



OBLIGATIONS OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS CONCERNING SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Introduction

1. As staff and volunteers of St Patrick's Parish, Pakenham you are expected to actively contribute to a parish culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. You are required to have read and to observe the principles and expectations as set out in the Parish Policy for the Care, Protection and Safety of Children and the Pastoral Care of Vulnerable Adults as published on the Parish Web Site www.stpatrickspakenham.com.au . Printed copies of the Policy are available from the Parish Office or from the Parish Safety Officer at safetyofficer@stpatrickspakenham.com.au.

Responsibility

2. In particular your responsibilities include:
 - a) Treating children and vulnerable adults with dignity and respect, acting with propriety, exercising your duty of care, and protecting children and vulnerable adults in your care
 - b) Following the legislative (including mandatory reporting obligations where appropriate) and Diocesan processes if, in the course of your work, you form a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected
 - c) Providing a physically and psychologically safe environment where the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults is nurtured
 - d) Undertaking regular training and education in order to understand your individual responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
 - e) Assisting children and vulnerable adults to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from abuse
 - f) Abiding by and promoting the Parish's Codes of Conduct for Child Safety and for the Pastoral Care of Vulnerable Adults.

Appropriate Behaviours in the Care of Children

3. When caring for children you are in a position of trust and authority. While acceptable behaviours are detailed in full in St Patrick's Code of Conduct for the Care and Protection of Children some **highlights** are:
 - a) Take care not to form inappropriate relationships.
 - b) The provision of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs to a child is unacceptable,
 - c) It is not appropriate to smoke tobacco or be under the influence while in the presence of children.
 - d) If you are taking a child home at the end of an activity, ensure that a parent/guardian has given prior consent (whether verbal or written) and that, as a general rule, you are not alone with the child.
 - e) As with any unlawful behaviour, any illegal activities conducted over the internet or through use of a computer should be reported to the appropriate authority.
 - f) Do not touch a person in an inappropriate or unnecessary fashion.
 - g) Corporal punishment is never acceptable



- h) It is best practice to always have another adult with you when you are with a child or children, and/or to have other children present. Avoid being alone with a child or children unless an open and supervised environment can be maintained.
- i) Favouritism to any particular child; for instance, through gifts or continually showing greater attention than is given to others should not occur.
- j) Do not swear or use offensive language.
- k) Avoid behaving or speaking in a manner that may embarrass or humiliate.

Appropriate behaviours in the Pastoral Care of Vulnerable Adults

4. In providing pastoral care to adults you have a particular task or job description. This defines your role and gives you boundaries. You do not want to cause emotional or physical dependence in the vulnerable by becoming overly involved in their lives. While acceptable behaviours are detailed in full in St Patrick's Code of Conduct for the Pastoral Care of Vulnerable Adults some **highlights** are
- a) Ensure that the arrangements to visit a vulnerable person are clear so that the person knows when to expect your visit.
 - b) Keep focus on the vulnerable person rather than your own personal needs or concerns.
 - c) Respect the vulnerable person's right to hold beliefs and values that may be different to yours without imposing your ideas on them.
 - d) Respect the vulnerable person's personal space
 - e) Other than for personal care or therapeutic purposes touching a vulnerable person needs to be approached with extreme care and caution as it can easily be misinterpreted and create discomfort even when well intentioned.
 - f) Be sensitive to and protective of the physical privacy and private information of those in your care.

Responding and Reporting

5. St Patrick's Parish expects staff and volunteers to uphold a strong sense of moral obligation to report any inappropriate or criminal activity to the designated authority in St Patrick's Parish Policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.

I, _____, confirm that I am aware that St Patrick's Parish expects me to uphold the published standards of behaviour described in the Parish Professional Standards for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults. I also understand that any breach of these standards may affect my continued engagement with St Patrick's Parish Pakenham.

Signature.....Date.....

Email Address.....