National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

ACSL
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING LTD

A safe Church for everyone

COMPARISON BETWEEN NCSS, NATIONAL PRINCIPLES, ROYAL COMMISSION CHILD SAFE STANDARDS & ROYAL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table compares the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and its criteria, with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations key action areas, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's Child Safe Standards core components and recommendations made by the Royal Commission to Religious Institutions (and the Catholic Church specifically) which have been incorporated into the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 1	National Principle 1	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 1	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Committed leadership, governance and culture** *Child safeguarding is embedded in the entity's leadership, governance and culture*	*Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture*	*Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture*	
	1.1 The entity publicly commits to child safeguarding and takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse.	1.1 The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.	a. The institution publicly commits to child safety and leaders champion a child safe culture.	
	1.2 A child safeguarding culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the entity from the top down and bottom up.	1.2 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and the bottom up.	b. Child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels of the institution.	16.37 Leaders of religious institutions should ensure that there are mechanisms through which they receive advice from individuals with relevant expertise on all matters relating to child sexual abuse and child safety.
	1.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of a Child Safeguarding Policy across the entity's activities.	1.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.		
	1.4 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for personnel on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.	1.4 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.	d. Staff and volunteers comply with a code of conduct that sets clear behavioural standards towards children.	16.49 Codes of conduct in religious institutions should explicitly and equally apply to people in religious ministry and lay people. 7.8 Code of Conduct requirements (unacceptable behaviours towards children; reporting of breaches; protections for those who report)

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1.5 The entity has risk management strategies focusing on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children.	1.5 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.	c. Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children.	
1.6 Personnel understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.	1.6 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.	e. Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.	8.1 To allow for delayed disclosure of abuse by victims and take account of limitation periods for civil actions for child sexual abuse, institutions that engage in child-related work should retain, for at least 45 years, records relating to child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred. 8.4 Principles for records and recordkeeping (creating and keeping full and accurate records is integral part of leadership, governance and culture; full and accurate records created for all incidents, responses and decisions affecting child safety; records maintained appropriately; records only disposed of in accordance with law or policy; individuals' rights to access, amend or annotate records about themselves recognised to fullest extent)

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 2	National Principle 2	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 2	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Children are safe, informed and participate** *Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*	*Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*	*Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*	
	2.1 Children are informed about their rights, including safety, information and participation.	2.1 Children and young people are informed about all their rights, including to safety, information, and participation.	a. Children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decision that affect their lives.	
	2.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and less isolated.	2.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.	b. The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and be less isolated.	
	2.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and families may be offered access to abuse prevention programs and related information that is age appropriate.	2.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children may be offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age appropriate way.	c. Children can access sexual abuse prevention programs and information.	16.40 Wherever a religious institution has children in its care, those children should be provided with age-appropriate prevention education that aims to increase their knowledge of child sexual abuse and build practical skills to assist in strengthening self-protective skills and strategies.
	2.4 Personnel are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.	2.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.	d. Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to communicate and raise their concerns.	

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 3	National Principle 3	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 3	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Partnering with families, carers and communities** *Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safeguarding.*	*Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.*	*Families and communities are informed and involved.*	
	3.1 Families and carers participate in decisions affecting their child.	3.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.	a. Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child and participate in decisions affecting their child.	
	3.2 The entity engages and openly communicates with families, carers and communities about its child safeguarding approach, and relevant information is accessible.	3.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.	b. The institution engages in open, two-way communication with families and communities about its child safety approach and relevant information is accessible.	16.41 Each religious institution should make provision for family and community involvement by publishing all policies relevant to child safety on its website, providing opportunities for comment on its approach to child safety, and seeking periodic feedback about the effectiveness of its approach to child safety.
	3.3 Families, carers and communities have a say in the entity's policies and practices.	3.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.	c. Families and communities have a say in the institution's policies and practices.	
	3.4 Families, carers and communities are informed about the entity's operations and governance.	3.4 Parents, caregivers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.	d. Families and communities are informed about the institution's operations and governance.	
	3.5 The entity takes a leadership role in raising community awareness of the dignity and rights of all children.			

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 4	National Principle 4	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 4	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Equity is promoted and diversity is respected** *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*	*Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*	*Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account.*	
	4.1 The entity actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and backgrounds, and provides support and responds effectively to those who are vulnerable.	4.1 The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people's diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.	a. The institution actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities.	
	4.2 All children have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.	4.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.	b. All children have access to information, support and complaints processes.	
	4.3 The entity pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and children of diverse sexuality.	4.3 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.	c. The institution pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5	National Principle 5	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 5	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Robust Human Resource management** *People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safeguarding values in practice.*	*People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.*	*People working with children are suitable and supported.*	
	5.1 Recruitment, including advertising, interview questions, referee checks and pre-employment screening, emphasises child safeguarding.	5.1 Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasises child safety and wellbeing.	a. Recruitment, including advertising and screening, emphasises child safety.	
	5.2 Relevant personnel (including all seminarians, clergy and religious) have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.	5.2 Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.	b. Relevant staff and volunteers have Working With Children Checks.	
	5.3 Personnel receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their child safeguarding responsibilities, including reporting obligations.	5.3 All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.	c. All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their child safety responsibilities, including reporting mechanisms.	16.36 Each religious institution in Australia should ensure that its religious leaders are provided with leadership training both pre- and post-appointment, including in relation to the promotion of child safety.
	5.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safeguarding.	5.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.	d. Supervision and people management have a child safety focus.	

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5	National Principle 5	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 5	Royal Commission Recommendations
5.5 Robust processes exist for screening candidates before and during seminary and religious formation. Robust processes are implemented for ongoing formation, support and supervision of clergy and religious.			16.21 Establish a national protocol for screening candidates before and during seminary or religious formation, as well as before ordination or the profession of religious vows. 16.22 Establish a mechanism to ensure bishops and religious superiors draw upon broad-ranging professional advice in their decision-making, … in relation to the admission of individuals to: - seminaries and houses of formation - ordination and/or profession of vows 16.25 All people in religious or pastoral ministry undertake mandatory, regular professional development; undertake mandatory professional supervision (also 16.45); undergo performance appraisals 16.42 Candidates for religious ministry undergo external psychological testing, including psychosexual assessment … 16.44 All people in religious or pastoral ministry, are subject to effective management and oversight and undertake annual performance appraisals
5.6 Seminary and formation programs for clergy and religious have curriculum to build the knowledge and skills of candidates to understand and lead child safeguarding initiatives.			16.23 Review Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis: program for priestly formation and all other guidelines for formation of priests, deacons and those in pastoral ministry, to explicitly address issue of child sexual abuse and best practice prevention; religious institutes review and revise their norms and guidelines for formation to explicitly address issue of child sexual abuse and best practice prevention

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5	National Principle 5	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 5	Royal Commission Recommendations
			16.43 Ensure that candidates for religious ministry undertake minimum training on child safety and related matters including: equip with understanding of the Standards; educate on boundaries, ethics, policies, complaint handling, child development, nature, indicators and impacts of child sexual abuse
5.7 Credentialing and movement of seminarians, clergy and religious is appropriately managed.			16.58 Consider establishing a national register which records limited but sufficient information to assist affiliated institutions identify and respond to any risks to children that may be posted by people in religious or pastoral ministry
5.8 Entities which receive overseas clergy and religious for work in ministry have targeted programs for the screening, induction, professional supervision and development of these individuals.			16.46 Religious institutions that receive people from overseas to work in religious or pastoral ministry, should have targeted programs for the screening, initial training and professional supervision and development of those people

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 6	National Principle 6	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 6	Royal Commission Recommendations
Effective complaints management *Processes for raising concerns and complaints are responsive, understood, accessible and used by children, families, carers, communities and personnel*	*Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.*	*Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused.*	
6.1 The entity has an effective Complaints Handling Policy and procedures which clearly outline the roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, reporting obligations and record keeping requirements.	6.1 The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.	b. The institution has an effective complaint handling policy and procedure which clearly outline roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints and obligations to act and report.	7.2 Provide mandatory reporters with access to experts who can provide timely advice on child sexual abuse reporting obligations 7.7 Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused, institutions should have a clear, accessible and child-focused complaint handling policy and procedure that sets out how the institution should respond to complaints of child sexual abuse. The complaint handling policy and procedure should cover: - making a complaint; responding to a complaint; investigating a complaint; providing support and advice; achieving systemic improvements following a complaint 8.1 Institutions that engage in child related work should retain, for at least 45 years, records relating to child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred 16.39 Policy relating to management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse

Left sidebar (rotated): Criteria / Key action areas / Core components

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 6	National Principle 6	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 6	Royal Commission Recommendations
6.2 The entity has a child-focused complaints handling system that is understood by children, families, carers and personnel.	6.2 Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, staff, families and volunteers, and are culturally safe.	a. The institution has a child-focused complaint handling system that is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families.	7.7 Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused, institutions should have a clear, accessible and child-focused complaint handling policy and procedure that sets out how the institution should respond to complaints of child sexual abuse. The complaint handling policy and procedure should cover: - making a complaint; responding to a complaint; investigating a complaint; providing support and advice; achieving systemic improvements following a complaint
6.3 Complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.	6.3 Complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.	c. Complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly and thoroughly, and reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.	16.51 All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, upon receiving a complaint of child sexual abuse, an initial risk assessment is conducted to identify and minimise any risks to children 16.52 All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, if a complaint of child sexual abuse against a person in religious ministry is plausible, and there is a risk that person may come into contact with children in the course of their ministry, the person be stood down from ministry while the complaint is investigated 16.55 Any person in religious ministry who is the subject of a complaint of child sexual abuse which is substantiated on balance of probabilities, or who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, should be permanently removed from ministry, and steps taken to prohibit the person from in any way holding

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			themselves out to be a person with religious authority
			16.56 Any person in religious ministry convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should be dismissed from the priesthood and/or dispensed from his or her vows as a religious
6.4 The entity has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of concerns and complaints to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.	6.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.		
6.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.	6.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.		
6.6 The Church Authority ensures mechanisms are in place to care for adult complainants.			
6.7 The Church Authority ensures mechanisms are in place to monitor and support respondents facing allegations.			

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 7	National Principle 7	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 7	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Ongoing education and training** *Personnel are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through information, ongoing education and training.*	*Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.*	*Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.*	
	7.1 Personnel are trained and supported to effectively implement the entity's child safeguarding policies and procedures.	7.1 Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policy.	b. Staff and volunteers receive training on the institution's child safe practice and child protection.	16.36 Each religious institution should ensure that its religious leaders are provided with leadership training both pre- and post-appointment, including in relation to the promotion of child safety 16.47 Each religious institution should require that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including leaders, undertake regular training on the institution's child safe policies and procedures, including external training 16.50 Each religious institution should require all people in religious ministry, leaders, employees, contractors, volunteers, etc to undergo initial and periodic training on its code of conduct …
	7.2 Personnel receive training to recognise the nature and indicators of child abuse, including harmful behaviours by a child towards another child.	7.2 Staff and volunteers receive training to recognise the nature and indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people.	a. Relevant staff and volunteers receive training on the nature and indicators of child maltreatment, particularly institutional child sexual abuse.	16.50 Each religious institution should require all people in religious ministry, leaders, employees, contractors, volunteers, etc to undergo initial and periodic training on its code of conduct …
	7.3 Personnel receive training to enable them to respond effectively to child safeguarding risks, concerns, disclosures and allegations of child abuse.	7.3 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.	c. Relevant staff and volunteers are supported to develop practical skills in protecting children and responding to disclosures.	
	7.4 Personnel receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children.	7.4 Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.		

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 8	National Principle 8	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 8	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Safe physical and online environments** *Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.*	*Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*	*Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.*	
	8.1 Personnel identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.	8.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.	a. Risks in the online and physical environments are identified and mitigated without compromising a child's right to privacy and healthy development.	16.48 Policy for rite of religious confession for children that requires the rite only be conducted in an open space within the clear line of sight of another adult.
	8.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the entity's Code of Conduct and safeguarding policies and procedures.	8.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.	b. The online environment is used in accordance with the institution's code of conduct and relevant policies.	
	8.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by the entity's settings, activities and physical environments.	8.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities and the physical environments.		16.57 Where a religious institution becomes aware that any person attending any of its religious services or activities is the subject of a substantiated complaint of child sexual abuse, or has been convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, the religious institution should: - assess the level of risk posed to children by that perpetrator's ongoing involvement in the religious community - take appropriate steps to manage that risk
	8.4 Entities that contract facilities and services to and from third parties have procurement policies that ensure safeguarding of children.	8.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.		

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 9	National Principle 9	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 9	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Continuous improvement** *Entities regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children safe.*	*Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.*	*Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved*	
	9.1 The entity regularly reviews and improves child safeguarding practices.	9.1 The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.	a. The institution regularly reviews and improves child safe practices.	
	9.2 The entity analyses concerns and complaints to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.	9.2 Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures so as to inform continuous improvement.	b. The institution analyses complaints to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.	
	9.3 The Church Authority reports on the findings of relevant reviews to personnel, children, families, carers and community.	9.3 The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.		

	National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 10	National Principle 10	Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 10	Royal Commission Recommendations
Criteria / Key action areas / Core components	**Policies and procedures support child safety** *Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.*	*Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.*	*Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe.*	
	10.1 Policies and procedures address the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.	10.1 Policies and procedures address all national child safe principles.	a. Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.	
	10.2 Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand.	10.2 Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.	b. Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand.	
	10.3 Best practice policy models and stakeholder consultation inform the development and review of policies and procedures.	10.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development and review of policies and procedures.	c. Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development of policies and procedures.	
	10.4 The Church Authority and leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.	10.4 Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.	d. Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.	
	10.5 Personnel understand and implement the policies and procedures.	10.5 Staff and volunteers understand and implement the policies and procedures.	e. Staff understand and implement the policies and procedures.	