pastoral relationship and enhances the quality of their ministry. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

protective behaviours program an age-appropriate structured education program that seeks to prevent abuse by equipping children and young people with the skills and knowledge to enhance their personal safety. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, Edition 2, 2022.)

record all information that the Archdiocese creates, sends or receives that provides evidence of decisions, directions and Archdiocesan activities. Records may be in any format (whether formal or informal), including digital or physical format, and may include documents, email correspondence, financial statements, text messages, meeting notes, audio-visual recordings, photographs, website pages and social media posts. Further information in relation to record keeping can be found in the Safe Programs Practice and Behavioural Guidelines information sheet.

reportable conduct as defined under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic):

- a. a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded
- b. sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- c. physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- d. any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- e. significant neglect of a child.

respondent a person against whom a complaint is made. (Source: Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, 2nd edn, 2022.)

safeguarding committee the committee of persons in each parish, agency or entity established to advise and support the Church authority on all matters relating to safeguarding, including the development and implementation of a safeguarding implementation plan and coordinating annual self-audits at a local level. Committee members may have relevant and varied professional expertise in relation to safeguarding, child protection, organisational culture and structure or policy development, for example, and include lay women and men.

safeguarding documents all Archdiocesan documents related to safeguarding children and young people, including:

- Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Procedure
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Anti-discrimination and Racism Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Information and Record Keeping Policy
- Working with Children Check Protocol
- information sheets as published by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne from time to time.

Safeguarding Unit (SU) the Safeguarding Unit of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne.

volunteer any person engaged by or part of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne or a parish, agency or entity within the Archdiocese who provides services without remuneration or reward, regardless of whether their role relates directly to children and/or young people.

vulnerable children children and young people who have a higher risk of abuse than the general population. Vulnerable children may include children and young people who:

- identify as a member of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities
- are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- are of diverse sexuality
- have a disability
- have been abused or harmed in the past
- are unable to live at home
- are experiencing poverty or homelessness
- are subjected to or witness family violence.

wellbeing a positive state of physical, mental and emotional health. It generally means feeling safe, happy and healthy more than momentarily. Wellbeing can be achieved in many ways, including by supporting a child to express their culture in a way that recognises their ancestry, spirituality, faith and country.

Working with Children (WWC) Check a Working with Children Check issued pursuant to the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic).

Comparison between the Victorian Child Safe Standards, National Principles and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards (VCSS) Commission for Children and Young People</p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Australian Human Rights Commission National Office for Child Safety</p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd</p>
<p>STANDARD 1</p> <p><i>Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.</i></p>	<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT BUT RELATES TO PRINCIPLE 4—Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</p>	<p><i>While there is no direct equivalent standard, current criteria and indicators across the NCSS can be directly applied to ensure that the requirements of the new Victorian Standards are being met.</i></p>
<p>1.1 A child’s ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.</p>		<p>4.3 The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p> <p>2.1 Children and adults at risk engaged in an entity’s ministry and/or services are informed about their rights, including safety, decision making, participation and how a complaint will be managed.</p>

<p>1.2 Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.</p>		<p>7.5 Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults.</p>
<p>1.3 Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.</p>		<p>4.3 The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p> <p>7.5 Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults.</p> <p>1.4 The entity's Code of Conduct sets clear behavioural standards towards children and adults.</p> <p>6.3 Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.</p>
<p>1.4 The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children and young people.</p>		<p>4.3 The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p> <p>7.5 Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults.</p>
<p>1.5 All of the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.</p>		<p>4.2 Children and adults have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that promote inclusion, are culturally safe, and accessible.</p> <p>4.3 The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with a disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p>

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 2</p> <p><i>Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 1</p> <p><i>Child Safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 1</p> <p><i>Committed leadership, governance and culture</i></p> <p><i>The safeguarding of children and adults is embedded in the entity's leadership, governance and culture.</i></p>
<p>2.1 The organisation makes a commitment to child safety.</p>	<p>1.1 The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.</p>	<p>1.1 There is a public commitment to safeguarding that takes a zero tolerance approach to abuse.</p>
<p>2.2 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.</p>	<p>1.2 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.</p>	<p>1.2 A culture of safeguarding children and adults is championed and modelled at all levels of the entity from the top down and bottom up.</p>
<p>2.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.</p>	<p>1.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.</p>	<p>1.3 Governance arrangements facilitate the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy across the entity's activities.</p>
<p>2.4 Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.</p>	<p>1.4 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.</p>	<p>1.4 The entity's Code of Conduct sets clear behavioural standards towards children and adults.</p>
<p>2.5 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.</p>	<p>1.5 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.</p>	<p>1.5 The entity's risk management plan focuses on preventing, identifying, and mitigating safeguarding risks to children and adults.</p>
<p>2.6 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.</p>	<p>1.6 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.</p>	<p>1.6 Personnel understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping for safeguarding and professional standards.</p>

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 3</p> <p><i>Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 2</p> <p><i>Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 2</p> <p><i>Children and adults are safe, informed and participate</i></p> <p><i>Children and adults are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.</i></p>
<p>3.1 Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.</p> <p>3.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.</p> <p>3.5 Organisations have strategies in place that develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.</p> <p>3.6 Organisations provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.</p>	<p>2.1 Children and young people are informed about all their rights, including to safety, information, and participation.</p> <p>2.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns.</p>	<p>2.1 Children and adults at risk engaged in an entity's ministry and/or services are informed about their rights, including safety, decision making, participation and how a complaint will be managed.</p>

<p>3.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.</p>	<p>2.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and less isolated.</p>	<p>2.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and less isolated.</p>
		<p>2.3 RELEVANT TO ADULTS AT RISK ONLY.</p>
<p>3.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant information in an age-appropriate way.</p>	<p>2.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children may be offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way</p>	<p>2.4 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and families are offered access to abuse prevention programs and related information that is age appropriate.</p>

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 4</p> <p><i>Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 3</p> <p><i>Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 3</p> <p><i>Partnering with families, carers and communities</i></p> <p><i>Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting the safeguarding of children and adults.</i></p>
<p>4.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.</p>	<p>3.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.</p>	<p>3.1 Parents, carers and/or guardians participate in decisions affecting their child, or adults with diminished capacity.</p>
<p>4.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.</p>	<p>3.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.</p>	<p>3.2 Families, carers and communities are engaged with and are provided with information about the entity's approach to safeguarding.</p>
<p>4.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and procedures.</p> <p>4.4 Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.</p>	<p>3.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.</p> <p>3.4 Parents, caregivers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.</p>	<p>3.3 Families, carers and communities are informed about the entity's operations and governance; and have an opportunity to have a say in the safeguarding policies and practices.</p>
<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>3.4 The entity raises community awareness of the dignity and rights of all children and adults.</p>

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 5</p> <p><i>Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 4</p> <p><i>Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 4</p> <p><i>Equity is promoted and diversity is respected</i></p> <p><i>Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</i></p>
<p>5.1 The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people’s diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.</p>	<p>4.1 The organisation including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people’s diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.</p>	<p>4.1 The diverse circumstances and backgrounds of children and adults at risk are acknowledged and accommodated by providing appropriate support.</p>
<p>5.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.</p>	<p>4.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.</p>	<p>4.2 Children and adults have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that promote inclusion, are culturally safe, and accessible.</p>
<p>5.3 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.</p> <p>5.4 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.</p>	<p>4.3 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.</p>	<p>4.3 The diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those living with disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and those of diverse sexuality, are acknowledged.</p>

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 6</p> <p><i>People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 5</p> <p><i>People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 5</p> <p><i>Robust Human Resource management</i></p> <p><i>People working with children and adults are suitable and supported to reflect safeguarding values in practice.</i></p>
<p>6.1 Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer preemployment screening, emphasises child safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p>5.1 Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer preemployment screening, emphasises child safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p>5.1 A strong commitment to safeguarding underpins an entity's recruitment.</p>
<p>6.2 Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.</p>	<p>5.2 Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.</p>	<p>5.2 Personnel have current clearances (for example working with children checks) and/or equivalent background checks relevant to their role.</p>
<p>6.3 All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.</p>	<p>5.3 All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.</p>	<p>5.3 Personnel complete appropriate induction and are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, including reporting obligations.</p>
<p>6.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p>5.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p>5.4 Ongoing supervision and people management includes an emphasis on safeguarding responsibilities.</p>

NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	5.5 Before and during seminary and religious formation, candidates are appropriately screened and supported; including processes for ongoing formation, support and supervision of clergy and religious.
NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	5.6 The curriculum for seminary and formation programs for clergy and religious includes safeguarding knowledge and skills development of candidates to understand and lead initiatives for safeguarding children and adults.
NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	5.7 The movement and credentialling of those in ministry is appropriately managed.
NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT	5.8 Where clergy and religious from countries other than Australia are recruited to ministry, programs are in place to support their cultural awareness, screening, induction, professional supervision and development.

<p>Victorian Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 7</p> <p><i>Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 6</p> <p><i>Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 6</p> <p><i>Effective complaints management</i></p> <p><i>Processes for raising concerns and complaints are responsive, understood, accessible and used by children, adults, families, carers, communities and personnel.</i></p>
<p>7.1 The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.</p>	<p>6.1 The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.</p>	<p>6.1 The entity's Complaints Handling Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, reporting obligations and record keeping requirements.</p>
<p>7.2 Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe.</p>	<p>6.2 Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, staff, families and volunteers, and are culturally safe.</p>	<p>6.2 The Complaints Handling Policy is understood by children, adults, families, carers, and personnel, and focuses on the rights of children and adults at risk.</p>
<p>7.3 Complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.</p>	<p>6.3 Complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.</p>	<p>6.3 Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.</p>

<p>7.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.</p> <p>7.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.</p>	<p>6.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.</p> <p>6.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.</p>	<p>6.4 The Complaints Handling Policy includes the process of reporting complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, requiring cooperation with any statutory or contractual processes.</p>
<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>6.5 The Church Authority ensures mechanisms are in place to support complainants of child and adult sexual abuse.</p>
<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>6.6 The Church Authority ensures respondents facing allegations are supported and monitored.</p>

<p>Victoria Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 8</p> <p><i>Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 7</p> <p><i>Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 7</p> <p><i>Ongoing education and training</i></p> <p><i>Personnel are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and adults safe through information, ongoing education and training.</i></p>
<p>8.1 Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation’s child safety and wellbeing policy.</p>	<p>7.1 Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation’s child safety and wellbeing policy.</p>	<p>7.1 Personnel are trained and supported to implement the safeguarding policies and procedures.</p>
<p>8.2 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people.</p>	<p>7.2 Staff and volunteers receive training to recognise the nature and indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people.</p>	<p>7.2 Personnel are supported to recognise the nature and indicators of child abuse, including harmful behaviours by a child towards another child.</p>
<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>NO DIRECT EQUIVALENT</p>	<p>7.3 RELEVANT TO ADULTS AT RISK ONLY</p>
<p>8.3 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.</p>	<p>7.3 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.</p>	<p>7.4 Personnel have the information and skills to respond effectively to safeguarding risks, concerns, disclosures, and allegations of abuse.</p>
<p>8.4 Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.</p>	<p>7.4 Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.</p>	<p>7.5 Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and adults.</p>

<p>Victoria Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 9</p> <p><i>Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 8</p> <p><i>Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 8</p> <p><i>Safe physical and online environments</i></p> <p><i>Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children and adults to be harmed.</i></p>
<p>9.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child’s right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.</p>	<p>8.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child’s right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.</p>	<p>8.1 The Safeguarding Risk Management Strategy addresses both physical and online risks, without compromising the individual’s right to privacy or wellbeing.</p>
<p>9.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation’s Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.</p>	<p>8.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation’s Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.</p>	<p>8.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the entity’s Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy.</p>
<p>9.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities and the physical environments.</p>	<p>8.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities and the physical environments.</p>	<p>8.3 Risk management plans address the range of settings, activities, and physical environments in which ministry and/or services occur.</p>
<p>9.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.</p>	<p>8.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.</p>	<p>8.4 Where facilities and services are contracted to and from third parties, contractual arrangements specify safeguarding considerations.</p>

<p>Victoria Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 10</p> <p><i>Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 9</p> <p><i>Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 9</p> <p><i>Continuous improvement Entities regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children and adults safe.</i></p>
<p>10.1 The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.</p>	<p>9.1 The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.</p>	<p>9.1 The entity's safeguarding practices for the protection of children and adults at risk are regularly reviewed.</p>
<p>10.2 Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.</p>	<p>9.2 Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures so as to inform continuous improvement.</p>	<p>9.2 Concerns and complaints are analysed to identify causes and systematic failures in safeguarding practices.</p>
<p>10.3 The organisation reports on findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.</p>	<p>9.3 The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.</p>	<p>9.3 The Church Authority reports on the findings of its safeguarding reviews.</p>

<p>Victoria Child Safe Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 11</p> <p><i>Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.</i></p>	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p> <p>PRINCIPLE 10</p> <p><i>Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.</i></p>	<p>National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p> <p>STANDARD 10</p> <p><i>Policies and procedures support the safety of children and adults</i></p> <p><i>Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children and adults.</i></p>
<p>11.1 Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.</p>	<p>10.1 Policies and procedures address all national child safe principles.</p>	<p>10.1 Policies and procedures address the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards</p>
<p>11.2 Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.</p>	<p>10.2 Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.</p>	<p>10.2 Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand.</p>
<p>11.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.</p>	<p>10.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.</p>	<p>10.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development and review of policies and procedures.</p>
<p>11.4 Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.</p>	<p>10.4 Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.</p>	<p>10.4 Church leaders champion and model best practice implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.</p>
<p>11.5 Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.</p>	<p>10.5 Staff and volunteers understand and implement the policies and procedures.</p>	<p>10.5 Personnel understand and implement policies and procedures.</p>

Examples of completed self-assessment tools

OPTION ONE

Self-assessment tool indicator	COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT SCALE				IMPLEMENTATION PLAN			
	Yet to develop	Developing	Developed	Developed and embedded	Evidence <i>What is already in place?</i>	What more do we need to do? <i>Areas for improvement and action required</i>	Who is responsible? What is the timeframe?	Completed
2.1.3 A child or young person's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported. (VCSS 1.1; NCSS 2.1, 4.3)					<p>The parish priest has provided the parish census data, and this has been reviewed with the safeguarding committee. There is a large population of Vietnamese and Italian parishioners.</p> <p>The parish holds an Italian Mass every Thursday night at 7pm, featuring an Italian children's liturgy.</p> <p>The child-friendly posters displayed throughout the parish are translated into Vietnamese and Italian to ensure accessibility for all members of the community.</p> <p>Once a year, the parish hosts a Vietnamese feast day and an Italian feast day to honour each culture. These events feature children's activities aimed at encouraging their participation.</p> <p>The parish trialled child pamphlets for Mass in English, Vietnamese and Italian, featuring colouring sections and child-friendly awareness of a safe church. Volunteers and the parish priest sought feedback from children, who expressed enjoyment and a desire for their continuation. Additionally, some children will contribute to creating new pamphlets with activities specific to their culture.</p> <p>The parish commemorates NAIDOC Day annually by inviting an Aboriginal elder to lead Aboriginal children's story time. Additionally, painting areas are provided for children during the event.</p>	<p>The parish recognises the importance of supporting Aboriginal community members and children year-round. To ensure meaningful support, the parish will schedule a meeting with the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry to seek guidance and education on fostering Aboriginal children's cultural expression and engagement within the church.</p> <p>The parish will organise a multicultural feast day, welcoming all parish members to celebrate the diverse cultures within the community. Volunteers will conduct a survey with children during the event to gather input on how they wish to express their culture within the church and gather suggestions for additional support the parish can offer.</p> <p>The parish is to consider setting up a cultural advisory group (or membership of the safeguarding committee) with representatives from different cultural communities, to explore how the parish can continue to support children to express their culture within the parish.</p>	<p>The parish priest. The safeguarding committee.</p>	

Examples of completed self-assessment tools

OPTION TWO

COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT SCALE					
Self-assessment tool indicator	Yet to develop	Developing	Developed	Developed and embedded	Evidence <i>What is already in place?</i>
	<p>2.13 A child or young person's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported. (VCSS 1.1; NCSS 2.1, 4.3)</p>				

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

<p>What more do we need to do? <i>Areas for improvement and action required</i></p>	<p>Who is responsible? What is the timeframe?</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>The parish recognises the importance of supporting Aboriginal community members and children year-round. To ensure meaningful support, the parish will schedule a meeting with the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry to seek guidance and education on fostering Aboriginal children's cultural expression and engagement within the church.</p> <p>The parish will organise a multicultural feast day, welcoming all parish members to celebrate the diverse cultures within the community. Volunteers will conduct a survey with children during the event to gather input on how they wish to express their culture within the church and gather suggestions for additional support the parish can offer.</p> <p>The parish is to consider setting up a cultural advisory group (or membership of the safeguarding committee) with representatives from different cultural communities, to explore how the parish can continue to support children to express their culture within the parish.</p>	<p>The parish priest. The safeguarding committee.</p>	





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