



Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

Professional Standards Committee Terms of Reference

The Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all persons, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Diocese is committed to nationally established Standards and Protocols of the Catholic Church, as well as being compliant with all State Government legislation.

The Diocese has a zero tolerance of child abuse and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and reported in line with its legal obligations, its moral obligations and Catholic Church policies. The Diocese is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early so as to reduce and remove them.

The Professional Standards Committee of the Diocese of Sandhurst oversees the policies and procedures of the Diocese in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Complaints about current Church personnel are directed to the Child Safety Officer. Complaints about historical incidents are directed to the Professional Standards Officer in the Diocesan Archives.

Terms of Reference

The Professional Standards Committee of the Diocese has the following Terms of Reference:

1. To assist all clergy, employees and volunteers in the Diocese, including its parishes and agencies, to make the implementation of safeguarding practices for children and vulnerable adults and accountability for their implementation, a key responsibility and a priority of ministry.
2. As a consultative group, to advise and assist the Bishop of Sandhurst in his duty of creating and sustaining child safeguarding practices and policies in the parishes and institutions of his Diocese.

3. As requested by the Bishop, to receive and offer advice on the progress of historical child sexual abuse allegations relating to clergy, employees and volunteers in the Diocese, attentive to issues of privacy.
4. To assist the Child Safety Officer to draft appropriate Policy and Codes of Conduct relating to the safeguarding of children, young persons, and vulnerable adults.
5. To assist and advise the Child Safety Officer in the oversight of the implementation of Diocesan policies and practices regarding child safety in parishes of the Diocese.
6. To assist the Child Safety Officer in the preparation of materials for parishes and Diocesan audits, based on the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS), for such bodies as Catholic Professional Standards Limited (CPSL).
7. To ensure that the Diocese maintains an accessible and effective point of reference for persons affected by alleged incidents of misconduct such as physical abuse or sexual abuse by Church personnel.

Role and Purpose

The Professional Standards Committee is a formally constituted Committee of the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst, reporting to the Bishop of Sandhurst.

The Committee is an advisory group to the Bishop.

The Committee oversees and monitors policies and practices relating to Professional Standards, and ensures those same policies and practices are embedded in the operational and ministerial practices of the parishes of the Diocese.

The Child Safety Officer reports to the Chair of the Professional Standards Committee on the management and implementation of professional standards and safeguarding practices in the parishes of the Diocese.

On a regular basis the PSC Chair meets with the Child Safety Officer to monitor continuous improvement of the Diocesan Safeguarding Implementation Plan.

Meetings

The Committee meets at least three times a year, with additional meetings organised on a needs basis.

A quorum of the Committee consists of the Chair and three members.

Since it is an advisory body to the Bishop, any advice to him would be by way of the consensus of the members.

Membership

There are seven members of the Committee, including the Chair, all appointed by the Bishop.

The Bishop of Sandhurst is not a member of the Committee.

All appointments to the Committee are made by the Bishop acting on recommendations made to him by the Chair and the current members of the Committee.

Membership of the Committee is drawn from key bodies in the Diocese (Catholic Education Sandhurst, CatholicCare Sandhurst), as well as a person of legal experience and/or offender management. Membership therefore should be drawn from such fields as law, public health, Catholic education, parishes, clergy, and social work.

At least one member of the Committee should be clergy.

The Child Safety Officer is a member of this Committee (ex-officio).

The Diocesan Archivist and Professional Standards Officer is a member of this Committee (ex-officio).

Membership of the Committee is for a three-year term, renewable.

The Diocese arranges for secretarial support for Committee meetings.

Contacts

Chair of the Professional Standards Committee

Tel: 5441 2544

Email: professionalstandards@sandhurst.catholi.org.au

Child Safety Officer of the Diocese

Tel: 0438 951 010


Email: childsafety@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

Professional Standards Officer, Diocesan Archives

Tel: 03 5445 3611

Email: archives@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

1. Approval

Approved by	Signature	Date
Bishop Shane Mackinlay – V. 1		4 July 2020

2. Revision History

Version	Date	Revised By	Description of Revision	Next Review
V. 1	27/05/2020	Professional Standards Committee	New policy	27/05/2022