



De La Salle Australia New Zealand Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (ANZPPNG) Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy

Issue Date: 10 December 2014
Review Date: 23 November 2016

1.0 Purpose

This policy exists to outline the clear expectations for all those engaged in the Mission within the Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (ANZPPNG) District with regard to the care, protection and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured and safeguarded by all. Accordingly, it is intended that this policy will set out expectations with regard to the provision of a uniform standard of best practice in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, in the clear expectation that at all times and under all circumstances, everyone will uphold the ethical and moral commitment we have to those we serve.

The foundation of this policy is built on our beliefs, values and behaviours in keeping with our faith traditions.

Key themes include:

- respectful relationships, including appropriate boundaries and practice standards;
- best practice recruiting and selection practices;
- duty of care practices and compassionate and just responses;
- governance structures which champion a child safe culture and where clear accountabilities are set by institutional leaders
- ongoing review and development of child safe practices and procedures;
- behaviours which give witness to Lasallian Values and Culture; and
- Commitment to compliance with all Church and Legislative requirements.

Our policies and procedures seek to prevent and or remedy harm arising from sexual, physical, emotional or neglectful abuse.

2.0 Scope

The policy applies at all times and to all who work in the Lasallian Mission and as such includes Religious, Board Members, employees, and volunteers.

This policy also applies to anyone engaged within Lasallian Works and in support of the Works under contract or whereby they are involved with Works through other parties.

3.0 Reference

As part of an international world-wide body committed to upholding the rights of the child, this policy reflects the principles of the following:

- The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;
- De La Salle Policy related to Disclosure of Abuse and Harm;
- Child protection legislation of the relevant jurisdictions ; and
- The normative protocols and procedures of the Roman Catholic Church determined for each jurisdiction.

4.0 Prevention and Protection

As Lasallians we have a shared responsibility to ensure that no harm comes to children and vulnerable adults within our works and that at all times the best interests of a child and/or vulnerable adult is a primary consideration. Accordingly, each Lasallian Work is to have a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy so as to ensure that all involved in the mission are aware of their responsibilities and to safeguard against the possibility of any form of abuse.

The Policy is to include:

- A statement expressing the organisation's commitment to child and vulnerable adult safety.
- Responsibilities to report and to respond to reports of abuse
- How promotion of child safety and a child safe culture will be undertaken and maintained
- How education regarding child safe practices is to be provided
- Responsibilities to report and respond to reports of abuse;
- Where concerns with regard to child protection are to be reported;
- How supports will be provided;
- Maintenance of respectful relationships and professional boundaries; and
- How the policy will be monitored and reviewed

Each work must undertake and provide evidence that all personnel have been trained in the contents of the policy so that it is seen as a 'living' policy, requiring attention and action.

Policies are to be considered public documents and as such communicated and made available to stakeholders, including children, and their families.

In addition it is expected that works will minimise risk by:

- Adopting recruiting and selection practices which safeguard children;
- Ensuring that employees and volunteers have clearly articulated and documented position descriptions;
- Ensuring that employees and volunteers are trained appropriately in working with children and vulnerable adults and are knowledgeable with regard to child protection practices including mandatory reporting obligations;
- Ensuring that strategic plans include specific consideration of child safety requirements and goals;
- Having robust risk management processes in place which are reviewed on a regular basis;
- empowering and encouraging open communication – ensuring a culture of trust and openness where practice is supervised, discussed and questioned; and
- Ensuring safe environments which recognise the child's right to be heard.

5.0 Compliance

It is acknowledged that there are a range of governance structures in place across the District, however it is expected that each Lasallian work will have a Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy with accompanying procedures in place. A copy of the Policy must be provided to the Brother Visitor so that compliance with the District Policy can be assured. It is expected that the Policy will be reviewed at least annually and where changes are made, an updated Policy is to be provided.

The Brother Visitor may request an audit of each works policies and procedures. When this is requested and/or advised each work must engage in the process openly and transparently. The focus of such audits is compliance to Child Protection Policy, Jurisdictional Legislation (where there is none in place then compliance with best practice will be the default measure) and District expectations.

In addition to compliance with the District's Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy, works must also comply with the District's Disclosure of Abuse or Harm Policy and other policies as developed by the District.

6.0 References

Documents referenced and related to this Policy include:

- Creating Child Safe Institutions – July 2016 – Royal Commission
- Taking Us Seriously –August 2015 – Institute of Child Protection Studies (ACU)
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy - 2015– Archdiocese of Brisbane

Status

This policy is approved by the Brother Visitor and is to be considered a mandatory document for all Lasallian Works in the District. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Date: 01.02.2017

Signed:

