

Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish

Aireys Inlet, Apollo Bay, Lavers Hill, Lorne



Child Safety Policy



Date of policy: October 2017
Date of last major review: Initial
Date of next major review: October 2020

1. Introduction

At Our Lady Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish (the Parish), we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our parish. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel ([CAM Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

The Church's social doctrine constantly points out the need to respect the dignity of children. 'In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, and a great respect and generous concern for their rights' (Apostolic Exhortation, Familiaris Consortio, 26). Indeed it was Jesus who, when his disciples were arguing among themselves about who was the greatest, directed his attention to a little child and said to his disciples, *'Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me'* (Mark 9.37).

2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of Our Lady Star of the Sea to the care, safety and wellbeing of all children in our parish. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep children safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our parish environment, on site, online and in other locations used by the parish.

This policy applies to all parish personnel, including parish employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy.

3. Principles

The Catholic Church has a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe ([CAM Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety at *Our Lady Star of the Sea*

- Our parish has zero tolerance of child abuse.
- All children are entitled to, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Our parish works in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection.
- All adults in our parish, including staff, clergy, religious, volunteers, parishioners, and contractors, have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
- The policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of children are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children and young people.
- All persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Staff, clergy, religious, volunteers, parents, parishioners including children and contractors should be free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by the parish leadership.

- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

4. Definitions

Child: A person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child abuse includes:

- (a) any act committed against a child involving:
 - (i) a sexual offence
 - (ii) an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- (b) the infliction on a child of:
 - (i) physical violence
 - (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm
- (c) serious neglect of a child.

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

Child neglect: The failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing.

Child physical abuse: Generally, child physical abuse refers to the non-accidental use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviours including shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning. The fabrication or induction of an illness by a parent or carer (previously known as Munchausen syndrome by proxy) is also included in this definition of “Child physical abuse”.

Child protection: Statutory services designed to protect children who are at risk of serious harm.

Child sexual abuse: Any sexual activity between a child under the age of consent (16) and an adult or older person (i.e. a person two or more years older than the victim) is child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse can also be:

- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult in a position of power or authority over them; the age of consent laws do not apply in such instances due to the strong imbalance of power that exists between young people and authority figures, as well as the breaching of both personal and public trust that occurs when professional boundaries are violated
- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult family member, regardless of issues of consent, equality or coercion
- sexual activity between peers that is non-consensual or involves the use of power or coercion

- non-consensual sexual activity between minors (e.g. a 14-year old and an 11-year old), or any sexual behaviour between a child and another child or adolescent who, due to their age or stage of development, is in a position of power, trust or responsibility over the victim. Sexual activity between adolescents at a similar developmental level is not intended to be included in this definition of “Child sexual abuse”.

Mandatory Reporting: The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is known as mandatory reporting. Mandated persons include teachers, nurses, police, psychologists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners.

Reasonable Belief: When an adult is concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a ‘reasonable belief’. A ‘reasonable belief’ or a ‘belief on reasonable grounds’ is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A ‘reasonable belief’ is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

Parish Staff: Includes parish employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy

5. Policy Commitments

While the demographic of the Our Lady Star of the Sea consists mainly of elderly parishioners, with very few children and young people involved in church activity, the Parish has an influx of visitors in holiday periods which typically includes families.

The Parish is committed to respectful pastoral care for all to whom we minister. Respectful relationships that support the dignity of each person are central to the life and teachings of Jesus. We are committed to ensuring that all who participate in the life of our parish, particularly children and young people, can expect an environment which is safe and free from harm. We believe that any form of exploitation of vulnerable persons can never be consistent with Christian profession. It is the responsibility of all those in positions of trust at Our Lady Star of the Sea to proactively establish and maintain a child-safe and child-friendly environment for all children and young people who participate in the life of this parish, with particular attention paid to those who are most vulnerable, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability. We are committed to creating a child-safe environment and promoting cultural change in the way the parish manages the risk of child abuse and neglect by responding to any cases of alleged abuse, neglect or grievances and complaints in a consistent, unbiased and thorough manner.

Our commitment to our children

- (a) We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in our parish.
- (b) We commit to providing children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences.
- (c) We commit to listening to children and young people and empowering them by taking their views seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.
- (d) We commit to taking action to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse or harm.
- (e) We commit to providing children and young people with the necessary knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.
- (f) We commit to seeking input and feedback from children regarding the creation of a safe parish environment.

Our commitment to parents and carers

- (a) We commit to communicating honestly and openly with parents and carers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- (b) We commit to engaging with, and listening to, the views of parents and carers about our child- safety practices, policies and procedures.
- (c) We commit to transparency in our decision-making with parents and carers where it will not compromise the safety of children or young people.
- (d) We commit to acknowledging the cultural diversity of our parishioners and being sensitive to how this may impact on child safety issues.
- (e) We commit to continuously reviewing and improving our systems to protect children from abuse.

Our commitment to our parish employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy:

- (a) We commit to providing all Our Lady Star of the Sea's staff with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles. This will include regular and appropriate learning opportunities.
- (b) We commit to providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to child safety and young people's protection and wellbeing. This will include annual training in the principles and intent of the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct, and staff responsibilities to report concerns.
- (c) We commit to listening to all concerns voiced by Our Lady Star of the Sea parishioners, visitors, and staff about keeping children and young people safe from harm.

- (d) We commit to providing opportunities for Our Lady Star of the Sea staff and ministry leaders who work with children and young people to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of the abuse of a child or young person.

6. Responsibilities and Organisation Arrangements

Everyone employed or volunteering at Our Lady Star of the Sea has a responsibility to understand the important and significant role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make (Catholic Diocese of Ballarat [Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

The parish has allocated roles and responsibilities for child safety as follows:

6.1 Guide to Responsibilities of Parish Leadership

The parish priest and the Parish Safeguarding Team at Our Lady Star of the Sea recognise their particular responsibility to ensure the development of preventative and proactive strategies that promote a culture of openness, awareness of, and shared responsibility for child safety.

Responsibilities include:

- creating an environment for children and young people to be safe and to feel safe
- upholding high principles and standards for all staff and clergy
- promoting models of behaviour between adults and children and young people based on mutual respect and consideration
- ensuring thorough and rigorous practices are applied in the recruitment, screening and ongoing professional learning of staff
- ensuring that parish personnel have regular and appropriate learning to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters
- providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm legislative obligations, policy and procedures in relation to child and young people's protection and wellbeing
- ensuring the parish meets the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

6.2 Guide to Responsibilities of Parish Staff

Responsibilities of parish staff include:

- treating children and young people with dignity and respect, acting with propriety, exercising their duty of care, and protecting children and young people in their care
- following the legislative (including mandatory reporting obligations where appropriate) and Diocesan processes if, in the course of their work, they form a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment where the wellbeing of children and young people is nurtured
- undertaking regular training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety and the wellbeing of children and young people
- assisting children and young people to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from abuse
- following the parish's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

6.3 Organisational Arrangements

Our Lady Star of the Sea has a Parish Safeguarding Officer and at least one support person appointed who make up the Child Safety Team under the guidance of the Parish Priest. The Parish Priest and Child Safety Team are responsible for all mass centres within the Parish.

7. Expectations of our Parish Staff – Child Safety Code of Conduct

At Our Lady Star of the Sea parish community, we expect parish staff to proactively ensure the safety of children at all times and to take appropriate action if there are concerns about the safety of any child in the parish environment. All staff must remain familiar with the relevant laws, the code of conduct, and policies and procedures in relation to child protection and comply with all requirements. We have developed a Child Safety Code of Conduct which is available in hard copy form at each mass centre and on the Parish website

<https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parishes-and-priests/fx-parish.cfm?id=100&loadref=127>, which recognises the critical role that staff play in protecting the children in our care and establishes clear expectations of staff for appropriate behaviour with children in order to safeguard them against abuse and or neglect.

Our Code also protects parish personnel through clarification of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

8. Child Safety and Participation

At Our Lady Star of the Sea, we actively encourage all children to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We advise our children what to do if they feel unsafe and enable them to understand, identify, discuss and report on child safety. We listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents or carers, raise with us.

9. Reporting and Responding

Our parish records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and stores the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our parish complies with legal obligations that relate to managing the risk of child abuse under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.), the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.) and the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust report. Our parish's Child Protection

Reporting Policy as shown on the next four pages sets out the actions required under the relevant legislation when there is a reasonable belief that a child in our parish environment is in need of protection or a criminal offence has been committed, and provides guidance and procedures on how to make a report. We work to ensure all children, families and staff know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, or if they notice inappropriate behaviour. Our parish has also established internal processes to ensure that appropriate action is taken to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and/or safety of a child.

The poster "IF YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT CONCERNS YOU, SAY SOMETHING" is prominently displayed on the Parish Noticeboard. The role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer will be advertised to parishioners as another contact who may be approached with concerns about child safety.

Our Complaints and Disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

The Parish processes follow the **Diocesan Code of Conduct for Caring for Children (Sections 88 to 107)** which are reproduced below:

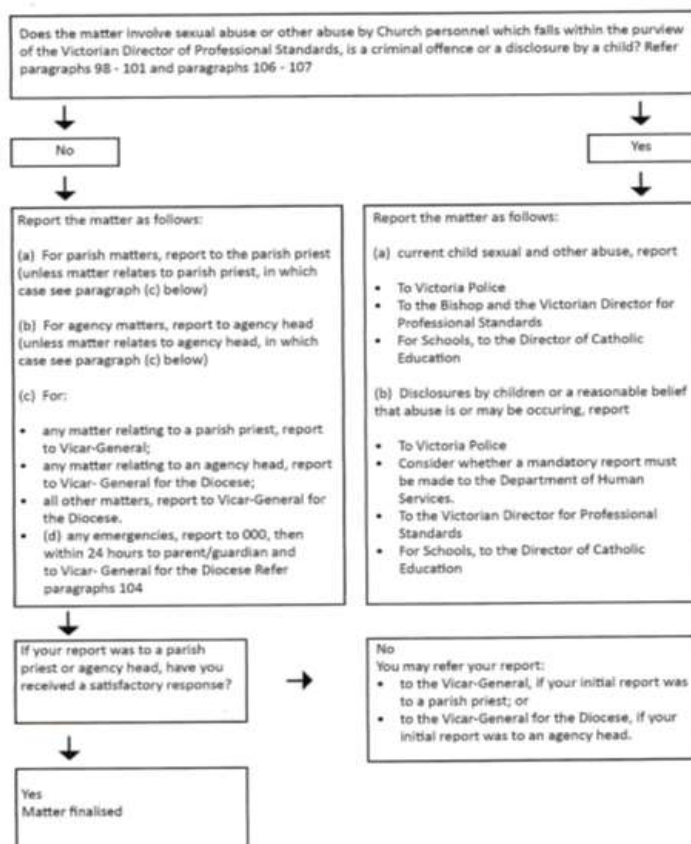
88.

The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat aims to deal with all reports under this Code of Conduct fairly and appropriately, and to act on the following principles:

- a. Promoting a positive experience of the Church and creating a strong community of faith;
- b. Preventing misconduct where this is possible;
- c. Ensuring fair process for persons against whom allegations are made;
- d. Dealing effectively with any allegations which are substantiated, including responding compassionately to anyone who has been affected.



FLOW CHART – REPORTING BREACHES OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT



What should you report?

90. You may come across possible breaches of this Code of Conduct, or matters that cause you concern, in any number of ways. These might include

- a. A disclosure made to you by a child;
- b. Observing events that cause you to form an objectively reasonable belief that a child is being harmed or abused, or is at risk of being harmed or abused (whether by a family member or by another person); or
- c. Being present and witnessing an event or incident.

91. Alternatively, an incident may occur during an activity you are responsible for, such as:

- a. A child being lost;
- b. A child being injured; or
- c. A medical emergency.

92. Regardless of the way in which an issue arises, you should always report circumstances that cause you concern and you should certainly always report:

- a. Any material breach of this Code of Conduct;
- b. Any incident in which a child is harmed or goes missing;
- c. Any emergency situation including a medical emergency;
- d. Any hazard or risk of harm to a child that is not being adequately addressed;
- e. Any allegation of sexual misconduct;*
- f. Any disclosure by a child, or an objectively reasonable belief you have formed, that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse of any kind;*
- g. Any allegation of violence inflicted by an adult upon a child;*
- h. Any allegation in which an adult has been under the influence of drugs (illicit or misused medication) or alcohol while responsible for children;
- i. Any incident in which a child has been harmed or injured (either physically or psychologically) or is at risk of harm or injury;*
- j. Any allegation of conduct which is or might be unlawful;* and
- k. Any conduct which would or might give rise to a mandatory requirement to report under the Children, Youth and Families Act or the Crimes Act.6 93.

If you are not sure whether to report a matter, please contact the Coordinator for Professional Standards on 03 53377121.

Who may make and investigate a report?

94. Any person may make a report however if an allegation involves sexual or other abuse of a child you should not investigate the matter yourself, or raise it with parents/guardians or the alleged abuser directly. You should report the matter using the procedures set out in paragraphs 98 - 101 of this Code.

How can a report be made?

95. If you would like any guidance about how to report a breach of this Code of Conduct or a matter of concern, please contact the Coordinator for Professional Standards on 03 53377121. The process for reporting and dealing with any concerns or breaches of this Code of Conduct will vary depending on the type of conduct and who is responsible for the conduct.

96. A Confidential Incident Recording Form is available at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au and may be used to record details of any incident or matter of concern.

97. Nothing in this Code of Conduct is intended to restrict the right or the legal obligation of any person to report any matter to Victoria Police or other authorities. To report child sexual and other abuse

98. When the complaint concerns an alleged crime by Church personnel it must be immediately reported to Victoria Police as required in accordance with the Crimes Act. 99. A report must also be made to the Bishop and to the Victorian Director of Professional Standards in accordance with the protocols established under “Towards Healing” which have been established by the Australian Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious of Australia to enquire into and advise with respect to allegations of sexual misconduct by any priest of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat, and religious and lay persons working and volunteering within the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat.

100. The role of the Victorian Director of Professional Standards and the procedures that will be followed upon the receipt of a complaint can be located in the “Towards Healing” document or at www.catholic.org.au/professionalstandards/towards-healing

101. The Victoria Police may be contacted on ph. 1800 333 000. The Victorian Director of Professional Standards may be contacted at ph. 1800 816 030.

To report all other matters

102. All matters other than those within the purview of the Victorian Director of Professional Standards should be reported as follows:

- a. Any matter that arises within a parish should be reported in the first instance to your parish priest (unless the matter involves the parish priest, in which case it should be reported in accordance with paragraph 103.) The parish priest will listen to the allegations and decide what action to take in accordance with the procedures below at paragraph 105. If, after a reasonable time has elapsed, you are not satisfied with the parish priest’s response to your report you may then refer the matter to the Vicar-General of the Diocese of Ballarat ph. 03 5331 2933.
- b. Any matter that arises within an agency of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat (for example Centacare) should be reported in the first instance to the head of the agency (unless the matter involves the agency head, in which case it should be reported in accordance with paragraph 103). The agency head will listen to the allegations and decide what action to take in accordance with the procedures below at paragraph 105. If, after a reasonable time has elapsed, you are not satisfied with the response to your report, you may refer the matter to the Vicar-General of the Diocese of Ballarat 03 533 12933.

103. Matters relating to parish priests, agency heads, or any other matters should be reported as follows:

- a. Any report that relates to a parish priest should be reported in the first instance to the Vicar-General on 03 533 12933
- b. Any report that relates to an agency head should be reported to the Vicar-General on 03 533 12933
- c. Any other matter may be reported to the Vicar-General

Reports will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures at paragraph 105

104. Any medical emergency, a missing child, or any other emergency situation should be reported in the first instance to the appropriate authorities (such as police, fire or ambulance by dialling 000). As soon as possible thereafter, the child’s parent/guardian should be notified and a report should be made (at the latest within 24 hours) to the Vicar-General.

What happens when a report is made?

105. When a report is made in accordance with paragraph 103, the person receiving the report shall:

- a. Listen carefully to the report and ensure it is fully understood;
- b. Consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to advise others within the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat or to inform relevant authorities
- c. Determine what action will be taken (if any)
- d. Document all action taken; and
- e. Maintain the confidentiality of all parties (including the person making the report, and any person to whom the report relates) at all times to the extent this is possible. In some cases, it may be necessary to inform relevant authorities or others within the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat or Catholic Diocese of Ballarat or to whom the report relates. Depending on the nature of the allegation it may be necessary to:
 - i. Inform the Victoria Police, if the behaviour is or might be criminal;
 - ii. Consider whether a mandatory report must be made to the Department of Human Services (DHS) under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYF) Act or whether a report must be made to Victoria Police under the Crimes Act;
 - iii. Make or refer a report to the Victorian Director of Professional Standards.

Dealing with disclosures by children or a reasonable belief that abuse is or may be occurring in a setting to which the protocol applies

106. If:

- a. A child makes a disclosure to you that sexual, physical or psychological abuse is occurring, or
- b. You form an objectively reasonable belief that a child is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, you should;
 - i. immediately report the matter to Victoria Police.
 - ii. Consider whether a mandatory report must be made to the Department of Human Services under the Child, Youth and Families Act 2005.
 - iii. Immediately report the matter to the Victorian Director of Professional Standards (or for schools, to the Director of Catholic Education) who will discuss your concerns and advise you on the next steps to take.

107. Be aware that the child may be feeling ashamed, guilty and scared, and may be worried about the consequences of telling someone about the abuse. Stay calm and listen carefully to the child. Tell them that you believe them and that they did the right thing by telling you. Do not make promises you cannot keep such as promising that you will not tell anyone else.

Footnote

** For further information regarding the mandatory reporting requirements under CYF Act, please see *Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children*, available at <http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/child-protection-familyservices/library/childprotection-publications/protecting-the-safety-andwellbeing-of-children-and-young-people>, or contact the Diocesan Coordinator for Professional Standards on 03 53377121 or the Victorian Director of Professional Standards on 1800 816 030. For further information regarding the mandatory reporting requirements under the Crimes Act see www.justice.vic.gov/home/safer-communities/protecting-children+and+fan*

10. Screening and Recruitment of Parish Staff

Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish will apply thorough and rigorous screening processes in the recruitment of employees and volunteers involved in child-connected work. Our commitment to child safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for such employee, contractor and volunteer positions, and all applicants are provided with copies of the parish Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Policy.

When recruiting and selecting employees, contractors and volunteers involved in child-connected work, we make all reasonable efforts to:

- confirm the applicant's Working with Children Check and National Police Check status complying with the Diocese's Policy "Working with Children Check and Police Record Check" professional registration (as relevant) ([https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/uploads/ppage/files/Professional%20Standards/Working%20with%20Children%20Check%20and%20Police%20Record%20Check\(1\).pdf](https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/uploads/ppage/files/Professional%20Standards/Working%20with%20Children%20Check%20and%20Police%20Record%20Check(1).pdf)) and/or
- obtain proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
- verify the applicant's history of work involving children
- obtain references that address the applicant's suitability for the job and working with children.

It is recognised that contractors who will have no contact with children as a part of their role do not require a "Working with Children Check".

We have processes for monitoring and assessing the continuing suitability of parish staff to work with children, including regular reviews of the status of Working with Children Checks.

11. Child Safety – Education and Training for Parish Staff

At Our Lady Star of the Sea, we provide employees, volunteers, religious and clergy with regular and appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters. This includes induction, ongoing training and professional learning to ensure that everyone understands their professional and legal obligations and responsibilities, and the procedures for reporting suspicion of child abuse and neglect.

Leaders will attend formal education sessions with volunteers receiving as a minimum locally provided tuition.

12. Risk Management

At Our Lady Star of the Sea, we are committed to proactively and systematically identifying and assessing risks to child safety across our whole parish environment (physical and online), and reducing or eliminating (where possible) all potential sources of harm. We document, implement, monitor and periodically review our risk management strategies for child safety and ensure that the strategies change as needed and as new risks arise.

13. Relevant Legislation

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.) – Three new criminal offences have been introduced under this Act:

1. a grooming offence relating to communication, including electronic communication, with a child or their parents with the intent of facilitating the involvement of a child in a sexual offence (s44B) and applies to people who a child is under the care of including, but not limited to, a religious official or spiritual leader, youth workers, sports coaches, and out of home carers;
2. a 'failure to disclose' offence for an adult who has information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child which obliges them to report to Police as soon as practicable, unless the person has a reasonable excuse for not doing so (s327);
3. a 'failure to protect' offence that applies to people within organisations who knew of a risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk but negligently failed to do so (s44C).

14. Related Policies

14.1 Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Policies

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Code of Conduct for Caring for Children
- Working with Children Check and National Police Record Check Policy
- Social Media Policy

14.2 Parish Policies

No formal policies exist at this time.

14.3 Other Supporting Documentation

Integrity in the Service of the Church – A resource document of principles and standards for lay-workers in the Catholic Church in Australia.
www.catholic.org.au/documents/1345-integrity-in-service-of-the-church-1

Integrity in Ministry – A document of principles and standards for Catholic clergy and religious in Australia.
www.catholic.org.au/documents/1344-integrity-in-ministry

Betrayal of Trust - Report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other non-government organisations conducted in 2012 and 2013.

www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/fcdc/inquiries/57th/Child_Abuse_Inquiry/Report/Preliminaries.pdf

Facing the Truth - The response of the Catholic Church in Victoria to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other non-government organisations www.cam.org.au/facingthetruth

Victorian Child Safe Standards - Mandatory Child Safe Standards that ensure all organisations dealing with children have appropriate responses in place for allegations of child abuse and misconduct -

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>

15. Breach of Policy

Where an **employee** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this Policy, this may result in disciplinary consequences.

Where the **parish priest** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the concerned party is advised to contact the Vicar General. If there is any reasonable belief that a criminal act has been committed, the concerned party must contact Victoria Police.

Where any **other member of the parish community** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the parish priest is to take appropriate action as required by Diocesan Code of Conduct for Caring for Children. He may also report the matter to the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Coordinator for Professional Standards.

16. Review of this Child Safety Policy

At Our Lady Star of the Sea, we are committed to continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. We intend this policy to be a dynamic document that will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working in practice and updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.

We will maintain a history of updates to the policy.

History of Updates to Policy

Date	Comment (e.g. major review, minor review)

17. Inclusion of All

We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

18. References

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. Visit <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Our-Schools/Child-Safety>

Catholic Diocese of Ballarat, *Commitment Statement to Child Safety* – September 2016

State of Victoria 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools: Ministerial Order. 870*, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Victorian Government Gazette No. S2

Victorian Government Department of Justice 2016, *Betrayal of Trust Implementation.*

Acknowledgment: St James The Apostle, Hoppers Crossing Child Safety policies and procedures