



Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

The Carmelites, Australia & Timor-Leste

Reference	Date approved	Date Last amended	Date of next review	Status
				Endorsed by: Approved by:

1. Purpose

The Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste operate in various ministries within the states of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia in Australia and within the towns of Dili, Hera and Zumalai in Timor-Leste. The ministries in which we are involved are parishes, primary and secondary schools, provincial administration and services, retreat and spirituality centres, a hospital, a seminary, a public library, a boarding house and formation communities. Whilst there is more or less contact with children in these different ministries, some contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults is possible in all of them.

We take seriously our responsibility to deliver a pastoral environment that is caring, nurturing and safe.

We promote equity and respect diversity by:

- actively anticipating children's diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities
- by giving all children access to information, support and complaints processes, and
- paying particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Our Provincial Council approves and endorses the Carmelite Province of Australia and Timor-Leste's commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect.

It is the responsibility of all members of the province as well as staff it directly employs and volunteers who assist them, along with those who support us in ministries that do not answer to any other governing body (e.g. Formation communities, Zumalai Boarding House, Spirituality and Retreat Centres, Carmel Impact, Fundraising Ministry, Library) to:

- protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people;
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside the scope of our operations and services that may have an impact on the children, young people and vulnerable adults to whom we provide a service; and
- create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services.

We expect all within our organisation, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to act to safeguard

children from such harm by:

- adopting the practices and behaviour we have set as our standard when carrying out their roles, and
- reporting any abuse or neglect of which they become aware to our management and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or to police, regardless of whether that abuse is being perpetrated by personnel within our organisation, or by those outside our organisation including those from the child's family, extended family, their family's extended network or strangers.

2. Scope

The Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy applies to all personnel involved with the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste. This includes all members of the province and pre-novices, all Carmelites from other provinces living and working in the province, all employees and volunteers of the province or its ministries or communities.

3. Related documents

The following Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste policies must be considered in relation to this document:

- Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Responding to Child Abuse and Allegations Reporting Policy
- Recruitment and Screening Policy

4. Related legislation

In upholding this Policy, the following legislation must be considered by all Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste personnel:

- comply with all Australian laws in relation to Child Protection and Child Safe Standards for those in Australia and all Timorese laws for those in Timor-Leste;
- uphold the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*

5. Definitions

Definitions are included in Appendix 1.

6. Responsibilities

The Provincial Council is responsible for the development and endorsement of the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy. The role of each entity in relation to the development and compliance of the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy is detailed in the table below.

Entity	Role/Responsibility
Provincial Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the commitment to this Policy and its expectations. • Support policy review on a tri-annual cycle as a minimum or at a time governed by legislation, regulations, or organisational learnings that promote a change to the Policy and all relevant policy or procedural guidelines. • Ensure compliance to the Policy via an inbuilt review mechanism. • Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the development and effective implementation of this policy. • Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of openness and continued improvement and accountability to child protection and member welfare. • Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children, young people and vulnerable adults in support of this Policy and its expectations.
Provincial and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all involved Personnel understand their obligations in accordance with the Safeguarding Children, young people and vulnerable adults Policy and any relevant policy and procedural documentation. This includes induction, a minimum of one compulsory training session, and regular discussion and guidance at supervision and team meetings. • Ensure the Safeguarding Children, young people and vulnerable adults Policy is implemented and adhered to amongst relevant member stakeholders. • Ensure the development and implementation of required internal policy/work procedures and guidelines are in place to support child protection practice in accordance with the expectations of the Safeguarding Children, young people and vulnerable adults Policy. • Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow effective implementation of the Safeguarding Children, young people and vulnerable adults Policy. • Ensure to support Personnel in a joint way with a decision to initiate any form of action to protect a child from abuse, neglect, grooming or exploitation. • Ensure appropriate supports, such as counselling and formal debriefing, are provided for any Personnel involved in a matter relating to responding to a concern for the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person. • Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children, young people and vulnerable adults in support of this Policy. • Proactively share resources and experience in the development of child safe initiatives as they are identified. • Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of continuous improvement and accountability of child protection and member welfare. • Ensure that our Personnel are aware of the appropriate recruitment, screening and employment practices in relation to individuals with specific roles in working, coaching or volunteering with children and families.
All personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a full understanding of the commitments and expectations of this Policy, as well as all other policy relevant to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. • To undertake any induction and training anticipated in this Policy, in relation to policy and procedures relevant to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. • To seek guidance from a supervisor or manager if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this Policy. • To take action to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation.

Entity	Role/Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety

7. Our Commitment

The Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who access our activities, programs, services or facilities. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish a Safeguarding culture and practices. Our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults policies and procedures are: accessible in forms that are easy to understand; have been informed by stakeholder consultation; and are communicated to children, young people and their families, our personnel and the general public. We regularly review our policies, gain endorsement of changes and advise our personnel of changes.

We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

Through our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy we document our clear commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect. We communicate our commitment to all of our personnel and give them access to a copy of our policy.

Our personnel know the behaviour we expect

We ensure that each person involved in our delivery of services to children, young people and vulnerable adults understands their role and the behaviour we expect in relation to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect. We utilise clear position descriptions which clearly state relevant safeguarding requirements. We have a code of conduct, which is approved and endorsed from the highest levels of our organisation that outlines our expectations for behaviour towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our personnel are given a copy of and have access to the code of conduct. Our personnel indicate, in writing, that they have read and are committed to the code of conduct.

We minimise the likelihood of recruiting a person who is unsuitable

We have appropriate measures in place to minimise the likelihood that we will recruit a person who is unsuitable to work / volunteer with children, young people or vulnerable adults. We have recruitment procedures that ensure:

- our safeguarding commitment is communicated to potential applicants for positions
- face-to-face interviews are held which includes safeguarding-related questions
- two professional reference checks are undertaken (where possible in Timor-Leste)
- screening checks are undertaken, including identity, criminal record, working with children checks and qualification checks (where possible in Timor-Leste).

Induction and training is part of our commitment

We provide all new personnel with information during their induction about our commitment to Safeguarding including our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy, code of conduct and child abuse reporting policy. We support ongoing education for our personnel to ensure safeguarding information is provided in an ongoing way.

We encourage the involvement of children, young people and their parents

We provide information to children and their carers (such as brochures, posters, handbooks, guidelines) about:

- our commitment to safeguarding children and their rights
- the behaviour we expect of our personnel and of themselves
- our policy about responding to child abuse

We have processes for encouraging two-way communication with children and families. We seek their feedback and have a process for responding. We respect diversity and seek to facilitate effective communication and involvement.

Our personnel understand their responsibility for reporting child abuse

Our policy for responding to child abuse is approved and endorsed from the highest levels of our organisation, and applies to all our personnel. The policy states that:

- personnel must immediately report abuse or neglect and any concerns with policies, practices or the behaviour of personnel.
- personnel must meet any legislated mandatory reporting requirements
- personnel must follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect including who will receive reports
- failure to report is serious misconduct

Our personnel are given a copy of and have access to the policy and understand the implications of the policy for their role. We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding child abuse and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures or concerns.

We maintain and improve our policies and practices

We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures and practices to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults from neglect and abuse. We have assigned responsibility for maintaining and improving our policies and procedures to a 'Safeguarding Coordinator'

We monitor our personnel and external providers to ensure appropriate practice and behaviour, and policies are followed. We communicate with our personnel to ensure that they understand our policies and that the policies are effective in the work place. We require our personnel to disclose convictions or charges affecting their suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and we review police record and WWCC checks periodically.

In association with the regular periodic auditing requirements to which we will be subject by CPSL (Catholic Professional Standards Limited), we will review our service delivery to identify and document potential risks to children or young people.

Summary Commitment Statement

The Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste, committed to living in allegiance to Jesus Christ, being pure in heart and stout in conscience and unswerving in the service of the Master (Carmelite Rule) reach out to people in pastoral service. We are committed to making all our places safe and protected spaces for all people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

8. Reporting

In reporting any complaints or allegations of abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste will follow the requirements laid down by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria in respect of Whitefriars College and those laid down by the relevant Dioceses in respect of the Parishes for which the Carmelites have pastoral responsibility. Any such reports made by Whitefriars College or a Parish will be copied to the Provincial. In all other contexts, any complaints or allegations of abuse must be reported to the Provincial who will be responsible for fulfilling civil and ecclesiastical reporting requirements – and for ensuring that the individual reporting to him has also fulfilled any civil or ecclesiastical reporting requirements that he/she needs to make personally.

9. Incident Management

Whilst incidents that occur within Whitefriars College or Parishes for which the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste have pastoral responsibility will be managed according to the Guidelines of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria or the relevant Dioceses, incidents in other contexts will be managed in Australia according to the following process:

I. Responding

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm, those immediately responsible must ensure their safety by:

- Separating alleged victims and others involved
- Administering first aid
- Calling 000 for medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- Identifying a contact person for future liaison with Police

II. Reporting

a) If the source of suspected abuse comes from within the family or community, those immediately responsible should:

- Report to the local jurisdictional child protection body depending on the rules in the local jurisdiction
- Report to local police
- Report to the Provincial

b) If the source of suspected abuse comes from within the organisation, those immediately responsible should:

- Report to the Provincial
- In the case of the Provincial being the alleged perpetrator of the suspected abuse, a report should be made to the Safeguarding Office of the local Diocese in which the Provincial resides. If the Provincial is required to stand aside whilst the complaint/allegation is investigated, the 1st Councillor assumes the rights and responsibilities of the Provincial, including in regard to the management of incidents involving complaints/allegations of abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The Provincial will ensure that any incident is documented on the Child Abuse Incident Report Form

III. Contacting

Through the Provincial Office, the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste will consult with the relevant child protection authority or local police to determine that the information can be shared with parents/carers. This can include:

- Not to contact the parents/carers in circumstances where they are alleged to have engaged in the abuse or when the child is a mature minor and does not wish their parent/carer to be contacted.
- To contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information as soon as possible.

IV. Supporting

The Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste will provide support for children impacted by abuse which could include: the development of a safety plan, direct support and/or a referral to wellbeing professionals.

In Timor-Leste, the principles underpinning Appendix 1 will be observed and implemented according to what is possible in the local context.

10. Records and documentation

We retain records of changes to this document (see 10. Monitoring and Review).

11. Communication

The Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste commit to ensuring our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy is communicated to:

Service users

- on our website
- in age-accessible formats for children, young people and vulnerable adults
- as part of enrolment forms and program information provided to parents and families

Any communication with the Media regarding a complaint will be according to the province's Media Relations Policy.

All 'Involved' Personnel

- during recruitment and induction processes
- on agendas for team meetings
- when there are any updates or changes to this document

12. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed at least every 3 years, after consultation. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Provincial Council and/or the Provincial. We retain records to document each review undertaken. Records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

13. Supporting resources

Ratio Institutionis Vitae Carmelitanae, 2013. <i>Carmelite Formation: A Journey of Transformation</i>

Carmelite Formation Handbook 2016 (Carmelite Province, Australia & Timor-Leste)

Appendix 1

Term	Definition
Bullying	<p>Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Verbal</i> (name calling, put downs, threats); • <i>Physical</i> (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting); • <i>Social</i> (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating); and/or • <i>Psychological</i> (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).
Child or young person	A person under the age of eighteen years.
Safeguarding Code of Conduct or Practice and Behaviour Guidelines	The Safeguarding Code of Conduct aims to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to members, children, young people and vulnerable adults in our Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste communities. The Safeguarding Code of Conduct outlines what is, and what is not acceptable behaviour or practice when working with or engaging with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
Direct role in providing activities, programs and services to children, young people and vulnerable adults	A direct role is considered one that has contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults that is not incidental, but normally part of providing a service, program or activity for children, young people and vulnerable adults. This direct delivery may require regular physical contact and forms of ongoing communication. For example, coaching.
Emotional or psychological abuse	Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviors continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.
Family Violence	Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children, young people and vulnerable adults at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.
Grooming	Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The child may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more

Term	Definition
	serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.
Harm	<p>Harm to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; • sexual abuse or exploitation; • a single act, omission or circumstance; and • a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
Neglect	Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.
Personnel	All staff and volunteers who work for the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste whether in a paid or unpaid capacity.
Physical abuse	Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behavior includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child at risk of being hurt.
Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (e.g. older) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.
Sexual exploitation	Sexual exploitation occurs when children are forced into sexual activities that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. Exploitation can also involve children who are forced into prostitution.

