# Benedictine Community of New Norcia

## Safeguarding Audit Report September 2023

National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

Report prepared by:

**ACSL**
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING LTD

*A safe Church for everyone*

**Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd acknowledges the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors and their families, the failure of the Catholic Church to protect, believe and respond justly to children and vulnerable adults, and the consequent breaches of community trust.**

**Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd is committed to fostering a culture of safety and care for children, and adults at risk.**

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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Context

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) was established in 2020, to bring together the work of Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL), the Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards (ACCPS) and the Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR). ASCL is a company limited by guarantee, owned by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Religious Australia, and the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons.

ACSL is committed to fostering a nationally consistent culture of safety and care throughout the Catholic Church in Australia. This includes providing a range of services to support the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS), a framework for the protection and care of adults at risk and children. ACSL maintains the NCSS, undertakes audits and reviews of Church entities, and publishes reports which demonstrate a Church entity's commitment to the NCSS.

ACSL's core values are leadership, integrity, and compassion. These values guide the way we work and inform cultural change within the Catholic Church and the wider community. We take our duty to care for and protect all children and adults at risk seriously and have zero tolerance for abuse of any kind.

This audit report includes the results of the assessment against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards for the Benedictine Community of New Norcia (BCNN or the Community).

## 1.2 Background

The Benedictine Community of New Norcia (the Community) is the only monastic town in Australia and is located 130 km north-east of Perth via the Great Northern Highway. The town comprises a monastery, a number of former school buildings, a church, a retreat centre, a café, a bakery, wells, art gallery and museum and several installations that acknowledge the contribution of the Aboriginal community that resided within the town. Founded in 1847 by Spanish Benedictine monks, it has remained fundamentally unchanged and has had many purposes over the years; a mission for Aboriginal peoples, a monastery, a boarding school for Indigenous and other children and now as a place of spiritual retreat.

The monks of New Norcia live according to the guidance and rhythms of the Rule of St Benedict, which has been followed by monks since the sixth century AD. Seven periods of prayer based on the Psalms punctuate each day and every person has tasks to perform, which contribute to the upkeep and smooth operation of the Community. The daily program is designed to allow for periods of silence, prayer, work, and the slow, deep reading of scripture and approved texts. There are 10 monks associated with the monastery, of whom six reside at New Norcia. Two monks live in external aged care, one living in Perth for access to medical treatment, one on sick leave and one on exclaustration for vocational discernment. The current Abbot, Fr John Herbert OSB, was installed in 2009.

The Community has lay personnel who work and volunteer in various capacities throughout the town. The Community runs guided tours for the public and there are several types of accommodation which can be hired for retreats or other occasions. Since the first audit in 2019, the Community has ceased accommodation for school groups, however the town is regularly visited by school groups for day trips.

The Community has been assessed through ACSL's Risk-based Audit and Review Framework as a "Full-Audit" Church entity for application of the NCSS (Working with Children and Adults at Risk). The audit assessed BCNN for both Children and Adults at Risk. There are 10 NCSS Standards, 48 NCSS Criteria and 104[1] NCSS

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[1] Of the 104 NCSS Indicators applicable to entities undergoing audit, 4 of these are not relevant to Benedictine Community of New Norcia

Indicators that apply to BCNN. For further details of the NCSS risk-based framework and the standards applicable to each entity type, visit the [ACSL website](#)..

Our recommendations for improvement, including BCNN's management responses, are included in Section 2 of this report.

The full audit report is also publicly available on the Publications and Reports page of the [ACSL website](#).

## 1.3    Audit Approach

The purpose of the NCSS is to build a culture of shared responsibility for safeguarding and to ensure that policies, practices, and codes of behaviour work together to prevent, detect, and respond appropriately to potential or actual incidents of child abuse.

### 1.3.1    The first Audit in 2019

The 2019 audit scope, which assessed the extent to which the Community had implemented the child-focused NCSS Edition 1, included:

- interviews, observations and enquiry with BCNN leadership members and relevant personnel;
- documentation and policy review;
- assessment of the design of safeguarding controls implemented by BCNN;
- testing of the operation of safeguarding controls implemented by BCNN; and
- 25% of the Monks were interviewed.

The Community undertook an NCSS audit in 2019 and were assessed as having fully implemented in the implementation of 105 (99%) of the 106 indicators relevant to their ministries. The 2019 Audit made two Priority 2 (medium rated) recommendations. There were no Priority 1 (high rated) or Priority 3 (low rated recommendations). The two (medium rated) recommendations were implemented in 2021.

### 1.3.2    2023 Audit

In August 2023 ACSL completed a review audit of the Community, providing an opportunity for the Community to be assessed on its safeguarding efforts since 2019. This second audit assessed safeguarding practices for both children and adults at risk, in line with NCSS Edition 2.

During the period 2019 – 2023, Western Australia closed its borders to interstate travellers, and while the Community remained partially operational, the virtual lockdown provided a timely opportunity for the Community to consider its Safeguarding Risk Management Strategy and policies and make significant changes to the Community's operations.

The 2023 audit scope included:

- Audit activities at the administrative centre.
- interviews, observations and enquiry with the Community leadership, including their Safeguarding Committee and relevant ministerial personnel.
- A safeguarding inspection site visit of the Community facilities in New Norcia.
- A review of key safeguarding documents, policies and procedures.
- Assessment of the design and testing of the operation of safeguarding controls implemented by BCNN; and
- Interviews were held with 25% of personnel.

The audit commenced with a review of the Community's self-assessment completed on the NCSS Self-Assessment Portal, followed by a desktop audit in June 2023. A site visit was conducted from August 27 -29, 2023. This report was completed in September 2023.

The format of this audit report for BCNN differs from the initial 2019 Audit Report and other ACSL Audit reports. As a subsequent or second audit, it was agreed by BCNN and ACSL that presenting overall findings and recommendations would be more helpful to strengthening safeguarding practices in the Community. ACSL acknowledges the significant work the Community has undertaken in meeting its safeguarding responsibilities. As a second audit against the NCSS, this report has a descriptive focus which details findings whilst suggesting improvements. The findings follow from in-depth interviews and the site visit to describe how safeguarding practices are implemented and offer some additional safeguarding recommendations, in line the Community's commitment to continuous improvement.

## 1.4    Disclaimer

The information contained in this report is based on evidence provided by the Benedictine Community of New Norcia (BCNN) and its representatives at the time of the assessment and where applicable any further subsequent information BCNN has supplied through the reporting process.

Certification issued by *Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited* (ACSL) does not guarantee the safety, quality or acceptability of a participating organisations, its services or programs, or that legislative and funding requirements are being, or will be, met.

Signed:

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Dr David Treanor
Manager Audit and Review

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Dr Ursula Stephens
Chief Executive Office

# 2.     Overall audit findings

Assessment of the implementation of NCSS has been determined using a four-point maturity scale[2].

Our assessment indicates that Community has fully implemented and embedded a culture of safeguarding throughout the Community. Some recommendations are a set of further practical safeguarding strategies intended to enhance and support exiting practices. These recommendations are Priority three (low rated) recommendations.

The key findings from the audit are summarised below.

**NCSS Standard 1 – Committed leadership, governance and culture**

A culture of safeguarding is embedded in the life and activities of the New Norcia community. There is an overt acknowledgement of the need for reconciliation and restorative justice, following the neglect and abuse revealed through the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Community has attempted to respond pastorally by listening 'with the ear of the heart' and through offering apologies and assistance while working to ensure the safety and dignity of all children and adults at risk.

The programs in place are underpinned by the key principles of restorative justice. There are numerous acknowledgements (for example, plaquettes) that individuals, families, and the community have been harmed and need restoration. These acknowledgements have been developed in close consultation with them, in keeping with the obligations held by the Benedictine Community to make things right as much as possible. The justice process belongs in the community and there is ongoing commitment to healing, recovery, accountability, and change. All New Norcia staff have received training to manage unintended responses or reactions to their programs and displays (such as re-traumatisation) that may be triggered when visitors tour the community.

BCNN is located approximately 2 hours' drive of Perth in a rural location, a by-pass road means there is less traffic and those who stay or visit the Community can experience a stillness or quietness which contributes to the Community being a place that enacts the word 'Pax' (English 'peace') which is integral to the charisma of the Community.

The Community has a strong framework around risk management with risk assessments having now been completed for their ministry activities. This has resulted in significant changes to the operations of the Community in recognition of the safeguarding risk presented as the number of tourists visiting the community increases.

**NCSS Standard 2 – Children are safe, informed and participate**

The Community has developed an educational program for student groups visiting the Centre. As part of their safeguarding risk mitigation strategy there is a specified teacher-student ratio required and the expectation of full supervision of student groups. The Community no longer hosts overnight camps for people under 18 years**.**

As the Community also has a parish, children are encouraged to participate in activities that promote safeguarding and provide feedback to the parish safeguarding officers on issues that impact them.

**NCSS Standard 3 – Partnering with families, carers and communities**

**NCSS Standard 4 – Equity is promoted, and diversity is respected**

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[2] Refer Appendix A for definitions of the maturity scale used for the Compliance Assessment.

As many of BCNN's paid personnel continue to work and live in the New Norcia parish, the engagement with families and community is strong. This includes receiving constructive feedback from families on BCNN's safeguarding practices.

Discussions with personnel and documentation review at BCNN confirm their commitment to and awareness of safeguarding practices. Moreover, child-friendly posters and statutory pamphlets on reporting safeguarding concerns information are displayed in the all the public areas to inform families, carers and communities about their rights and to provide age-appropriate information for children to raise concerns or complaints.

The community continues to consult closely with the New Norcia Aboriginal Corporation. Several vibrant exhibitions have been designed and installed around the site. Aboriginal families with a connection to New Norcia are invited to record their connection in a dynamic display. Books on local Aboriginal language, history and culture have been published, and liturgical events and reunions have been celebrated, all in the spirit of preservation, reconciliation and ongoing conversation.

ACSL has provided suggestions to the Community to further enhance their safeguarding practices when engaging with children, adults, families and communities.

These include:

1. Introducing a system to directly capture the voices and opinions of young people and adults at risk, for example, tablets/kiosks to enable visitor to provide direct feedback to BCNN.
2. Adding a safeguarding question to the questionnaire sent when tours are booked.
3. Developing a Code of Conduct for students to be signed by them prior to their visit.
4. Further consideration of inclusive signage and developing a safeguarding video that includes signing and captions.
5. Installation of CCTV into the Art Gallery and Museum.

**NCSS Standard 5 – Robust human resource management**

The Community's recruitment policy and procedures include appropriate safeguarding elements. The monks who are engaged in active ministry have the appropriate WWCC and national police checks. Paid personnel and volunteers have appropriate WWCC and national police checks.

The Community has a policy for professional/pastoral supervision, and these requirements are in place, monitored and recorded for relevant personnel.

All employees have received the appropriate safeguarding induction and interview questions include the topic of safeguarding.

Currently the Community does not have candidates in initial formation. However, the monastery has a rigorous assessment process which includes an independent psychological report**.**

**NCSS Standard 6 – Effective complaints management**

ACSL's review confirms the 2019 audit findings that indicated that the Community has implemented formal and robust procedures for complaints handling and response to complaints, with formal risk management practices in place to address potential incidents or concerns.

The Order is bound by the constitutions and ordinances of the Subiaco-Cassinese Congregation OSB. These constitutions prescribe the office of the Abbot, the admission and formation of candidates, complaint processes and the dismissal of a monk. The ordinances also explain the authority of the Abbot President and the role of pastoral visitations to the monastery. If a monk has a complaint to make against the Abbot, there are also opportunities for him to make a complaint directly to the Abbot President during a pastoral visit.

**NCSS Standard 7 – Ongoing education and training**

The Community has provided safeguarding training to all monks, employees and volunteers, and has a formal program of training in place. Detailed records of attendance at training are maintained.

**NCSS Standard 8 – Safe physical and online environments**

The processes used to manage third party contractors continue to be formal and robust. Regular contractors are required to provide a working with children check, sign the Code of Conduct and participate in a safeguarding induction.

There is active monitoring of internet usage and web browsing by personnel, with firewalls and filters in place which are routinely monitored.

New Norcia is a heritage-listed community and attracts regular visitors, many of whom do not register their intention to visit. Anyone staying overnight in the camping grounds must register at the Visitors Centre. Other accommodation is booked through the online booking system. The Guides and Community advise all registered visitors to exercise appropriate caution as they explore the town.

ACSL recommends that when all bookings are confirmed by email that BCNN provide a copy of the Community's Safeguarding Commitment Statement to the visitor or group.

**NCSS Standard 9 – Continuous improvement**

BCNN has a comprehensive Safeguarding Implementation Plan which includes safeguarding initiatives, goals and strategies. During 2020-2022, the Community has further mitigated safeguarding risk through the installation of alarms and closed-circuit television.

Inclusive practices include the installation of grab rails in bathrooms, disabled bathroom facilities, rails on external stairs, a new toilet block accessible to mobile homes, sealed pathways and distinctive signage. The closure of the public bar in the hostel, and the cessation of overnight camps for students under 18 years, have significantly improved the Community's risk profile.

The Safeguarding Implementation Plan will be updated to include the actions arising from the ACSL audit.

**NCSS Standard 10 – Policies and procedures support child safety**

Key policies and procedures relating to safeguarding requirements are in place and operating effectively.

The table on the following page summarises the overall assessment for each of the Standards.

| National Catholic Safeguarding Standard | # NCSS indicators | Not Relevant to Benedictine Community | Assessment of Compliance | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Managed & measurable | Defined & developed | Initial / Ad hoc | Not addressed |
| 1:   Committed leadership, governance & culture | 17 | 2 | 15 | - | - | - |
| 2:    Children are safe, informed and participate | 6 | - | 6 | | - | - |
| 3:   Partnering with families, carers and communities | 6 | - | 6 | | - | - |
| 4:   Equity is promoted and diversity is respected | 4 | - | 4 | - | - | - |
| 5:   Robust human resource management | 22 | 2 | 20 | - | - | - |
| 6:   Effective complaints management | 19 | - | 19 | - | - | - |
| 7:   Ongoing training & education | 11 | - | 11 | - | - | - |
| 8:   Safe physical and online environments | 7 | - | 7 | | - | - |
| 9:   Continuous improvement | 6 | | 6 | - | - | - |
| 10: Policies and procedures support child safety | 6 | - | 6 | - | - | - |
| TOTAL | 104 | 4 | 100 | | - | - |
| | | | (100%) | | | |

Audit recommendations are classified according to priority and urgency for remediation[3.]

There are no Priority 1 (high rated) or Priority 2 (medium rated) audit recommendations for the BCNN.

There are two Priority 3 (low rated) recommendations, which are detailed in Section 3 of this report. Each recommendation also contains The Community's response to the audit findings, including associated management actions.

We would like to thank Abbot John and the Benedictine Community leadership team, and all personnel who were involved in the audit for their cooperation and assistance and congratulate them on their efforts.

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[3] Refer Appendix B for definitions of the Priority ratings used for audit recommendations.

# 3.    Recommendations

*Standard 2: Children and adults are safe, informed and participate.*

| Recommendation #1 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Criterion 2.1 – Children and adults at risk engaged in an entity's ministry and/or services are informed about their rights, including safety, decision making, participation and how a complaint will be managed. | | Priority 3 |
| Details of finding | The following points were noted: <ol><li>The person/group who books the tour provides feedback to BCNN rather than each person who comes to BCNN.</li><li>The person/group who books the tour is provided with a follow up questionnaire.</li><li>There were incidents of unacceptable and risky behaviour of visiting students towards property noted by some personnel.</li></ol> | |
| Recommendation | ACSL recommends that BCNN investigate feedback options for students on school tours. ACSL also recommends BCNN confirms with School administrators what the acceptable standards of behavior are for their student visits. | |
| Agreed Action | BCNN will investigate feedback options for students on school tours to provide appropriate and meaningful feedback. In addition, BCNN will explore what options can be developed to ensure an appropriate code of conduct is observed by visitors to New Norcia. | |
| Responsibility | Abbot | |
| Due date | 30 September 2024 | |

*Standard 8 Safe physical and online environment*

| Recommendation #2 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Criterion 8.3 -  Risk management plans address the range of settings, activities, and physical environments in which ministry and/or services occur. | | Priority 3 |
| Details of finding | The following points were noted: <ol><li>Every person/group that books the visits/hires a BCNN facility is sent a survey questionnaire inquiring about their visitor experience however there are no safeguarding questions asked in the survey.</li></ol> | |
| Recommendation | <ol><li>BCNN include a safeguarding question in the questionnaire.</li><li>Booking confirmations include the Community's Safeguarding Commitment Statement.</li></ol> | |
| Agreed Action | BCNN will include a safeguarding questionnaire in their survey and also include the Community's Safeguarding Commitment Statement when a booking is made. | |
| Responsibility | Abbot | |
| Due date | 30 September 2024 | |

# Appendix A

## COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT SCALE

The compliance assessment of the entity's performance against each indicator will be determined using a four-point scale, as follows:

| | General | Processes | People/Resources |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Not Addressed** | • The entity has not addressed the required Indicator or is unable to demonstrate that the requirements of the indicator are in place and/or are operating effectively and continuously. | • Processes are non-existent.<br>• Processes exist however the specific requirements of the indicator have not been addressed. | • No resources have been assigned. |
| **Initial/Ad-Hoc** | • The entity has commenced to address the indicator, however processes are ad-hoc or are applied on a case-by-case basis. | • Some relevant processes have been implemented which align with the requirements of the indicator, however they are:<br>   • siloed; and/or<br>   • undocumented; and/or<br>   • inconsistent; and/or<br>   • lack clarity. | • Capabilities vary across the entity.<br>• Resources are not formally assigned. |
| **Defined and Developed** | • The entity has addressed the indicator and is in the process of implementing the requirements across the entity. | • Relevant processes have been defined and developed, however are yet to be rolled out across the full operations of the entity. | • Resources have been assigned and responsibilities defined, however there is no formal training or communication of standard procedures, and it is unlikely that deviations will be detected. |
| **Managed and Measurable** | • The entity has demonstrated that Indicator requirements are formally embedded and are operating effectively and continuously. | • Relevant processes are integrated and coordinated, including remote operations and activities. | • Personnel have been trained to detect and report on deviations or break downs in processes.<br>• Resources have been assigned to monitor and address non-compliance. |

# Appendix B

## AUDIT FINDING PRIORITIES

The following priority ratings have been used to assess findings arising from this audit:

| **Priority 1** | **Priority 2** | **Priority 3** |
|---|---|---|
| Gaps or control weaknesses have been identified resulting in non-compliance with the indicator.<br><br>Mitigation actions are required to be developed and initiated as soon as practicable but no later than 30 days from the issuance of this report, with expected resolution within 3 months. | Progress has been made with respect to implementation of the required indicator, however full compliance is yet to be achieved.<br><br>Mitigation actions are required to be developed and initiated within 3 months or earlier from the issuance of this report, with expected resolution within 6-9 months. | Issues have been identified which represent minor procedural weaknesses or improvement opportunities with respect to the operation of the indicator.<br><br>Expected resolution is within 12 months or earlier from the issuance of this report. |

# Appendix C

## GLOSSARY

The definitions of terms used in the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards consider Australian State, Territory and federal laws and relevant regulations, canon law, information from the Holy See, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse published by the United Nations in 2017.

The glossary does not have any legal force and is meant only to serve as a reference tool for the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. All terms and definitions are to be read in the context of these Standards alone.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Abuse** | when used throughout the NCSS document this is an inclusive term covering both child and adult abuse |
| **Abuse of Power** | means the abuse of position, function or duty to take advantage of another. This can take many forms and include situations where a person has power over another person by virtue of their relationship (e.g. employer and employee, teacher and student, coach and athlete, parent or guardian and child, clergy/religious and parishioner) and uses that power to their advantage. |
| **Accessible language** | means information is provided in multiple formats for individuals with different levels of English literacy and proficiency, modes of communication, languages, and cognitive abilities. |
| **Adult** | means any person 18 years or older. When used throughout the NCSS document this is an inclusive term referring to all adults, including adults at risk. |
| **Adult abuse** | means the improper treatment of a person that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm. Abuse can come in many forms, such as: physical or verbal maltreatment, neglect, injury, assault, violation, rape, unjust practices, crimes, exploitation, or other types of aggression. <br><br> There are several categories of abuse of adults, such as: <br><br> • Sexual abuse* <br> • Physical abuse* <br> • Emotional/psychological abuse* <br> • Neglect* <br> • Elder abuse* <br> • Financial abuse* <br> • Exploitation* <br> Within the context of the Catholic church and faith-based entities, it is also important to recognise spiritual abuse* as an additional subtype of abuse. |
| **Adult at risk** | means any person aged 18 years and over who is at increased risk of experiencing abuse, such as people: |

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|---|---|
| | • who are elderly<br>• with a disability<br>• who suffer from mental illness<br>• who have diminished capacity<br>• who have cognitive impairment<br>• who have suffered previous abuse<br>• who are experiencing transient risks<br>• who in receiving a ministry or service are subject to a power imbalance<br>• who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander<br>• who are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background<br>• who are of diverse sexuality<br>• who have any other impairment or adversity that makes it difficult for them to protect themselves from abuse. |
| Allegation | means a complaint, still to be verified, claiming, or asserting that someone has committed an act of abuse against a child or adult. The term is used interchangeably and in combination with "complaint". |
| Audit | means a mechanism to assess how a Church Authority, ministry or entity governed by a Church Authority, is implementing the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. |
| Australian Catholic Bishops Conference | means the assembly of Bishops of Australia exercising together certain pastoral offices for the Catholics of Australia. |
| Bishop | means a diocesan bishop or archbishop, the ordinary of an Ordinariate and the prelate of a Personal Prelature of the Latin Church and an eparch of the Eastern Churches |
| Canon law | means the revised code of canon law promulgated by His Holiness Pope John Paul II in 1983 and the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches as promulgated in 1990 and any other universal or legislation promulgated by the competent ecclesiastical authority. |
| Canonical Offence | means canonical crimes[1] of sexual abuse committed by clerics and religious are:<br><br>• forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts;<br>• performing sexual acts with a minor or a vulnerable person[2];<br>• the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by electronic means, of child pornography, as well as by the recruitment of or inducement of a minor or a vulnerable person to participate in pornographic exhibitions.<br><br>[1] The canonical crimes/delicts/offences committed by clerics or religious as stated in Art. 1 §1 a) of Vos Estis Lux Mundi.<br>[2] Definition of vulnerable person as stated in Art. 1 §2 b) of Vos Estis Lux Mundi: "means: any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence". This definition is captured by the term 'Adult at risk' within the NCSS. |
| Catholic Religious Australia | CRA is the conference of major superiors comprising leaders of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life within the Catholic Church in Australia. |
| Certification | means the act of giving official authority or approval and certification of the implementation of the NCSS and permission to use the ACSL Certification symbol. |
| Child/ren | means individuals under 18 years of age. |
| Child abuse | There are different legal definitions of child abuse in Australia. Definition sourced from the Australian Institute of Family Studies: |

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|---|---|
| | https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reporting-abuse-and-neglect

Child abuse refers to any behaviour or treatment by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child. Such behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e., neglect) and commission. Child abuse and neglect is commonly divided into five subtypes:

- physical abuse
- emotional/psychological abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse
- exposure to family violence |
| **Church Authority** | means:

- a diocesan bishop or archbishop, an ordinary of an Ordinariate and the prelate of a Personal Prelature of the Latin Church and an eparch of an eparchy of an Eastern Church.
- the competent authority, howsoever titled, exercising the ministry of governance for religious institutes in Australia in accordance with their Constitutions; or
- for ministerial PJPS the competent authority in accordance with the statutes.
- for any other Church entity, the senior authority within the organization in accordance with its rules. |
| **Church Protocols** | means official procedures or system of rules which govern the affairs of the Catholic Church in Australia, for example, Vos Estis Lux Mundi and the National Response Protocol. |
| **Civil Standard** | the most common standard of proof relates to civil proceedings, which is the balance of probabilities (incorporating the principles from Briginshaw v Briginshaw) – which means it is more probable than not that what the person says happened is true (in criminal cases, the standard is proof beyond reasonable doubt). |
| **Clergy** | includes bishops, priests and deacons. |
| **Clergy and religious from countries other than Australia** | means any cleric or member of a religious institute who is specifically recruited or welcomed from overseas by a Church Authority or entity. |
| **Cleric** | a member of the clergy. |
| **Clericalist/ism** | means an attitude toward clergy/religious characterised by an excessive deference and an assumption of their moral superiority. Pope Francis has said that it occurs when "clerics feel they are superior, [and when] they are far from the people." It can be "fostered by priests themselves or by lay persons". |
| **Cognitive impairment** | means when a person has trouble remembering, learning new things, concentrating, or making decisions that affect their everyday life, because of their condition. Some causes of long-term or permanent cognitive impairment include dementia, stroke, or brain injury.
For further information see: https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/cognitive-impairment |
| **Complainant** | means any person who makes a complaint that may include any allegation, suspicion, concern, or report of a breach of the entity's Code of Conduct. A |

| | complaint may also include disclosures made to an institution that may be about, or relate to, abuse in the entity's context. |
|---|---|
| **Conflicts of interest** | means situations (perceived or actual) where a conflict arises between a person's official duties and their private interests, which could influence the performance of those official duties. Such conflict generally involves opposing principles or incompatible wishes or needs and may occur when personnel function in multiple roles. |
| **Consecrated Life/Institute of Consecrated Life** | is an association of faithful in the Catholic Church erected by canon law whose members profess the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience by vows or other sacred bonds (as defined in the Code of Canon Law under canons 573–730).<br>Apart from being a member of an institute, consecrated life may also be lived individually; the Catholic Church recognises, as forms of individual consecrated life that are not members of institutes, namely that of hermits and consecrated virgins. |
| **Cultural safety** | means an environment that is safe for people of all ethnicities and cultural identities: where there is no assault, challenge, or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge, and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening. |
| **Dicastery** | means a department of the Roman Curia. |
| **Dignity or Right to Risk** | refers to enabling individuals the right (or dignity) to take reasonable risks. It recognises that restricting this right can stifle the individual's growth, self-esteem and the overall quality of life:<br>    'Given that an individual's personal dignity is manifested, in part, by their ability to remain autonomous, and being autonomous engenders risk-taking. Inhibiting an individual's ability to take risks erodes their dignity. Dignity of risk is therefore the principle of allowing an individual the dignity afforded by risk-taking, subsequently enhancing their personal growth and quality of life.'<br>(Joseph E Ibrahim and Marie-Claire Davis, 'Impediments to Applying the "Dignity of Risk" Principle in Residential Aged Care Services: "Dignity of Risk" in Residential Aged Care', Australasian Journal on Ageing 32, no. 3 (September 2013): 188–93) |
| **Diminished capacity** | means if an adult needs to make a decision and is unable to carry out any part of this process (as listed below), they have impaired decision-making capacity.<br>There are three elements to making a decision:<br>• understanding the nature and effect of the decision;<br>• freely and voluntarily deciding; and<br>• communicating the decision in some way. |
| **Diocese** | means a diocese, archdiocese, ordinariate or personal prelature of the Latin Church and an eparchy of an Eastern Church. |
| **Disability (persons with)** | means those who have physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. (Article 2, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.) |
| **Diversity** | means a range of people who have various racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience, and interests. |
| **Diverse sexuality** | refers to all the diversities of sex characteristics, sexual orientations, and gender identities, without the need to specify each of the identities, behaviours, or characteristics that form this plurality. |

| | |
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| **Elder abuse** | means a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person. |
| **Emotional abuse (adults)** | is a common form of abuse that occurs in close relationships. Emotional abuse is defined as abuse that occurs when a person is subjected to behaviours or actions aimed at preventing or controlling their behaviour, with the intent to cause them emotional harm or fear, through manipulation, isolation, or intimidation. |
| **Emotional abuse (children)** | Emotional abuse of children refers to a parent or caregiver's inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts towards a child and/or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurturing and emotional availability. Such acts of commission or omission are likely to damage a child's self-esteem or social competence. |
| **Entity** | means a diocese, religious institute, ministerial PJP (including their agencies) or association recognised as Catholic in accord with canon law. |
| **Exploitation** | is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person. It is taking advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain. |
| **Exposure to family violence** | is generally considered to be a form of psychologically abusive behaviour, where a child is present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse, or psychological maltreatment, or is visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour. |
| **Financial abuse** | involves the illegal or improper use or mismanagement of a person's money, property or resources. Stealing, fraud, forgery, embezzlement, forced changes to a will, inappropriate removal of a resident's decision-making powers and misuse of power of attorney are all forms of financial abuse or exploitation. |
| **Formation/program** | means a program preparing individuals for ordination or profession of vows and a life-long journey to the invitation of Christ to proclaim and live the Gospel message, within the life of the Church. |
| **Good Standing** | A person in good standing is regarded as having complied with all their safeguarding obligations, and is not subject to any form of allegation, disciplinary process, sanction suspension. |
| **Grooming (child)** | refers to a pattern of behaviour aimed at engaging a child as a precursor to sexual abuse. It includes establishing a 'special' friendship/relationship with the child. Grooming can include the conditioning of parents and other adults to think that the relationship with the child is 'normal' and positive. |
| **Grooming (adult)** | is the predatory act of manoeuvring another individual into a position that makes them more isolated, dependent, likely to trust, and more vulnerable to abusive behaviour. |
| **Guardian** | refers to the person(s) who has the legal authority to care for the personal and property interests of another person. |
| **Institutional abuse** | means abuse or poor care within an institution or specific care setting. Possible causes of institutional abuse include: |

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| | <ul><li>a "closed" culture within an organisation where transparency is discouraged.</li><li>lack of flexibility and choice for people using the service.</li><li>failure to properly check the backgrounds and interview staff.</li><li>inadequate training.</li><li>lack of safeguarding policies and procedures.</li><li>lack of support of staff by management.</li><li>poor supervision; and</li><li>poor standards of care.</li></ul> |
| **Lay/lay person** | means members of the Catholic Church and Church personnel other than bishops, priests, deacons and religious. |
| **Leaders** | means personnel who are responsible for important governance decisions within a Church entity and/or who lead and coordinate Church improvement initiatives. |
| **Mentor** | means an experienced and trusted advisor or a person who gives a younger or less experienced person help and advice over a period. |
| **Ministerial PJP** | means a legal entity which is constituted a public juridic person in canon law and carries on its mission in the name of the Church, in accordance with its statutes approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority. |
| **Ministry** | means any activity within, or conducted by, an entity, that is authorised by formal appointment and designed to carry out the apostolic and charitable works of the Catholic Church. |
| **NDIS Worker Screening Check** | The NDIS Worker Screening Check is an assessment of whether a person who works, or seeks to work, with people with disability poses a risk to them. The assessment determines whether a person is cleared or excluded from working in certain roles with people with disability.<br>For further information see https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/ndis-worker-screening-check |
| **Neglect (adult)** | is the failure of a carer to provide the necessities of life to a person for whom they are caring. |
| **Neglect (child)** | refers to a failure by a caregiver to provide the basic requirements for meeting the physical and emotional developmental needs of a child. Physically neglectful behaviours include a failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene or medical attention. |
| **Offender** | means a person who has admitted abuse or whose responsibility for abuse has been determined by a court of law (criminal or civil), statutory or Church procedure. |
| **Organisation** | means a ministry and/or service operating under the governance of a recognised authority (such as a legal entity) and/or a Church Authority. |
| **Pastoral care** | means when one person has responsibility for the wellbeing of another or for a faith community. It includes the provision of spiritual advice and support, education, counselling, medical care, and assistance in times of need. All work involving the supervision or education of children and young people is a work of pastoral care. |
| **Personnel (Church personnel)** | means a cleric, religious or other person who is employed by the entity or engaged on a contract, subcontract, voluntary or unpaid basis. |
| **Physical abuse** | is a non-accidental physically aggressive act which results in physical pain or injury, and which may include physical coercion and physical restraint. Physical abuse may be intentional or may be the inadvertent result of physical punishment. |
| **Professional/pastoral supervision** | means a professional activity in which personnel are engaged in reflection and learning, under the guidance of a supervisor. Supervision assists personnel in their |

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| | accountabilities for professional standards, defined competencies for their role and understanding and implementation of organisational policy and procedures. For clerics and religious, professional supervision assists in the maintenance of boundaries of the pastoral relationship and enhances the quality of their ministry. |
| **Protective behaviours program** | Is a type of abuse prevention program and means an age-appropriate structured education program to equip children and young people with the skills and knowledge to enhance their personal safety. |
| **Reflective practice** | is a professional development technique that involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences in applying knowledge to practice. It is expected to be a continuous process, whereby an individual explores an experience to identify what happened and what their role in this experience was, including behaviour, thinking, and related emotions. Reflective practice enables potential changes in approaches to similar future events to be identified, with the aim of improved performance. |
| **Religious institute** | means an entity within the Catholic Church whose members commit themselves through religious vows to lead a life of poverty, chastity and obedience. Societies of apostolic life resemble religious institutes in that their members also live a life in common. They do not take religious vows but live out the apostolic purpose of the group. In these Standards, the term 'religious institutes' is used to include religious institutes, societies of apostolic life and secular institutes. |
| **Religious** | means a member of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life. |
| **Respondent** | means a person against whom a complaint is made. |
| **Review** | means an internal self-assessment of an entity's implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. A review can also be an assessment that forms part of the process of continuous improvement which occurs when following up recommendations made during an audit. |
| **Risk-based audit and Review Framework** | means a framework for assessing the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards that reflects a proportionate response based on the risk profile of the Church Authority. |
| **Risk Profile** | means an assessment against key safeguarding risk factors. |
| **Safeguarding Committee** | means a committee established to advise and support the Church Authority on all matters relating to safeguarding, including the development and implementation of a Safeguarding Implementation Plan and coordinating annual self-audits at a local level. Committee members need relevant and varied professional expertise in relation to safeguarding, child protection, organisational culture and structure, policy development, etc. and include lay women and men. |
| **Safeguarding Culture** | means embedding safeguarding into everything an organisation does. In promoting this culture, young people and adults at risk will understand they will be listened to, supported, and known action will be taken on their behalf. |
| **Safeguarding Commitment Statement** | means a Commitment Statement describing an entity's commitment to keep children and adults safe from harm. It informs the entity's safeguarding culture. |
| **Safeguarding Co-ordinator** | means an individual who champions safeguarding and co-ordinates the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards within an entity. |
| **Safeguarding Implementation Plan** | means a documented plan which articulates actions to be taken across the entity to ensure safeguarding practices are in place. It includes actions, strategies, responsibilities, delegations, and accountabilities, and tracks review and progress. It is overseen by the Safeguarding Committee. |
| **Safeguarding policies and procedures** | means any policies or procedures of the entity that address elements of safeguarding children and adults. For example, but not limited to: |

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| | • recruitment;<br>• risk management;<br>• complaint handling; and<br>• acceptable use of online applications. |
| **Seminarian** | a student in a theological formation and education centre preparing for ordination as a priest. |
| **Seminary** | means a centre for the formation and education of students preparing for ordination. |
| **Sexual abuse (adult)** | Sexual abuse is a form of sexual assault. Sexual abuse includes rape, indecent assault, sexual harassment, and sexual interference. Sexual activity with an adult who is incapacitated by a mental or physical condition (such as dementia) that impairs his or her ability to grant informed consent, is defined as sexual assault/abuse. Sexual assault/abuse includes where by force, threats or abuse of authority an individual commits a canonical offence or forces someone to perform or submit to sexual acts. Sexual assault is a crime. |
| **Sexual abuse (child)** | refers to exposing a child to any form of sexual activity. This may or may not involve physical contact. This may take the form of taking sexually explicit photographs or videos of children, forcing children to watch or take part in sexual acts and forcing or coercing children to have sex or engage in sexual acts with other children or adults. |
| **Spiritual abuse** | means abuse of a person that invokes a person's religious beliefs and faith to perpetrate harm. Spiritual abuse can occur as a secondary experience of abuse when abuse is perpetrated by someone in a position of spiritual authority and trust within the Church a |
| **Substantiated complaint** | means under the civil standard of proof an allegation of abuse for which the investigator finds that sufficient evidence exists to believe that the alleged conduct more likely than not occurred. |
| **Third parties** | means any individual, group or legal entity outside the Church entity who contract services and facilities to or from the Church entity. |
| **Transient Risk** | means short-term risk, experienced by people at different stages in their life: e.g. when someone is vulnerable due to:<br><br>• grief<br>• bereavement<br>• relationship breakdown<br>• homelessness<br>• unemployment<br>• financial hardship |
| **Trauma-informed and victim-centred support** | is a strengths-based framework which is founded on five core principles – safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. Trauma-informed services do no harm: they do not re-traumatise or blame victims for their efforts to manage their traumatic reactions, and they embrace a message of hope and optimism that recovery is possible. In trauma-informed services, trauma survivors are seen as unique individuals who have managed their responses to the experiences as best that they could. |
| **Validation** | means an assessment by ACSL of any self-assessment, review or audit, undertaken to achieve ACSL Certification status. |
| **Working with children check** | means generic term used in the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards to denote the statutory screening requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. There is not yet a single national framework setting out requirements for 'working with children' checks. Each State/Territory in Australia |

| | has its own system. They are one part of a Church entity's recruitment, selection, and screening practices. |
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| **Working with Vulnerable People Check** | means the Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 in the Australian Capital Territory which requires those working with children (and other vulnerable groups) to complete a Working with Vulnerable People Check and be registered before they can commence employment.<br><br>Tasmania has a 'Working with Vulnerable People Check' which requires all employees and volunteers aged 16 and over working in childcare services or other child-related services to apply for a WWVP check.<br><br>To date, only the ACT and Tasmania have this requirement. |