

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

De La Salle District of Australia New Zealand
Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (ANZPPNG)

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1.0 PURPOSE

This policy articulates the commitment the District of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea has to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk.

Children, young people and adults at risk have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured and safeguarded by all. Accordingly, this policy sets out what is required in the clear expectation that at all times and under all circumstances, everyone will uphold the ethical and moral commitment we have to those we serve.

The District has a zero tolerance towards any form of abuse or exploitation.

This policy is built on the foundation of Lasallian Values, our faith traditions and the requirements of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) of Australia.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to **all** involved in the Lasallian Mission and as such includes Board Members, employees, and volunteers and relates to all activities which involve, result in or relate to contact with children, young people or adults at risk.

This policy also applies to anyone engaged within Lasallian ministries under contract or if they are involved with Lasallian ministries through other parties.

3.0 PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

As Lasallians we have a shared responsibility to ensure that no harm comes to children, young people and/or adults at risk within our ministries or through our actions, and that at all times the best interests of a child and/or children, young people and adults at risk is a primary consideration.

All Lasallians have personal responsibility to meet the laws of their jurisdictions which respect to safeguarding and child protection.

All those engaged in the Lasallian ministry must:

- demonstrate in both their public and private lives behaviours which bear witness to our values and commitment to safeguarding
- report any actual or suspected harm to a child, young person or adult at risk
- engage with and demonstrate their understanding of District and ministries policies related to safeguarding and engage with all training required to maintain currency of knowledge
- engage in honest, respectful communication with children, young people and adults risk, and welcome and encourage feedback
- ensure that clear information is provided to children, young people and their families about activities, their rights and responsibilities and provide access to support and feedback mechanisms; and
- ensure that the voice of children, young people and adults at risk is sought, and included within the design of activities, ministries and advocacy.

All those in Leadership/Governance Positions must:

- commit to uphold and promote a culture where safeguarding and wellbeing practices are demonstrated through practice and action
- develop practices to participate and validate safeguarding compliance and a culture of ongoing practice improvement
- develop mechanisms for the monitoring of risk, including risk controls and treatments
- develop and maintain systems and processes to ensure ongoing education, socialisation and activations of policies and procedures
- ensure compliance with all policies, procedures and reporting requirements; and
- contribute to the ongoing development of safeguarding across the District.

4.0 LASALLIAN MINISTRIES

Each Lasallian ministry is to have a Safeguarding Children and Adult at Risk Policy which aligns to the District position, as well as relevant legislation and standards.

Each Lasallian ministry's policy is to at a minimum include:

- A statement expressing the ministry's commitment to child and adults at risk wellbeing and safety including child friendly versions where required
- Responsibilities to report and to respond to reports of abuse
- How promotion of child safety and a child safe culture will be undertaken and maintained
- How education regarding safeguarding practices is to be provided
- Where concerns with regard to safeguarding are to be reported;
- How supports to individuals who make report/s are to be provided;
- Maintenance of respectful relationships and professional boundaries; and
- How the policy will be monitored and reviewed.

All ministries must undertake and provide evidence that all personnel have been trained in the contents of the policy and provide evidence of it being a 'living' document requiring attention and action.

Policies are to be considered public documents and are to be made available to stakeholders, including children, and their families. Furthermore regular promotion of policies is to be undertaken to ensure that all have knowledge of their existence.

Lasallian ministries must minimise risk by:

- adopting recruitment and selection practices which safeguard children and adults at risk, including meeting all jurisdictional requirements related to working with children checks
- ensuring that employees and volunteers have clearly articulated and documented position descriptions
- ensuring that employees and volunteers are trained appropriately in working with children, young people and adults at risk and demonstrate knowledge and awareness of child protection practices including mandatory reporting obligations
- ensuring that strategic plans include specific consideration of safeguarding requirements and goals
- having risk management processes in place which are reviewed on a regular basis
- developing a full suite of policies and procedures with relate to safeguarding
- empowering and encouraging open communication – ensuring a culture of trust and openness where practice is supervised, discussed and questioned; and
- ensuring safe environments which recognise a child's right to be heard.

5.0 COMPLIANCE

There are a range of governance structures in place across the District, however every Lasallian ministry must maintain policies and procedures with regard to Safeguarding. A copy of the ministry's Safeguarding Policy must be provided to the Brother Visitor so that compliance with the District Policy can be assured. It is expected that each ministry's policy will be reviewed at least bi-annually and where changes are made, an updated Policy is to be provided to the Brother Visitor.

The Brother Visitor may request an audit of each works policies, procedures and practices. When this is requested and/or advised each work must engage in the process openly and transparently. The focus of such audits is to ensure compliance to District Safeguarding Policies and to facilitate the means to promote shared learnings and continuous improvement strategies.

In the event of District policies being overridden by jurisdictional legislation then official certification of compliance will be required to be provided. In jurisdictions where there is no statutory requirements for safeguarding, the provisions of the ANZPPNG District Policy will apply.

6.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

As part of an international world-wide body committed to upholding the rights of the child, this policy reflects the principles of the following:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Australia)
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australia)
- Lukautim Pikinini Act – Papua New Guinea
- Children's Act of 2014 – New Zealand
- Oranga Tamariki Legislation Act 2019 – New Zealand
- Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act 2019 - Pakistan
- Relevant Child Safeguarding/Protection legislation of the relevant jurisdictions; and
- The normative protocols and procedures of the Roman Catholic Church determined for each jurisdiction.

7.0 RELATED DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In support of safeguarding the District has a wide range of policies of which individuals and works must also ensure compliance with. All policies developed at the District level will be socialised across the District. Such policies include, but are not limited to:

- Safeguarding Commitment Statement
- District Code of Conduct
- Disclosure of Abuse or Harm Policy
- Child Safeguarding Risk Management Plan

8.0 POLICY STATUS AND REVIEW

This policy is approved by the Brother Visitor and is a mandatory document for all Lasallian Works in the ANZPPNG District.

Information and/or support with regard to the policy can be sought from the District Professional Standards Officer.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the District Safeguarding Committee.