

St Paul Apostle Parish Safeguarding Statement of Commitment



One Family

St Paul Apostle Parish holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children as a fundamental responsibility of the Church. This commitment is drawn from, and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the dignity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel. A culture of safety within the Church ensures that children can actively and fully participate in the life of the Church and realise their potential in a faith community.

This commitment extends to clergy, employees and volunteers within the parish, **including the sports clubs**, regardless of their role or level of responsibility to act to safeguard children and young people from child abuse.

We are committed to upholding the safety and dignity of each child and young person, and to ensure that they are able to grow and develop in a caring and supportive environment in our Church.

The Catholic Church proclaims that all human life is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation and hope for the flourishing of humanity and society—a message that is at the heart of the Gospel. As such, all in the Catholic Church have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing environments where children are respected, where their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe.

We acknowledge that preventing child abuse requires proactive approaches across policies, procedures and practices consistent with the requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Through these policies, procedures and practices, we strive to prevent abuse in the first instance and to respond effectively and pastorally if abuse does occur.

We are committed to creating a child-safe culture across the Archdiocese that safeguards children and young people from all forms of abuse.

We are resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in the Church are aware of the inherent vulnerability of children and young people, and that they acknowledge their own responsibility to promote the dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe environment.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every person involved in the Catholic Church has an obligation to understand the important and specific role he or she plays, individually and collectively. Together we ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people are at the forefront of everything we do and every decision we make.

As part of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, St Paul Apostle Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

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We are committed to zero tolerance of all forms of child abuse and discrimination, and will always act to safeguard children and young people and report suspected abuse promptly to the appropriate authorities.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne sets clear behavioural expectations and has an overarching commitment to the protection of children and young people from all forms of abuse. All child safety concerns and allegations will be treated seriously and reported in line with our moral and legal obligations as articulated in the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and other Safeguarding of Children and Young People Framework documents.

We are committed to ensuring that all people who have, or may be expected to have, contact with children and young people acknowledge their responsibility to safeguard children and young people from abuse and discrimination.

We acknowledge and welcome diversity in our Church community. We recognise that cultural safety and inclusion serve as protective factors in relation to child safety—particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, and children and young people of diverse sexuality—and are sensitive to the impact these factors may have on child safety.

Declaration

Fr Brendan Connell

Position: Parish Priest

Date: 01/08/2025