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| KILMORE – St PatrickBROADFORD – Our Lady Help of ChristiansWALLAN - Our Lady of the WayWANDONG – St Michael | StPatSymbol3 | **Post:** 37 Sutherland St, Kilmore, 3764**Phone:** 5782 1084**Email:** kilmore@cam.org.au**Website:** [pol.org.au/kilmore/Home.aspx](http://pol.org.au/kilmore/Home.aspx)**Parish Priest:** Fr Grant O’Neill**Parish Secretary**: Janette Hinchcliffe |

**Child Protection in St Patrick’s Parish**

**Context and Rationale**

The mission of St Patrick’s Parish is for all members, both adult and children, to work together to provide for the growth of each individual by building positive relationships, mutual respect and responsibility within a secure and supportive structure. This draws on fundamental Gospel values of the intrinsic worth and dignity of each person and of service to others: "*Love one another as I have loved you*" (Jn 13:34).

Within St Patrick’s Parish we are committed to providing a safe environment for all. Each member of the St Patrick’s Parish community shares the collective responsibility to develop positive relationships and to ensure every member feels safe, supported and valued at all times.

**The Victorian Child Safe Standards**

The Victorian Child Safe Standards comprise seven (7) **Standards** and three (3) **Principles.**

The seven (7) Standards are as follows:

**Standard 1**: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.

**Standard 2:** A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.

**Standard 3:** A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

**Standard 4:** Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

**Standard 5:** Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

**Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

**Standard 7:** Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

In addition to the seven (7) **Standards**, the Parish is required to take into consideration the following three (3) **Principles** as part of our response to each Standard:

**Principle 1:** promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;

**Principle 2:** promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; and

**Principle 3:** promoting the safety of children with a disability.

To assist organisations interpret each of the Standards the Victorian Government has published a guide titled **An overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards**. In addition, the Minister for Education has published Ministerial Order No. 870 that prescribes certain matters with which registered Parishes in Victoria must comply as part of their registration requirements.

St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has established and implemented a Child Protection Program in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

The table below sets out each Standard with a summary of how we comply with that Standard.

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| **Standard** | **Short description**  | **How St Patrick’s Catholic Parish applies this Standard** |
| **1** | Organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church complies with this Standard in a number of ways including:* the continued development of this Child Protection Program, our **Child Protection and Safety Policy** and **Child Safety Code of Conduct**;
* each Board member, staff member and Direct Contact Volunteer having to complete **Child Protection Training** which provides information with respect to key risk indicators of child abuse and reporting procedures;
* establishing **clear guidelines for reporting** child abuse concerns; and
* creating an environment supportive of children from **culturally diverse backgrounds** and **children with disabilities**.
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| **2** | A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has developed and implemented a **Child Protection and Safety Policy** that describes the key elements of our approach to child protection as well as an overarching set of principles guiding the development of policies and procedures to protect children from child abuse. Our Child Protection and Safety Policy is published through various mediums including our public website. |
| **3** | A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has created a plain English **Child Safety Code of Conduct** which specifies appropriate standards of behaviour for adults towards students in all Parish environments. |
| **4** | Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has created **child safe human resources practices** including those relating to: * **Recruitment, Selection & Screening**
* **Our Working with Children Checks Policy**
* **Child Protection Training**
* **Our Child Safe Culture**
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| **5** | Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has established simple and accessible procedures for anyone to report a child abuse concern internally to one of the Parish's **Child Protection Officers**.St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has developed and implemented procedures for Board members, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers for responding to allegations and disclosures of child abuse, or suspected child abuse, including procedures for support following a disclosure by a student. Refer to our **Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse**.Reporting procedures for Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Indirect Contact Volunteers, parents/guardians and other community members are included in our **Child Protection and Safety Policy** which is available on our public website. Age appropriate reporting procedures for students are developed through our **pastoral care program**. |
| **6** | Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of abuse | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has adopted a risk management approach to child safety. **Key risk indicators of child abuse** are documented in our Child Protection Program and also included in our **Child Protection Training**.The Parish has developed a number of strategies, policies and procedures to create a risk-based approach to child safety and protection. Refer to **Child Protection Risk Management**. |
| **7** | Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children | St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Church has developed strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children including policies and procedures related to age appropriate **pastoral care** and supporting **children with disabilities** and **children from culturally diverse backgrounds.** |

**Implementation of Child Safe Standards**

The Child Safe Standards Implementation Action Plan is an ongoing responsibility and priority which involves, but is not limited to:

• inclusion as a regular agenda item at council meetings to facilitate communication and consultation on all matters relating to child safety;

• annual induction into the Parish’s child safety requirements;

• annual refresher on professional and legal obligations and responsibilities relating to child safety;

• annual refresher and acknowledgement of the Parish’s code of conduct requirements