

ST. BRENDAN'S PARISH, LAKES ENTRANCE

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

July 2021

We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of all people, especially children, the disabled and adults at risk, as our central and fundamental responsibility. This commitment is drawn from, and inherent to, the teachings and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

We are committed to ensuring that our Parish community promote the inherent dignity of every individual and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe Parish environment.

We are committed to create a nurturing Parish environment where all are respected and the voices of children, the disabled and vulnerable adults, particularly, are heard, where they are safe and feel safe.

We are committed to a policy of zero tolerance of any forms of abuse of any persons, particularly children, the disabled and adults at risk. When allegations of abuse concerning children, the disabled or adults at risk are raised, we will take prompt action to have these appropriately referred and investigated. We are committed to strive for continual improvement that is responsive to emerging thinking, evidence and practice, so as to eliminate the possibility of abuse occurring.

Safeguarding Code of Conduct (6 Feb 2021)

ST.BRENDAN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

Central to the mission of St. Brendan's Catholic Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children, young people and adults at risk, providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk at *St.Brendan's Catholic Parish* against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement child protection legislation and the Catholic Diocese of Sale "Code of Conduct for Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk *Promoting Safe Parishes*".

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and parish council members at *St.Brendan's Catholic Parish* are expected to actively contribute to a parish culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children and adults at risk as noted below.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and parish council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children and adults at risk by:

- adhering to the parish Safeguarding Policy and upholding the parish's Statement of Commitment to the safety of children and adults at risk at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children and adults at risk from abuse and harm
- having contact with a child or adult at risk for Parish purposes only by email and phone with the written consent of a parent, or legal guardian who has provided the contact details.
- 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, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child have been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, by ensuring reasonable care is taken to cater for any additional needs being faced)
- ensuring as far as practicable that an adult is not alone with a child
- immediately report any incidents, disclosures, allegations, suspicions and concerns, as per the Diocesan Complaints Handling and Reporting Policy. Adhere to 'Five Critical Actions for Church Personnel' which is accessible from any member of the parish office or PSO.

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and parish council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed abuse of a child, young person or adult at risk
- develop any 'special' relationships that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children or adults at risk which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example, inappropriate sitting on laps)
- in any circumstance put children **at risk** by the locking of doors of any room they enter nor should an adult be alone with a child in any room without good cause.
- 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. The use of corporal punishment is never acceptable. Physical restraint should only be 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
- have contact with a child or their family who is/are not socially related outside of the pastoral duties reasonably associated with the role description of the person's position in the parish without the parish priest's or child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (other than accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street)
- have any online contact (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) with a child or their family who is/are not family or socially related (unless necessary e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters)
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a private mobile phone or personal email account to conduct parish communications without explicit permission from the Parish Priest
- visit adults at risk on behalf of the parish without first obtaining the consent of the Parish priest and recording the visits at the Parish office. Permission of the adult at risk should be sought for the visit. If the adult at risk has cognitive impairment, it is important that a legal guardian is contacted for consent before visits are conducted.
- undertake financial transactions on behalf of adults at risk without the consent of their appointed financial power of attorney. Similarly, medical appointments should not be made without the consent of their legal guardian. [Should the adult at risk being visited have an immediate medical episode, then contacting '000' is required].
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a child or their family who is/are 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

ACCEPTED: Name: (Please print)

Name of Company/Club: (If applicable)

Signed:

Date: