



Nazareth Parish Safeguarding Committee

Policies and Procedures Handbook

2025

Nazareth Parish Safeguarding Committee

Preamble

The Safeguarding Committee of Nazareth Parish – Grovedale, Torquay and Anglesea is a committee established under the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards which is designed to be implemented by Catholic entities across Australia. The eleven Safeguarding Standards are a framework which articulates the requirements for Catholic entities to promote the safety of children, young people (a child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 years) and adults at risk (an adult at risk is any person over the age of 18 years who is at an increased risk of experiencing abuse or exploitation, including by virtue of their age, disability, diminished capacity, cognitive impairment, cultural background, life or personal circumstance) through the implementation of policies and activities to prevent, respond and report concerns regarding all types of abuse.

The Committee consists of our parish priest, lay members representing each church community and the parish administration staff.

The Committee meets on the third Thursday of each month. Where possible the committee meet in person, but most meetings are via Zoom.

It is the responsibility of the committee to develop and implement safeguarding policies, procedures and practices as directed and guided by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. We work towards creating and sustaining safeguarding practices and policies in the parish, as well as meeting compliance with government legislation.

Nazareth Parish is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all persons, especially children, young people and adults at risk and has a zero tolerance of abuse.

This document has been prepared to assist current and future members of the safeguarding committee in maintaining safeguarding practices in Nazareth Parish.

'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)

Committee Vision

The welfare of the children and young people in our parish is at the centre of everything we do.

Committee Mission

The Safeguarding committee is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and welcoming parish for children, young people, and vulnerable people.

Purpose

The Nazareth Safeguarding committee's purpose is to give advice to, and work with, the leadership of the parish to ensure policies, processes and practices are in place to protect children and young people.

Objectives

The Safeguarding Committee works to:

- Adhere to the eleven National Child Safe Standards
- Involve families and community members in child safety.
- Implement, maintain, and review child safety processes and procedures to support the wellbeing and safety of children and young people with input from relevant stakeholders e.g. the parish priest, parish administration, parents, children and young people, program leaders, and pastoral associates.
- Engage in and review risk management processes to promote the safe participation of children and young people in programs, activities, and events.
- Involve children and young people (and their families) in decision-making and planning to promote child safety.
- Support the implementation of child safe selection, recruitment, screening, and induction processes as per the requirements of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young people Framework.
- Ensuring that reporting processes for concerns and/or allegations are well communicated across the parish.
- Function as a first point of contact in relation to child safety concerns, reports or allegations and comply with reporting protocols for child abuse reports and allegations in a sensitive and supportive manner. [Reporting Procedure](#)
- Participate in and/or deliver child safety information and training.
- Monitor ongoing compliance with the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework which covers the requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- Coordinate the parish's annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool, including the development of an implementation plan. This is designed to help monitor, track, and improve safeguarding practices in the parish. This process is overseen by the Parish Priest and can be used as evidence for external audits.

(Many of these objectives are taken directly from the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne - Safeguarding Committee roles and responsibilities document)

Safeguarding Committee Members

The membership of the Committee must include parish representatives and other relevant stakeholders including:

- Program coordinators, who may be employees or volunteers involved in child and youth related work and ministry.
- Volunteers with child safety expertise (e.g. lawyers, human resource professionals, teachers or school principals, early childhood education workers, police officers, social workers, youth workers) and/or a strong commitment to safeguard children and young people
- Where possible, parent representatives.

Members of the Committee are in effect 'Safeguarding Officers' for the parish. Safeguarding Officers are an important asset within a parish and can act as points of contact for advice, support, and direction in relation to child safety matters.

Members Responsibilities/roles

Parish Priest – is responsible for overseeing decisions made by the committee on behalf of the parish.

Parish office staff – to manage volunteer database information and maintain safeguarding compliance guidelines.

Chair - A Chair will be appointed by the committee for two years. The Chair will be responsible for the orderly conduct of meetings, agenda construct and minutes of meetings.

Volunteer Members – representing each Church community within our parish.

Rules of operation

The Safeguarding Committee will:

- Meet at least six times each year.
- [Working With Children Check](#) updated every 5 years and linked with the parish.
- [National Police Check](#) obtained every 3 years.
- [Safeguarding Training Module](#) online training module to be completed yearly by paid staff members, and every 3 years for volunteers.
- Signed Nazareth's Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Plan and prepare the focus for Safeguarding Sunday.
- Review safety compliance and safety management plans yearly.
- Work on the Safeguarding Assessment Tool Annually.
- Communicate safeguarding practices with the parish community through the parish website, weekly bulletin and up to date displayed information in the church foyers.
- Operate meetings in the line with standard meeting principles, including formal minutes, motions for resolution.

Safeguarding Statement of Commitment of the Nazareth Catholic Parish

We are committed to upholding the safety and dignity of each child and young person, and to ensure that they are able to grow and develop in a caring and supportive environment in our Church.

The Catholic Church proclaims that all human life is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation and hope for the flourishing of humanity and society—a message that is at the heart of the Gospel. As such, all in the Catholic Church have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing environments where children are respected, where their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe.

We acknowledge that preventing child abuse requires proactive approaches across policies, procedures and practices consistent with the requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Through these policies, procedures and practices, we strive to prevent abuse in the first instance and to respond effectively and pastorally if abuse does occur.

We are committed to creating a child-safe culture across the Archdiocese that safeguards children and young people from all forms of abuse.

We are resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in the Church are aware of the inherent vulnerability of children and young people, and that they acknowledge their own responsibility to promote the dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe environment.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every person involved in the Catholic Church has an obligation to understand the important and specific role he or she plays, individually and collectively. Together we ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people are at the forefront of everything we do and every decision we make.

We are committed to zero tolerance of all forms of child abuse and discrimination, and will always act to safeguard children and young people and report suspected abuse promptly to the appropriate authorities.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne sets clear behavioural expectations and has an overarching commitment to the protection of children and young people from all forms of abuse. All child safety concerns and allegations will be treated seriously and reported in line with our moral and legal obligations as articulated in the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and other Safeguarding of Children and Young People Framework documents.

We are committed to ensuring that all people who have, or may be expected to have, contact with children and young people acknowledge their responsibility to safeguard children and young people from abuse and discrimination.

We acknowledge and welcome diversity in our Church community. We recognise that cultural safety and inclusion serve as protective factors in relation to child safety—particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, and children and young people of diverse sexuality—and are sensitive to the impact these factors may have on child safety.



Fr Joel Peart
Parish Priest
14th September 2025



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Code of Conduct

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION

The completion of the Child Safety Code of Conduct Declaration is a requirement of all volunteers in the Nazareth Parish. We acknowledge that not all parish volunteers have contact with children however according to the Safeguarding Unit for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, all volunteers are required to sign the code of conduct every 3 years.

Archdiocesan clergy, employees and volunteers are committed to upholding a duty of care to all children and young people and taking all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse and harm. At Nazareth Parish, clergy, employees and volunteers commit to safeguard the health and wellbeing of children and young people by:

Keeping Children and Young People Safe from Abuse and Harm

- Always treat children and young people with care and respect, ensuring their emotional, physical, and sexual safety.
- Promote a safe environment free from punishment or any degrading, frightening, or humiliating treatment.
- Use positive, respectful language and a kind tone when communicating.
- Foster relationships based on trust and fairness, avoiding any behaviour that could be misunderstood as favouritism or considered grooming.
- Communicate in ways that are inclusive and free from sexual, discriminatory, or racist language, including jokes or innuendo.

Creating a physically and psychologically safe environment

- Ensure that an adult is never alone with a child or young person and they do not seek to make contact with a child or young person that places them at risk of abuse.
- Ensure that children and young people in your care are appropriately supervised at all times.
- Use fair, respectful and developmentally appropriate strategies to guide the behaviour of children and young people in a positive manner.
- Ensure that photographs or video of children and young people are taken with the consent of parents or guardians within the context of the parish, agency or entity activity.
- Use social media and digital communication in a manner that does not exploit or place children and young people at risk.

- Act to remove and/or minimise any physical or environmental risks that could adversely impact children and young people.
- Not consume alcohol or illicit drugs before or while engaging in the care of children and young people or being adversely affected by prescription medication.
- Not supply alcohol and drugs to children and young people.
- Immediately notify management if charged or convicted with a criminal offence (if subject to a criminal history record check in relation to your involvement with a CAM parish, agency or entity).

Supporting cultural safety and inclusion

- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people.
- Support the inclusion of children and young people with a disability; from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse children and young people; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Promoting respectful relationships

- Engage in positive and respectful interactions with children and young people that uphold their rights and dignity.
- Listen to and respect the views of children and young people.

Taking action to safeguard children and young people

- Listen to and respond supportively to the concerns of children and young people in relation to their safety.
- Report any child safety concerns, reports or disclosures to relevant statutory child protection authorities (e.g. Child Protection (DHHS), Victoria Police) and the Professional Standards Unit, consistent with the requirements of this Policy.

Acknowledgement of Nazareth's Code of Conduct		
First name:	Surname:	Date
		___ / ___ / ___
Signature:		

