

Safety, love and hope  
for our young people






*The Safeguarding Project is child-focused and informed by a fundamental belief that children and vulnerable members of the Church have a right to physical and psychological safety at all times and that we, the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth, must play our part in protecting all children and vulnerable adults.*

## *Introduction*

Over recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the existence of child abuse and a growing acceptance of the potential risks to children from individuals working in positions of trust. Greater attention, therefore, has been paid to how Church organisations ensure that the children with whom they are in contact are kept safe from harm. ►





◀ The Perth Archdiocesan Safeguarding Office was established in November 2014 to develop policies, procedures and activities for safeguarding children and other vulnerable members of the Church. The role of this office is to develop and monitor the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures in all parishes within the Archdiocese, in line with the 12 National Standards for creating child-safe organisations.

Church organisations need to develop a common understanding of how to safeguard children, develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which they operate and increase accountability in this crucial aspect of their work. The standards contained in the project are designed to help parishes and Church organisations keep children safe.

*The project will provide practical guidance, tools and support materials to assist parishes in overcoming a host of challenges that confront them in tackling the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable individuals.*

## *The Safeguarding Project Aim*

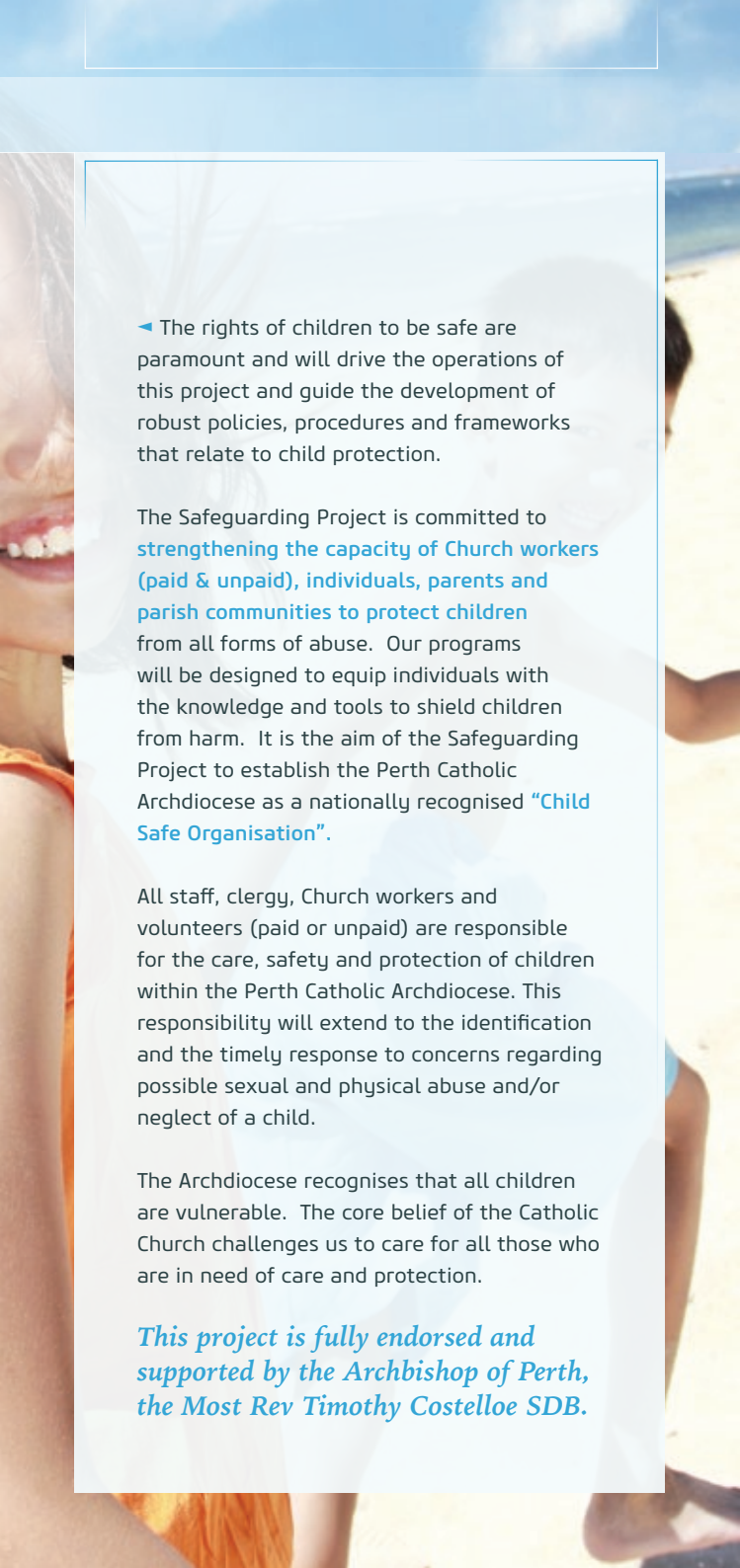
The aim of the Safeguarding Project is to raise awareness of our collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable individuals within the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. The project, whilst working towards providing all forms of safety for children, **will be focused on the prevention of abuse and harm to children and vulnerable individuals within parishes.**

Recognising that there is no fool-proof system for the complete prevention of all forms of abuse, the project will work towards increasing the safety of all children and vulnerable individuals through proactive and reactive measures and strategies.

The 12 National Standards used to increase the safety of children incorporate elements of public health interventions to prevent the abuse of children. They will minimise the risk of abuse by increasing the likelihood that abuse will be detected, and to reduce the long-term impacts of abuse on children.

## *Archdiocese's Commitment*

The Perth Catholic Archdiocese is committed to providing safe and secure environments for all its members, leaders, and especially its children, young people and vulnerable individuals. To this end, the duties of the Safeguarding Office will be centred on putting the needs of children first. ►

A background image showing a group of children playing on a sandy beach. In the foreground, a child's face is partially visible on the left, smiling. Other children are seen in the background, some running and playing. The sky is blue with some clouds.

◀ The rights of children to be safe are paramount and will drive the operations of this project and guide the development of robust policies, procedures and frameworks that relate to child protection.

The Safeguarding Project is committed to **strengthening the capacity of Church workers (paid & unpaid), individuals, parents and parish communities to protect children** from all forms of abuse. Our programs will be designed to equip individuals with the knowledge and tools to shield children from harm. It is the aim of the Safeguarding Project to establish the Perth Catholic Archdiocese as a nationally recognised “**Child Safe Organisation**”.

All staff, clergy, Church workers and volunteers (paid or unpaid) are responsible for the care, safety and protection of children within the Perth Catholic Archdiocese. This responsibility will extend to the identification and the timely response to concerns regarding possible sexual and physical abuse and/or neglect of a child.

The Archdiocese recognises that all children are vulnerable. The core belief of the Catholic Church challenges us to care for all those who are in need of care and protection.

***This project is fully endorsed and supported by the Archbishop of Perth, the Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB.***

## *Establishing Safeguarding Officers in Every Parish*

One of the main activities of the Safeguarding Project will be the establishment of two Safeguarding Officers within each parish in the Archdiocese of Perth. These officers will be provided with ongoing support and training and will be responsible for the implementation of policies and procedures, together with proactive measures within their individual parishes.

Furthermore, there will be a **notable person within the parish to whom clergy, Church workers, children, parents and parishioners can approach** and speak with if they are not feeling safe or have something they wish to disclose that relates to an individual's safety.

Parish Safeguarding Officers will be supported and mentored by the Archdiocese's Safeguarding Project Coordinator. A wide range of proactive activities will be coordinated across the Perth Archdiocese that will work towards keeping children safe.

A key responsibility of the Safeguarding Project Coordinator will be to assist those parish-based officers in implementing the safeguarding policies and procedures within their parishes and to ensure that **best practice is maintained at all times**.

## *Those suitable for the role of Church Safeguarding Officer*

*The person appointed to this role should*

- be a regular member of the parish who can demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults at risk from all cultural backgrounds and abilities
- have a good awareness of the civil safeguarding policies and procedures, statutory legislation and guidance.

**Full training in safeguarding and child protection will be provided.** A background or prior experience in this field would be advantageous but not necessary. The role will require the applicant to apply for - or to already possess and maintain - a current Working with Children Card.

## *Roles and Responsibilities of Parish Safeguarding Officers*

*The role of Parish Safeguarding Officers is key to ensuring that parishes meet the Archdiocese of Perth's safeguarding responsibilities in all aspects of service that they undertake.*

*They will be required to:*

- be a source of support, advice and information on all matters of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults in the parish
- be the first point of contact for children, vulnerable adults and other members of the parish community regarding suspicions of abuse and other safeguarding concerns
- respond to all safeguarding concerns in line with the Archdiocese's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure manuals, reporting these concerns to the Safeguarding Project Coordinator and/or other authorities, as needed
- keep the parish priest informed of all concerns, responses and activities relating to safeguarding children and other members of the parish community
- raise the profile of safeguarding in the parish, ensuring that it remains a high priority, and report on any issues or concerns with the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures
- assist with proactive measures with parishes to safeguard children
- ensure that all statutory requirements are met within parishes in respect to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.



*All enquiries regarding the  
Safeguarding Project or parish  
safeguarding positions can  
be directed to:*

***Safeguarding Project Coordinator***

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Catholic Archdiocese of Perth

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