

Risen Christ Parish

Safeguarding Committee

24 August 2024

Minutes

Present: Lorraine Furtado, Fr Michael Sierakowski, John Ramsdale, Anne Williams and Peter Williams

1. Apologies: Mark Kulkens, Nika Cseh.

(Mark emailed the committee his comments on each of the agenda items, which were included in discussions throughout the meeting)

2. Prayer and Acknowledgment of Country

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

4. Committee Membership

- **Welcome to Newest Committee Member**
John Ramsdale was introduced and welcomed as the newest member of the Safeguarding Committee. General introduction with each member sharing their stories.
- **Farewell and Thanks to Catherine Bressanutti**
- It was noted that messages of thanks and appreciation have been sent to Catherine for her commitment and contribution to Safeguarding in the parish over many years.
- **Increase Profile of Committee within the Parish**
It was agreed that the Safeguarding Committee should have a higher collective presence within the parish. Hence, the minutes of each meeting will be posted on the parish website and a copy available in the church foyers. In addition, names and photographs of committee members will be located, with the Safeguarding information, in the church foyers.
- **Contact Information**
Need to ensure committee members have telephone contact details for all members.

5. St Vincent De Paul Society

Fr Michael explained the rationale behind including SVDP representation on the Committee. John was invited to speak to the structure, operation and compliance requirements for STVDP.

John noted:

- Box Hill is the State Headquarters for SVDP.
- Montmorency Conference currently has 18 members,
- Eltham Conference has 7 members.
- Visitations are always done in pairs.
- All members have WWCC, Police Checks and undergo SVDP Safeguarding training.
- Operation and management of the Vinnies Stores are not connected to the Parish Conferences.

Post meeting discussions with parishioners who volunteer at the Vinnies Stores, seem to indicate there are differing compliance requirements, that are not as stringent as for the local conferences.

6. Parish Family Groups

Discussion followed on the status of the Passionist Family Groups (PFG), operating within the parish. Peter advised he was approached by leaders of the Montmorency groups, regarding compliance requirements and in particular the need to undertake risk assessments, for each group activity. This latter requirement has created stress within the groups. Peter agreed to attend any future meeting with the groups to help clarify these requirements. Peter also has had discussions with Greensborough Parish regarding this issue.

It was noted that the Passionist Family Group Website clearly states that PFG's operating within a parish fall under the Archdiocesan Safeguarding requirements, which are managed by the local parish. These requirements apply to any PFG volunteers/leader who undertake: training, organising and formation. The PFG are also required to provide a Risk Assessment for all of their regular activities, in accordance with the local parishes Risk Assessment requirements. Liability rests with the Parish.

7. Parish Compliance Issues

- **Current status of compliance**

Peter advised that currently all volunteers in the parish are fully compliant with the Safeguarding requirements, with the exception of 2 SFX volunteers who no longer seem to be volunteering. Fr Michael undertook to speak to these parishioners to clarify.

8. Engaging with Parish Schools

Work continues on developing the formal Safeguarding relationships with our parish primary schools. This is through ongoing engagement with the school principals/Safeguarding Officers of each of the three parish schools.

There are now 4 versions of the video, that welcomes everyone to each weekend Mass. These videos feature student leaders from SFX, HT and OLHC primary schools. Feedback received from parishioners has been generally positive.

9. Parish Response to Standard 1.

Mark had suggested in his emailed notes, amongst other issues, that the committee/parish could consider active support for furthering the Treaty in Victoria. He also asked if the parish collected Census information that would allow the parish to approach local First Nations people to offer support.

A tabled document entitled "The Aboriginal Heritage of the Shire of Eltham was discussed. Consideration of any further action on this document will be discussed at the next meeting.

The need to examine in depth the latest parish Census information was discussed. Peter undertook to speak to Kate Kogler, as to how best access this information.

10. Other Business

- **Advent 2024**

Brief discussion followed on pre-planning of Safeguarding activities for Advent 2024. It was agreed that we will following the same general format as used last year. This issue will be discussed in more depth at the next meeting.

- **Child Safety Week/Safeguarding Sunday**

Whilst the parish concentrates on celebrating and promoting Safeguarding over Advent. It was agreed that Peter will arrange for suitable posters to be displayed in the church foyers and a notice to be included in the parish bulletin.

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Saturday 9 November 2024.