



# Catholic Diocese of Darwin

## SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

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### Statement of Commitment

The Catholic Diocese of Darwin is committed to promoting the safeguarding of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. Consistent with gospel values and our Mission Statement, we follow the example of Jesus in respecting the dignity of each child, young person and vulnerable adult.

We are committed to work together to create an environment where children and young people are respected and where they are safe and feel safe. We provide opportunities for children and young people to have a say and be listened to.

### Purpose

This Safeguarding Code of Conduct sets out the responsibilities and behaviour which the Catholic Diocese of Darwin requires of all clergy, religious, employees and volunteers when working with or in contact with children and young people. This Code will help protect children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. Clergy and religious are also required to refer to *Integrity in Ministry*.

### Breaches of the Code

Any allegations of breaches of this Code are treated seriously. The Parish Priest, Principal or Director/ Manager will discuss any breaches of the Code with the person to whom the complaint is directed. In some instances, it may be determined that the employment may be terminated. If the allegation concerns a volunteer, it may be determined that the volunteer's services may be discontinued. Serious breaches may also result in a report being made to authorities as the Northern Territory Police and / or Territory Families.

### Standards of Behaviour

The Catholic Diocese of Darwin is committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes the safety and inclusiveness of all children, including children with a disability, and those with culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Catholic Diocese of Darwin condemns all forms of child abuse, discrimination and sexual exploitation. Child abuse occurs when adults or other children hurt children or young people under the age of 18, either physically, emotionally, sexually, through neglect, or in some other way.

### Acceptable Behaviours

#### I WILL:

- Act in accordance with the Catholic ethos and core values of the Catholic Church.
- Behave respectfully, courteously and ethically towards children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families and towards Parish Priests, religious, paid staff and other volunteers. This includes listening to and valuing ideas and opinions of other persons.

- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families and not disclose or use the private, personal or confidential information of children, young people, staff or parents/carers (unless required by the Code or law).
- Always ensure that if I am to work alone with children or young people, I am near another adult and in an open and visible environment.
- Only make physical contact with a child or young person, if the physical contact is appropriate and reasonable for the support, care or management of the child or young person, e.g. demonstrating an action to a child or young person.
- Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts.
- Take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of children, young people, other adults, and myself and follow all safety procedures which are required (e.g. sign in registers and emergency evacuation or lockdown procedures).
- Comply with the lawful and reasonable directions of appropriately authorised persons.
- Dress appropriately for the activities in which I am involved.
- Identify and mitigate risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people as required by the Catholic Diocese of Darwin Child and the Youth Risk Management Strategy.
- Ensure my language is appropriate.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they are telling that they or another child or young person has been abused and/or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or young person. These disclosures must be reported to the Parish Priest or Child Safeguarding Coordinator in Parishes and the Principal or Safeguarding Contact in Schools or the Integrity Officer/ Child Safety Coordinator.
- Report all child safety concerns, complaints, beliefs of harm or disclosures to the Parish Priest or Child Safeguarding Coordinator in Parishes and the Principal or Safeguarding Contact in Schools or the Integrity Officer/ Child Safety Coordinator.
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure the safety of the child or young person as soon as possible and then report to the Parish Priest, Principal, Child Safeguarding Coordinator in Parishes or the Safeguarding Contact in Schools. (Please refer to the Mandatory Reporting Policy.)

## Unacceptable Behaviours

### I WILL NOT:

- Engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child or young person.
- Engage in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Engage in any activity that is likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child, young person or vulnerable adults.
- Ignore or disregard any beliefs of harm or disclosed harm or abuse.
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child, young person or their family members.
- Knowingly use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.

- Make sarcastic, insensitive, offensive or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- Be alone with a child unnecessarily.
- Physically punish or discipline a child or young person.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment that may constitute grooming of children and young people.
- Indulge in any form of sexual contact with or conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person.
- Arrange personal contact, including online contact, with children I am working with for a purpose unrelated to Parish or school activities.
- Allow allegations/beliefs of harm/ risk of harm or disclosures go unreported.
- Release or discuss any personal confidential information about beliefs of child abuse other than with the Parish Priest, Child Safeguarding Coordinator, Principal, Safeguarding Contact or the Integrity Officer/ Child Safety Coordinator and as required by law.
- Use any computer, mobile phone or video or digital camera to take photos of children and young people without signed consent from parents/carers and there is a justifiable and appropriate context.
- Post any photographs or videos in relation to children and young people, the express permission of parents has been obtained.
- Let children and young people have my personal details, e.g. mobile number or contact address.
- Drive students or visit students at home without appropriate authority from the workplace and parent/carers.
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.
- Accept or allow behaviour of children, young people or adults that is morally wrong and/or illegal, e.g. children and young people using smoking products, drugs or alcohol, or providing smoking products, drugs or alcohol to children or young people.

## **Breaches of this Safeguarding Code of Conduct by another Person**

**If I believe that this Safeguarding Code of Conduct has been breached by another person in the Catholic Diocese of Darwin, I WILL:**

- Act to prioritise the best interests of children.
- Take actions promptly to ensure children are safe.
- Promptly report any concerns to the Parish Priest, Child Safeguarding Coordinator, Principal, Safeguarding Contact, Manager or supervisor.
- Follow the process for receiving and responding to complaints.
- Make a Mandatory Report if children or young people have been harmed or abused, according to the Mandatory Reporting Policy, to Territory Families or Police with factual information regarding a belief of harm to, or abuse of, a child or young person.

## Declaration:

I agree to abide by this Safeguarding Code of Conduct in activities in the Diocese of Darwin.

I understand that breaches of this Safeguarding Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, further training, being stood down from my volunteer work or the termination of my employment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director/ Manager/ Principal/ Priest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Signature

Parish/ School/ Workplace: \_\_\_\_\_