



One Family

**GUIDANCE & CODES OF CONDUCT
FOR ACTIVITIES WITH
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE
& VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Our Vision Statement

'With the grace of the Holy Spirit,
we, the community of St Paul Apostle Parish,
strive to live as 'One Family'.
Inspired by the Good News of Jesus
we aim to be a welcoming community
Filled with joy and faith,
we are open to the challenges of our times
and especially to seeing Christ
in the people and communities
whom we serve'

Created in 2016

'I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly'
John 10:10

As a Parish Community, we believe in the dignity of every human being created in the image and likeness of God. We are therefore committed to treating each person with the utmost respect, in particular children, young people and vulnerable adults. The guidance offered here is to support all who offer time and skills for the community to carry out the task of creating a safe environment.

PART ONE

SAFE ENVIRONMENT CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

On Children

And the woman who held a babe against her bosom said,

Speak to us of Children.

And he said:

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you.

And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
for they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children
as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,
and he bends with His might that
His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness;
for even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so he loves also the bow that is stable.

'The Prophet' by Kahlil Gibran

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish team values the contribution made by all those who involve themselves in activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Your involvement with such activities is very much appreciated and contributes greatly to making the Parish a living and caring community as outlined in our vision statement.

This booklet is to help give some support and guidance so that all those involved will have clarity about what safeguards the parish has in place. The booklet is in two parts. **Part 1** is concerned with issues about a safe environment for children and young people involved in parish based activities. **Part 2** is concerned with our care for the safety of vulnerable adults with whom parish members have contact e.g. those who take Communion to the sick at home and in places of care.

2.0 The Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Team want to support all those involved in creating a safe and welcoming environment for all those who participate in Parish based activities. We do this in a number of ways:

- **By having a policy that enables us to foster a safe community.**
- **By keeping everyone up to date with changes.**
- **By having a code of conduct which all involved should sign annually.**
- **By having a risk assessment which is carried out at the outset of a new activity or annually thereafter.**
- **By having regular updates and awareness training for all involved in activities.**
- **By having Working with Children (WWC) and Police checks as required by civil and diocesan authorities.**

3.0 Principles/Values:

In the spirit of our Parish vision statement and as part of our shared commitment to create a welcoming and safe environment, we who work in the Parish community either as employees or volunteers seek to:

- ❖ **Respect the dignity and privacy of each child, young person and adult in the community.**
- ❖ **Recognise that all children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.**
- ❖ **Be aware of the possibilities of abuse and its adverse consequences.**
- ❖ **Enable children and young people to fulfil their potential.**
- ❖ **Challenge inequalities.**
- ❖ **Comply with legislation by undertaking Police checks and Working with Children (WWC) checks as required by state and church agencies.**
- ❖ **Abide by Codes of Conduct and conscientiously follow the risk assessment procedures.**

4.0 **Action Statement:**

St Paul Apostle Parish will meet its commitment to safeguard children through the following means:

- **Awareness:** Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children and young people.
- **Prevention:** Ensure, through awareness and personal and professional conduct that staff and volunteers minimise the risks to children and young people.
- **Reporting:** Ensure that staff and volunteers have clear steps to follow where concerns arise regarding the safety of children and young people.
- **Responding:** Ensure that action is taken to support and protect children, young people when abuse is a concern.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse can be physical, emotional, and sexual or neglect.

Physical abuse:

Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.

Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person.

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is used by an older or bigger child, adolescent or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation, gratification or economic gain.

Neglect:

Neglect is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter and supervision to the extent that the child's health and development are at risk.

NOTE: A child may during an activity disclose some form of abuse. While it is important to listen the person running the activity is not there to solve problems or offer advice but they may need to pass on concerns to a member of staff or to the parish team and the issues may need to be followed up by professionals.

WHO NEEDS TO BE AWARE OF THIS GUIDANCE?

- PARISH COUNCIL
- ALL PARISHONERS
- FAMILY GROUPS
- SCHOOL STAFF

WHO NEEDS TO SIGN A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

All who are responsible for running or participating in activities with children and young people including the following:

- PARISH TEAM and PPC
- PRE-SCHOOL WORKERS
- SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME LEADERS
- CHILDREN'S LITURGY LEADERS
- LEADERS OF YOUTH GROUPS
- AFTER SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
- CHOIR LEADERS WHO HAVE MEMBERS UNDER 18
- HOME VISITATION
- TENNIS CLUB LEADERS & COACHES
- NETBALL CLUB LEADERS & COACHES
- ANYONE WHO LEADS A REGULAR ACTIVITY WHERE CHILDREN and YOUTH ARE INVOLVED

WHO SHOULD HAVE A WORKING WITH CHILDREN (WWC) CHECK AND/OR A POLICE CHECK?

- PARISH TEAM
- ALL WHO ARE LEADERS OF GROUPS AND ANYONE WHO IN THE COURSE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN ACTIVITIES ARE LIKELY TO BE ON THEIR OWN WITH CHILDREN INCLUDING COACHES OF SPORTS ACTIVITIES.
- THOSE WHO TAKE COMMUNION TO THE SICK

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILD PROTECTION

For the purposes of this code of conduct, a child is considered to be a person under the age of 18 years. I.....agree that while representing St Paul Apostle Parish in any activities with children I will:

- Agree to a Working with Children (WWC) and a Police check
- Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- Not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children;
- Not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or physical danger;
- Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must make sure another adult is present;
- Use any computers, mobile phones, video or digital cameras appropriately and never to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium;
- Refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children (excluding my own children);
- Refrain from hiring children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interfere with their time available for education or recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation including labour laws in relation to child labour;
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with the appropriate procedures;
- Comply with restrictions on photographing, filming and publishing images of children so that their identity and residence is not revealed.
- Seek parental permission for the publication of photographs in Church publications.

I accept that the onus is on me as employee/volunteer of St Paul Apostle Parish to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child abuse especially when undertaking Parish activities.

Signed:Date.....

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ACTIVITIES INCLUDING CHILDREN

The leader for each activity involving children should do a risk assessment to cover the following aspects of safety and protection in advance of an event. The parish should have a database of all volunteers involved the child related activities with contact information.

All employees and volunteers should be aware of the legal responsibilities regarding child protection and should sign the Code of Conduct.

ACTIVITY:	YES/NO	ACTION NEEDED	BY WHOM?	WHEN?	REPORTED TO
DATE					
<u>SUPERVISION:</u> Are there sufficient adults present for the number of children in the group?					
<u>PHYSICAL SPACE:</u> Is the premises used for this activity separate from residential space?					
Does the space being used provide a safe environment for the security of children?					
Do spaces used for individual ministry offer visibility from outside?					
Are the toilets within a supervised environment?					
<u>PROCEDURES</u>					
Are arrangements in place to ensure no adult is alone with one child or young person?					
<u>ILLNESS/ ACCIDENT</u> Are arrangements in place about what is to be done if a child becomes ill or has an accident? E.G. CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS					

<p><u>FIRST AID</u></p> <p>Are all employees and volunteers aware of the location of First Aid equipment?</p>					
<p>For large group events are there designated First Aid volunteers available?</p>					
<p><u>TRANSPORT</u></p> <p>Are employees and volunteers aware that they need to be accompanied if they drive children and young people?</p>					
<p>Are employees and volunteers aware that they are not, in ordinary circumstances to drive one child or young person?</p>					
<p><u>FIRE</u></p> <p>Are all adults supervising children aware of the location of fire exits?</p>					

Checked by:Signature Name in Block Letters:

Date:

Copies of this form will be available from the Parish Office and when signed should be returned to the office for filing. This is the evidence which the parish has to show that policy is implemented.

The incident form below is only used if there is an accident or injury while a child/young person is involved in an activity.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

NAME OF CHILD:	ADDRESS:
ACTIVITY:	PHONE NO:
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT	ACTION TAKEN
WHO WAS INFORMED?	ANY FURTHER ACTION NEEDED
ANY TRAINING ISSUES ARISING FROM THE INCIDENT?	
NAME OF PERSON REPORTING INCIDENT?	Signature: Parish Coordinator for Child Protection

Children Learn What They Live

*If children live with criticism,
They learn to condemn.*

*If children live with hostility,
They learn to fight.*

*If children live with ridicule,
They learn to be shy.*

*If children live with shame,
They learn to feel guilty.*

*If children live with encouragement,
They learn confidence.*

*If children live with tolerance,
They learn to be patient.*

*If children live with praise,
They learn to appreciate.*

*If children live with acceptance,
They learn to love.*

*If children live with approval,
They learn to like themselves.*

*If children live with honesty,
They learn truthfulness.*

*If children live with security,
They learn to have faith in themselves and others.*

*If children live with friendliness,
They learn the world is a nice place in which to live.*

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PART TWO

SAFE ENVIRONMENT VULNERABLE ADULTS

VULNERABILITY

'We tend to look at caring as an attitude of the strong towards the weak, of the powerful towards the powerless, of the have's towards the have not's. And, in fact, we feel quite uncomfortable with the invitation to enter someone's pain before doing something about it.

Still when we honestly ask ourselves which persons in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not-knowing, not-curing, not-healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is the friend who cares.'

Out of Solitude by Henri Nouwen

LISTENING

All listening begins and ends in God
The God who listens in infinite Compassion is the God
who creates in each of us the desire to listen to Him
to his world, to each other, to ourselves so that filled with
his spirit we might continue his work here on earth.

Teach me to listen Lord,
to those nearest to me.
my family, my friends, my co-workers.
Help me to be aware that no matter what words I hear, the
message is: Accept the person I am, listen to me.

Teach me to listen, Lord,
to those far from me - the whisper of the hopeless,
the plea of the forgotten
the cry of the anguished.

Teach me to listen, Lord to myself.
Help me to be less afraid,
to trust the voice inside
in the deepest part of me.

Teach me to listen, Lord for your voice
in busyness and in boredom,
in certainty and in doubt
in noise and in silence.
Teach me Lord to listen.

Anne Long

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS GUIDANCE?

- PARISH COUNCIL
- ALL PARISHONERS
- FAMILY GROUPS

WHO NEEDS TO SIGN A CODE OF CONDUCT?

- PARISH TEAM
- HOME VISITATION
- ALL WHO BRING COMMUNION TO THE SICK AT HOME OR IN A CARE HOME

WHO NEEDS A POLICE CHECK?

- PARISH TEAM
- HOME VISITATION
- THOSE WHO TAKE COMMUNION TO THE SICK AT HOME AND IN CARE HOMES

All adults have times of vulnerability during the seasons of their lives but some adults are more consistently vulnerable and these include those who are frail and elderly and also those with mental health or some disability including learning disabilities.

2.0 Definitions and Indications of Abuse in Vulnerable Adults

Age can often be accompanied by vulnerability and that vulnerability is open to being exploited sometimes. Elder abuse is mistreatment of an older person that is committed by someone with whom the older person has a relationship of trust such as a partner, family member, friend or carer.

Elder abuse may be physical, social, financial, psychological or sexual and can include mistreatment and neglect. Other forms abuse can fall into the categories of discrimination on grounds of gender, race or religion and also spiritual abuse. Spiritual abuse would be using power to coerce, control or impose beliefs, values or devotions on another person who is vulnerable without consent.

Seniors Rights Victoria seeks to prevent elder abuse from occurring by offering free legal advice and information as well a range of educational and advocacy activities.

3.0 Definition of Abuse.

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons. Anyone can experience or be a perpetrator of abuse. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts or behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes him or her harm, or endangers their life or their rights. Abuse may be perpetrated by an individual, a group or an organisation.

Abuse may be identified or suspected by a number of different people, including abused adults themselves, their carers, family members, advocates, and other members of the Health or Social Care team or the abuser.

4.0 Those who visit the sick in their own homes or in care homes need to be aware that the people they visit may disclose information about forms of abuse that they have experienced in the past. Whilst it is important to listen the person visiting is not there to solve problems or offer advice but may need to pass on concerns and information to a member of staff in a care home or to the Parish team if it is a home visit.

5.0 The incident form attached (of which there will be spares in the Parish office) are to enable people to record anything which may give rise to a concern about the safety of a vulnerable adult.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ADULT PROTECTION

For the purposes of the policy, an adult is considered to be a person over the age of 18 years. This code of conduct applies only to all those who visit people at home or in a residential care home or hospital.

I.....agree that while representing St Paul Apostle Parish
in any activities with vulnerable adults I will:

- Agree to a police check
- Treat adults with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- Not use language or behaviour towards them that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- Not impose my own personal devotions or values on people or coerce them to act against their will.
- Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation including labour laws in relation to elders and people with disability;
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of elder abuse in accordance with the appropriate procedures;
- Comply with restrictions on photographing, filming and publishing images of vulnerable adults so that their identity and residence is not revealed.
- If the person is unable to consent then I will undertake to talk with the person’s spouse, relative or carer before carrying out any actions or activities.

I accept that the onus is on me as employee/volunteer of St Paul Apostle Parish to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as abusive especially when undertaking Parish activities.

Signed:Date.....

Name in Block letters.....

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

NAME OF ADULT: ACTIVITY:	ADDRESS: PHONE NO:
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT	ACTION TAKEN
WHO WAS INFORMED?	ANY FURTHER ACTION NEEDED
ANY TRAINING ISSUES ARISING FROM THE INCIDENT?	

Signed.....Person reporting

Signed.....on behalf of the Parish Team

A BLESSING

May the light of your soul guide you
May the light of your soul bless the work you do
with the secret love and warmth of your heart
May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.
May the sacredness of your work bring
healing, light and renewal to those who work with you,
and those who see and receive your work.
May your work never weary you
May it release within you wellsprings
of refreshment, inspiration and excitement.
may you be present in what you do
May you never become lost in bland absences
May the day never burden
May dawn find you awake and alert
approaching your new day with dreams
possibilities and promises.
may evening find you gracious and fulfilled
May you go into the night blessed, sheltered and protected
May your soul calm, console and renew you.

John O' Donoghue

Thank you for supporting the Parish Activities with
your time, gifts and skills. The Parish Community is
appreciative of all that you do.