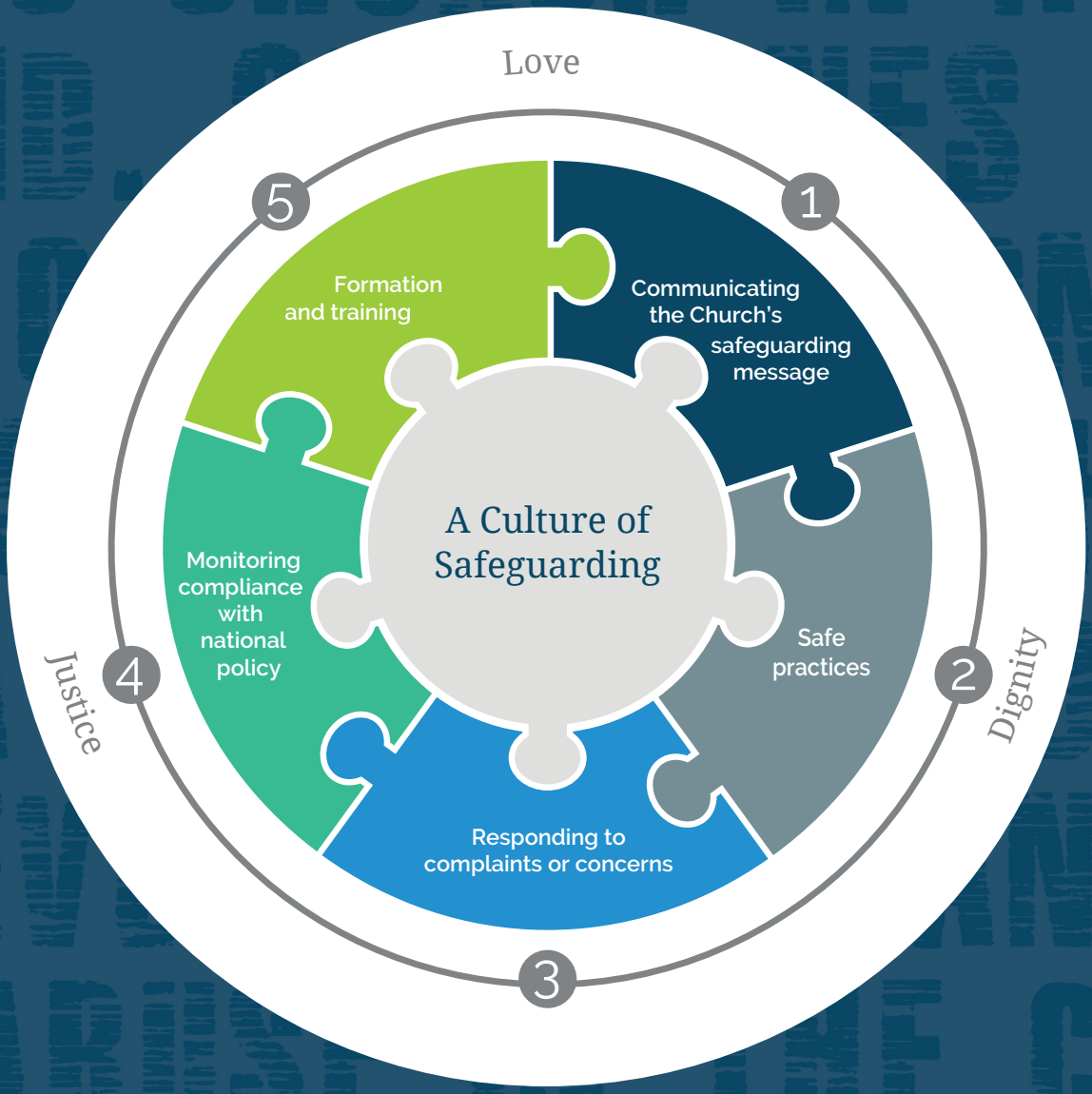
The Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand



Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture

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SAFEGUARDING CULTURE STANDARDS

These Safeguarding Culture Standards are designed to ensure our Catholic Church entities implement 'best practice' in all aspects of safeguarding in the creation and maintenance of safe environments for our children and vulnerable adults.

Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture describes our safeguarding goals and expectations and provides the framework for the implementation of the *National Safeguarding Guidelines* and associated polices. The purpose is to ensure that the same principles and practices for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults operate in all Catholic entities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

A further purpose is to create a secure and supportive atmosphere in which those who have suffered abuse can disclose this to a trusted person in the expectation of receiving a sensitive, caring and compassionate response and to be supported in their continued healing.

The successful application and implementation of these standards requires the commitment of all leaders within our Church entities. They provide a framework and mandate for leaders to ensure systems and processes within their entity or organisation promote the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

It is the responsibility of each diocesan bishop or congregational leader to ensure that those who work (paid or unpaid) with children and/or vulnerable adults within parishes, religious congregations and Catholic agencies in their jurisdiction apply these *Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture* in their own sphere of activity. By dedicating ourselves to learn, to improve on our practice and to meet these new standards, we will remain vigilant in protecting our children and vulnerable adults.

These standards will direct the development of a five-year safeguarding action plan to ensure these goals and expectations are integrated into every structure of our Church through the implementation of new practices.

The National Office for Professional Standards is developing a range of support materials and resources to assist Church entities to implement these standards.

We are committed to honouring the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by working with tangata whenua in the development and implementation of safeguarding practices.

Standards for Creating and Maintaining a Safeguarding Culture are intended to be responsive rather than static and definitive and will be subject to continuous review and improvement.

National Safeguarding and Professional Standards Committee

STANDARD 1
- Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

What is the standard?

Church entities appropriately communicate the Church's safeguarding message.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

The Church entity:

- has a written plan that details how the Church's safeguarding message will be communicated;
- makes information regarding how to safeguard children and vulnerable adults available to all, including te reo Māori, those whose first language is not English, as well as people with specific needs; and
- establishes links with other local organisations in order to promote a safe and caring community for children and vulnerable adults to share best safeguarding practice.

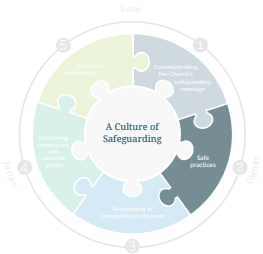
Effective implementation of this standard will include:

Evidence of communicating the Church's child safeguarding message may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- develop a communication plan;
- ensure that information regarding the Church's safeguarding message is accessible;
- communicate appropriately to children;
- communicate appropriately to those whose first language is not English, as well as to those who have specific needs; and
- develop links with other organisations in the locality in order to promote a safe and caring community and to share good practices.

STANDARD 2

- Safe Practices



What is the standard?

Church entities provide environments that are welcoming, nurturing and safe. Members respect, protect and enhance the spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of children and vulnerable adults.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

The Church entity:

- follows effective practice guidelines and legislative requirements in the recruitment of all Church personnel and in assessing their suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults;
- implements effective practice on the expected standards of adults' behaviour towards children and vulnerable adults;
- implements effective practice in encouraging children's positive behaviour;
- implements effective practice in safe care for all children and vulnerable adults including those with specific needs;
- ensures the safe use of Church property by external groups complies with effective safeguarding practice;
- has in place clearly written procedures to support and assist Church personnel to raise concerns about possible dangerous or unethical conduct by others toward children or vulnerable adults;
- implements effective practice for Church personnel on assessment of risks when working with children and vulnerable adults;
- implements effective practice for the appropriate use of information technology, including social media by Church personnel and by children and vulnerable adults; and
- works with tangata whenua to ensure practices value local tikanga.

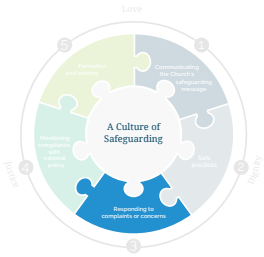
Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard

Evidence of creating and maintaining safe environments may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- undertake safe recruitment practices, including police vetting;
- screen visiting clergy or persons in any form of consecrated life seeking to minister
- in the Catholic Church in New Zealand;
- set expectations of what is appropriate behaviour by adults towards children and vulnerable adults via a Code of Conduct or similar written document;
- set expectations of what is appropriate behaviour by children and vulnerable adults;
- deal with breaches of codes of behaviour for adults and for children;
- extend the use of church property by external groups, including hire for private functions;
- undertake risk assessments of activities with children and vulnerable adults; and
- provide for the safe use of technology, including the internet, texting, email and photography.

STANDARD 3

- Responding to concerns or allegations



What is the standard?

Church entities have clear procedures and guidance regarding suspicions, concerns or allegations that may arise regarding a child or vulnerable adult's safety or welfare to ensure that there is a prompt response to meet legal requirements and to follow best practice. They also ensure fair processes for investigating and managing those matters compassionately. Complainants and their families are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care. Respondents are provided with support and monitoring.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

The Church entity:

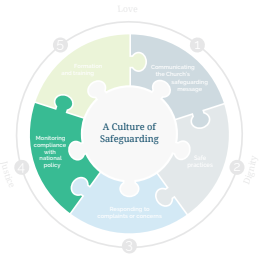
- follows written safeguarding procedures and refers all claims of abuse or harm involving members of the clergy or religious orders to the National Office for Professional Standards;
- follows written procedures regarding management of other types of complaints;
- offers appropriate pastoral care to complainants, recognising their unique needs;
- has access to appropriately trained personnel to respond to the complainant and respondent in a manner that is considerate of needs;
- seeks specialist advice from the statutory child protection services;
- works with Māori to ensure provision of appropriate pastoral care and support; and
- follows written confidentiality practices including storage of information in line with legislation and guidance.

Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard

Evidence of response and care management for both the complainant and respondent may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- report all allegations of abuse;
- when abuse occurs, encourage complainants to report abuse to New Zealand Police and/or Oranga Tamariki;
- respond appropriately and compassionately to all allegations of abuse or harm and to all other complaints or concerns;
- undertake a risk assessment to produce an interim management plan;
- provide a pastoral response to complainants and others affected;
- support parishes and others affected when a priest takes leave from ministry;
- support the respondent to return to ministry when investigations find no case to answer; and
- support and manage the respondent following the conclusion of any investigation.

STANDARD 4
- Monitoring Compliance with National Policy



What is the standard?

Church entities develop a plan of action to assure compliance with the standards. This plan is reviewed annually.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

The Church entity:

- has put in place arrangements to ensure and evaluate its compliance with the safeguarding standards;
- produces a report on the level of compliance established though this audit exercise;
- notifies the bishop or congregation leader in writing of the compliance of this annual audit report;
- produces a safeguarding plan that is implemented and reviewed; and
- engages with the National Office for Professional Standards who will carry out an independent review of its safeguarding practice in relation to the applicable indicators of the five safeguarding standards.

Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard

Evidence of quality assuring compliance with the standards may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- complete annual reports and undertake reviews of compliance with the five standards; and
- develops a safeguarding plan that:
  - outlines the actions that will be taken to keep children and vulnerable adults safe;
  - identifies who is responsible for implementing these actions;
  - specifies the time frame within which actions are completed; and
  - identifies the resources to ensure that the plan's objectives are realized.

STANDARD 5

- Formation and Training

What is the standard?

Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults.

Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met

The Church entity:

- ensures the induction of Church personnel includes training in the Church's safeguarding policies and procedures;
- conducts an annual training-needs analysis that identifies all Church personnel who require training and develops a training plan based on this;
- ensures delivery at a local level of basic training programmes that are identified and approved by National Office for Professional Standards;
- provides children and vulnerable adults who access Church-related activities and their parents/guardians with information, advice and support on keeping them safe and involves them in the safeguarding training initiatives wherever possible and appropriate; and
- facilitates the provision of appropriate level support to all involved with the Church in relation to their responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

Ways of providing evidence to support the implementation of this standard

Evidence of providing training and support for keeping children and vulnerable adults safe may include having and using effective procedures and practice to:

- provide induction for those involved in providing Church-related activities;
- ensure the delivery of basic safeguarding awareness;
- provide role-specific training for Church personnel;
- raise awareness of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults with children and parents/guardians in the Church; and
- ensure access to appropriate support and supervision.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Child:

Generally, this relates to an individual up to the age of 18 years. (Children's Act, 2014)

Church Entity:

Any parish, organization or agency which has been endorsed by a bishop or congregation leader as meeting the requirements of Canon 216 and therefore comes within the jurisdiction of the bishop or congregation leader.

Church Personnel:

Clergy, religious, employees and volunteers who are accepted by a bishop or congregation leader as working for the Church.

Religious Congregation or Order:

Religious refers to a member of a religious congregation or a society of apostolic life recognized by the Catholic Church. For the purpose of this document, it shall also include any person formally admitted into an institute's programme of formation.

Vulnerable Adult:

A person unable by reason of detention, age, sickness, mental impairment or any other cause, to withdraw him or herself from the care of charge of another. (Crimes Act 1961)

CONTACT DETAILS

- National Office for Professional Standards

Website: www. safeguarding.catholic.org.nz

Email: prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz

Phone: 0800 114 622

Post: PO Box 10199, Philipstown, Christchurch

Please visit diocesan websites for contact details of safeguarding coordinators and other information about safeguarding practices in your diocese:

Auckland Diocese: www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz

Hamilton Diocese: www.proudtobecatholic.org.nz

Palmerston North Diocese: www.pndiocese.org.nz

Wellington Archdiocese: www.wn.catholic.org.nz

Christchurch Diocese: www.chchcatholic.nz

Dunedin Diocese: www.cdd.org.nz

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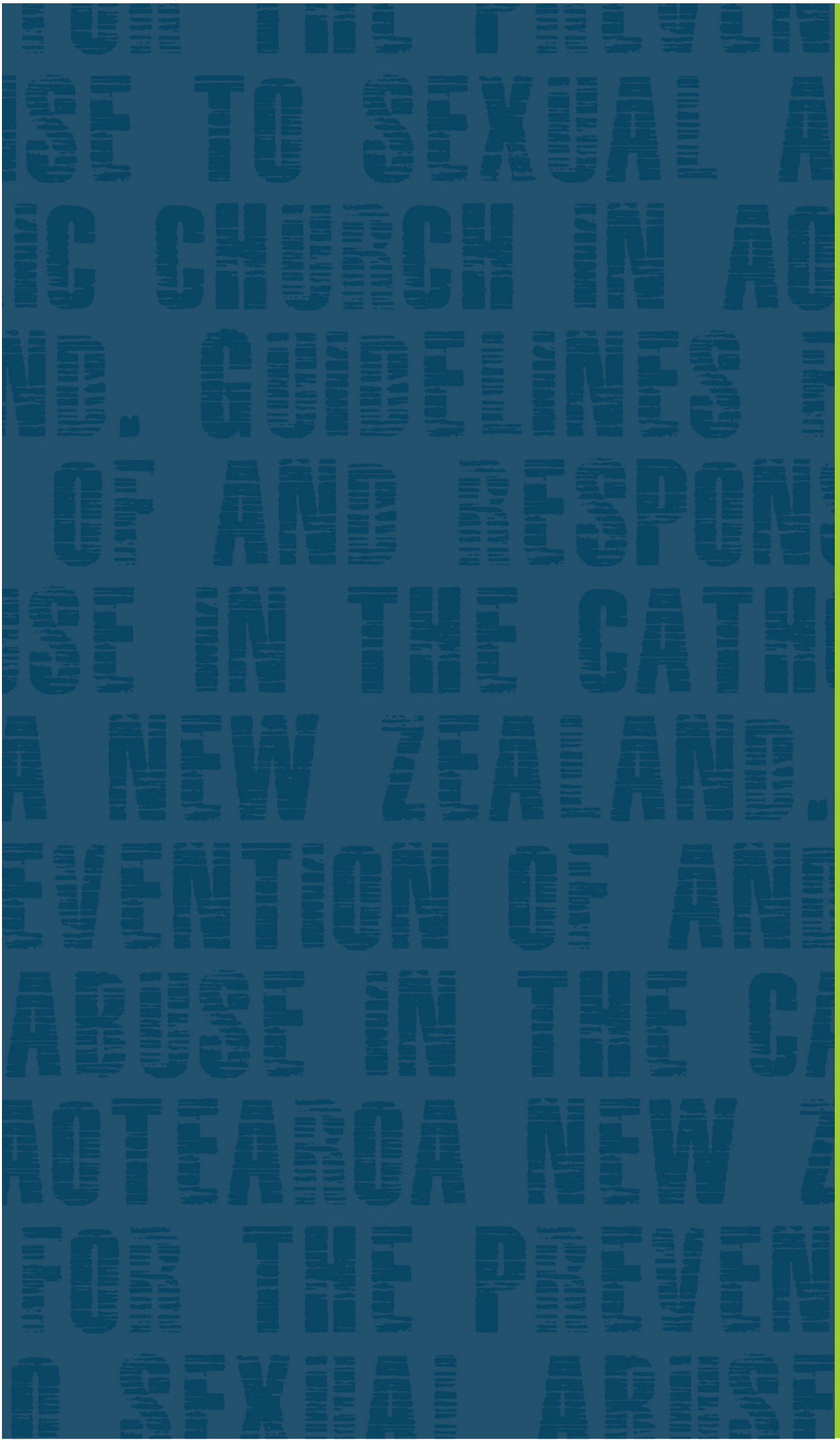
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