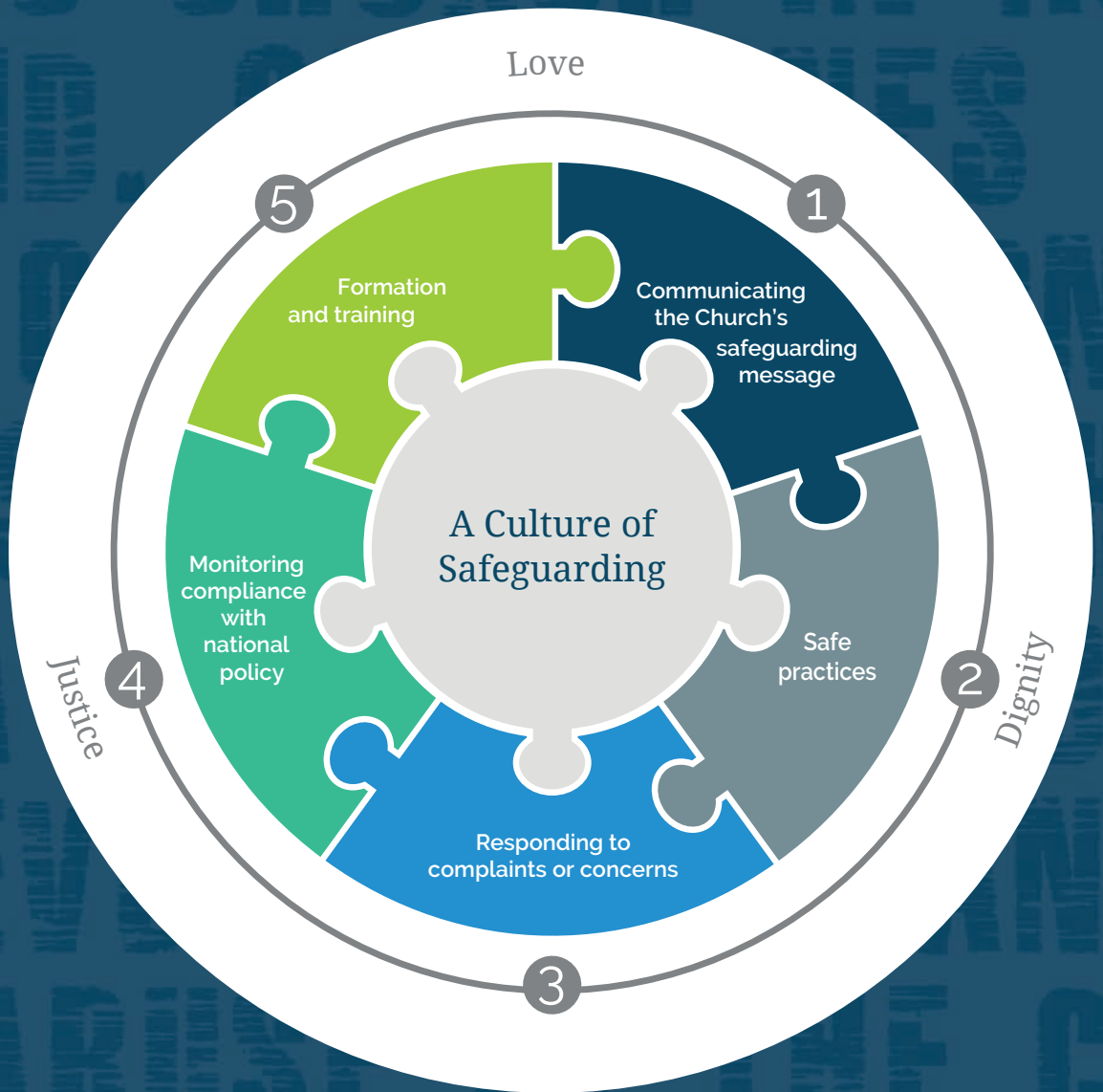


*The Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand*



Standards for  
Creating and Maintaining  
a Safeguarding Culture

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# ***SAFEGUARDING CULTURE STANDARDS***

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These Safeguarding Culture Standards are designed to ensure our Catholic Church entities implement 'best practice' in all aspects of safeguarding in the creation and maintenance of safe environments for our children and vulnerable adults.

*Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture* describes our safeguarding goals and expectations and provides the framework for the implementation of the *National Safeguarding Guidelines* and associated policies. The purpose is to ensure that the same principles and practices for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults operate in all Catholic entities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

A further purpose is to create a secure and supportive atmosphere in which those who have suffered abuse can disclose this to a trusted person in the expectation of receiving a sensitive, caring and compassionate response and to be supported in their continued healing.

The successful application and implementation of these standards requires the commitment of all leaders within our Church entities. They provide a framework and mandate for leaders to ensure systems and processes within their entity or organisation promote the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

It is the responsibility of each diocesan bishop or congregational leader to ensure that those

who work (paid or unpaid) with children and/or vulnerable adults within parishes, religious congregations and Catholic agencies in their jurisdiction apply these *Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture* in their own sphere of activity. By dedicating ourselves to learn, to improve on our practice and to meet these new standards, we will remain vigilant in protecting our children and vulnerable adults.

These standards will direct the development of a five-year safeguarding action plan to ensure these goals and expectations are integrated into every structure of our Church through the implementation of new practices.

The National Office for Professional Standards is developing a range of support materials and resources to assist Church entities to implement these standards.

We are committed to honouring the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by working with tangata whenua in the development and implementation of safeguarding practices.

*Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture* are intended to be responsive rather than static and definitive and will be subject to continuous review and improvement.

***National Safeguarding and Professional Standards Committee***

## **STANDARD 1**

### **- Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message**

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#### **What is the standard?**

Church entities appropriately communicate the Church's safeguarding message.

#### **Indicators to meet the standard include:**

The Church entity:

- has a planned approach that explains clearly how the Church's safeguarding message is communicated;
- knows and understands the diversity of those in its community and communicates the Church's safeguarding message appropriately;
- provides organisations that are associated with the entity, information that enables them to understand and uphold the Church's safeguarding policy and practices;
- provides the Church's safeguarding requirements for groups and organisations using the entity's facilities.

#### **Effective implementation of this standard will include:**

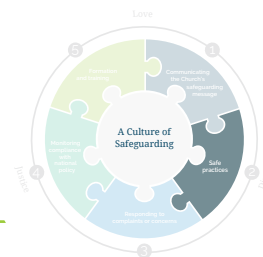
Evidence of communicating the Church's child safeguarding message may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- develop a communication plan;
- ensure that information regarding the Church's safeguarding message is accessible;
- communicate appropriately to children;
- communicate appropriately to those whose first language is not English, as well as to those who have specific needs; and
- develop links with other organisations in the locality in order to promote a safe and caring community and to share good practices.

## **STANDARD 2**

### **- Safe Practices**

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### **What is the standard?**

Church entities provide environments that are welcoming, nurturing and safe.

### **Indicators to meet the standard include:**

The Church entity:

- has a planned approach to implement safeguarding practices that respect, protect and enhance the dignity of everyone; particularly children, young persons and vulnerable adults;
- works with tangata whenua to ensure practices value local tikanga;
- undertakes safe recruitment practices including assessing suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults, and police vetting;
- screens visiting clergy or persons in any form of consecrated life seeking to minister in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand;
- has clear expectations of what is appropriate behaviour by adults towards children and vulnerable adults via a signed Code of Conduct or similar written document;
- deals appropriately with behaviour that breaches the Code of Conduct or similar document;
- implements effective practice for the safe use of technology, including the internet, social media, texting, email and photography;
- promotes and fosters an environment that encourages the well-being and hauora of everyone; particularly children, young persons and vulnerable adults;
- undertakes risk assessment of activities involving children and vulnerable adults that are monitored regularly and adjusted as appropriate.

### **Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard**

Evidence of creating and maintaining safe environments may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- undertake safe recruitment practices, including police vetting;
- screen visiting clergy or persons in any form of consecrated life seeking to minister in the Catholic Church in New Zealand;
- set expectations of what is appropriate behaviour by adults towards children and vulnerable adults via a Code of Conduct or similar written document;
- set expectations of what is appropriate behaviour by children and vulnerable adults;
- deal with breaches of codes of behaviour for adults and for children;
- extend the use of church property by external groups, including hire for private functions;
- undertake risk assessments of activities with children and vulnerable adults; and
- provide for the safe use of technology, including the internet, texting, email and photography.

## **STANDARD 3**

### **- Responding to Concerns or Allegations**

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#### **What is the standard?**

Church entities have clear procedures and practices to respond to and manage concerns, allegations and complaints.

#### **Indicators to meet the standard include:**

The Church entity:

- has a planned approach to ensure a prompt response and fair process;
- has clear systems in place for people to raise concerns regarding the safety of children, young persons and vulnerable adults;
- has written safeguarding procedures and refers all claims of abuse or harm involving members of the clergy or religious orders to the National Office for Professional Standards;
- has written processes to manage all other concerns and complaints;
- has access to appropriately trained personnel to respond to the complainant and respondent in a manner that is timely and considerate of needs;
- works with Māori to ensure provision of appropriate pastoral care and support;
- has clear processes to comply with the Privacy Act 1993 and for the secure storage of information and record-keeping.

#### **Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard**

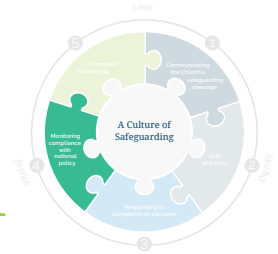
Evidence of response and care management for both the complainant and respondent may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- report all allegations of abuse;
- when abuse occurs, encourage complainants to report abuse to New Zealand Police and/or Oranga Tamariki;
- respond appropriately and compassionately to all allegations of abuse or harm and to all other complaints or concerns;
- undertake a risk assessment to produce an interim management plan;
- provide a pastoral response to complainants and others affected;
- support parishes and others affected when a priest takes leave from ministry;
- support the respondent to return to ministry when investigations find no case to answer; and
- support and manage the respondent following the conclusion of any investigation.

## **STANDARD 4**

### **- Monitoring Compliance with National Policy**

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#### **What is the standard?**

Church entities provides assurance of compliance with the standards.

#### **Indicators to meet the standard include:**

The Church entity:

- has a planned approach to ensure and evaluate its compliance with the safeguarding standards;
- undertakes an annual self-review of its safeguarding practices;
- meets its own designated reporting requirements;
- engages with the National Office for Professional Standards who will carry out an independent review of the entity's safeguarding practice.

#### **Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard**

Evidence of quality assuring compliance with the standards may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- complete annual reports and undertake reviews of compliance with the five standards; and
- develops a safeguarding plan that:
  - outlines the actions that will be taken to keep children and vulnerable adults safe;
  - identifies who is responsible for implementing these actions;
  - specifies the time frame within which actions are completed; and
  - identifies the resources to ensure that the plan's objectives are realized.

## **STANDARD 5**

### **- Formation and Training**

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#### **What is the standard?**

Church entities provide training and support for personnel in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role.

#### **Indicators to meet the standard include:**

The Church entity:

- has a planned approach for the provision of formation and training of employees and volunteers involved in safeguarding;
- includes safeguarding requirements in employee and volunteer induction processes;
- provides ongoing training programmes approved by the National Office for Professional Standards for volunteers and employees;
- facilitates access to appropriate support and supervision for volunteers and employees responsible for Church safeguarding matters.

#### **Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard**

Evidence of providing training and support for keeping children and vulnerable adults safe may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- provide induction for those involved in providing Church-related activities;
- ensure the delivery of basic safeguarding awareness;
- provide role-specific training for Church personnel;
- raise awareness of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults with children and parents/guardians in the Church; and
- ensure access to appropriate support and supervision.



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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### **Child:**

*Generally, this relates to an individual up to the age of 18 years. (Children's Act, 2014)*

### **Church Entity:**

*Any parish, organization or agency which has been endorsed by a bishop or congregation leader as meeting the requirements of Canon 216 and therefore comes within the jurisdiction of the bishop or congregation leader.*

### **Church Personnel:**

*Clergy, religious, employees and volunteers who are accepted by a bishop or congregation leader as working for the Church.*

### **Religious Congregation or Order:**

*Religious refers to a member of a religious congregation or a society of apostolic life recognized by the Catholic Church. For the purpose of this document, it shall also include any person formally admitted into an institute's programme of formation.*

### **Vulnerable Adult:**

*A person unable by reason of detention, age, sickness, mental impairment or any other cause, to withdraw him or herself from the care of charge of another. (Crimes Act 1961)*

## ***CONTACT DETAILS***

### ***- National Office for Professional Standards***

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**Website:** [www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz](http://www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz)

**Email:** [prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz](mailto:prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz)

**Phone:** 0800 114 622

**Post:** PO Box 10199, Philipstown, Christchurch

Please visit diocesan websites for contact details of safeguarding coordinators and other information about safeguarding practices in your diocese:

**Auckland Diocese:** [www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz](http://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz)

**Hamilton Diocese:** [www.proudtobecatholic.org.nz](http://www.proudtobecatholic.org.nz)

**Palmerston North Diocese:** [www.pndiocese.org.nz](http://www.pndiocese.org.nz)

**Wellington Archdiocese:** [www.wn.catholic.org.nz](http://www.wn.catholic.org.nz)

**Christchurch Diocese:** [www.chchcatholic.nz](http://www.chchcatholic.nz)

**Dunedin Diocese:** [www.cdd.org.nz](http://www.cdd.org.nz)

## ***ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:***

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