

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

St. Mary's Cathedral Parish Sale, St. Rose of Lima, Rosedale; St. Patrick's, Stratford; and St. Patrick's, Briagolong and the Catholic Communities of Loch Sport and Seaspray are committed to ensuring that our local Church community protects and promotes the care of individuals which encompasses physical violence, intimidation, sexual behaviour, neglect and grooming.

CODE OF CONDUCT

To protect and promote the inherent dignity of all children and vulnerable adults, irrespective of their social status, physical ability, cultural or linguistic background and other disabilities as their right to be respected and nurtured in a safe abuse free environment.

We have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse. This commitment is based in faith on the heart of the Gospel message and teachings of Jesus the Christ and his love for everyone.

PURPOSE

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults at St. Mary's Cathedral Parish against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement child protection legislation as well as the Catholic Diocese of Sale's "*Code of Conduct for Caring for Children, Promoting Child Safe Parishes*".

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and parish council members, parishioners and visitors are expected to actively contribute to parish culture that respects the dignity of its members. This affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviours towards and in the company of children and vulnerable adults.

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

All staff, volunteers, clergy, parish council members, parishioners and visitors are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the Diocese of Sale's Parish Child Safe Policy and upholding the Parish's Statement of Commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm
- treating everyone in the Parish Community with respect modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe pastoral environment
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds by having a zero tolerance policy toward discrimination
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability by ensuring reasonable care is taken to cater for any additional needs

- ensuring as far as practicable that an adult is not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Dean of the Cathedral and Police
- understanding and complying with all reporting allegations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958(Vic)*
- if the concern relates to the Dean of the Cathedral or the Assistant Priest of the cathedral parish, the reporting of any child safety concerns must be directed to the Vicar General and the Police.
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible the child(ren) are safe.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

All staff, volunteers, clergy, parish council members, parishioners and visitors MUST NOT:

- ❖ ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- ❖ develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism and/or grooming
- ❖ exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
- ❖ put children at risk of any form of abuse
- ❖ initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- ❖ manage disruptive or unsafe behaviour by degrading or isolating a child. Corporal punishment is never acceptable. Physical restraint should be only used as a last resort or in an emergency
- ❖ engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children, for example, personal details or social activities
- ❖ use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- ❖ express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- ❖ discriminate against any child because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- ❖ make deliberate contact with a child or their family – not socially related outside of the reasonable pastoral duties of one's parish role or position without the Dean of the Cathedral or parish priests knowledge or consent
- ❖ have any online contact, including by social media, email, instant messaging etc with a child or their family.
- ❖ use any personal communication channels/device such as personal email account to conduct parish communications
- ❖ exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a child or their family who is not family or socially related
- ❖ photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- ❖ work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- ❖ consume drugs on parish premises or at parish events.

I, _____, confirm that I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct and am aware that any breach of this code may affect my employment or opportunities to volunteer within St. Mary's Cathedral Parish Sale, St. Rose of Lima, Rosedale; St. Patrick's, Stratford; and St. Patrick's, Briagolong and the Catholic Communities of Loch Sport and Seaspray.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____