

National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

Implementation Guide Standard 3

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd acknowledges the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors and their families, the failure of the Catholic Church to protect, believe and respond justly to children and vulnerable adults, and the consequent breaches of community trust.

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd is committed to fostering a culture of safety and care for children and vulnerable adults.

This is the first edition of the ***National Catholic Safeguarding Standards – Implementation Guide Standard 3*** produced by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd.

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Catholic Professional Standards Ltd respectfully acknowledges all Traditional Owners of the land and waters of Australia. We pay respect to their Elders, past and present, and young leaders of today and the future.

STANDARD 3



Partnering with families, carers and communities

Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safeguarding

This standard outlines the range of ways an entity can involve families and the community in its approach to safeguarding children, relevant policies and practices and the provision of accessible information. This will help inform parents, carers and the community about safeguarding children and encourage their feedback and input. They will be empowered to speak up and drive conversations regarding child safeguarding and how they can raise issues and concerns.¹

3.1 Families and carers participate in decisions affecting their child.

How could your entity implement this criterion?

- Lead conversations with families and carers about the entity's safeguarding commitment and practices;
- support families and carers to take an active role in monitoring children's safety across the entity's activities and services;
- ensure families and carers are fully informed of the details of services and activities and any risk mitigation that the entity has put in place, so as to assist them with informed consent. For example: provide details of youth camp activities, including travel and supervision;
- clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of parents and carers in the entity's activities to ensure the safe participation of children;
- make contact with parents/carers as soon as a problem is identified so prompt action can be taken; and
- keep families and carers informed of progress and actions relating to any complaint, being mindful of limitations if legal processes are on foot.

Aligned with

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - National Principle 3.1

Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 3 (a)

¹ National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Consultation Draft), pg. 9. 2017

3.2 The entity engages and openly communicates with families, carers and communities about its child safeguarding approach, and relevant information is accessible.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including families, carers and communities know where to find them, understand them and know how to, and feel confident in, using them.

How could your entity implement this criterion?

- Ensure that your safeguarding policy and procedures are easily accessible on your website and in a variety of other formats;
- ensure families, carers and communities have seen/read information stating the entity's commitment to child safety and detailing actions it will take to meet this commitment;
- ensure families, carers and communities know where to find the entity's Code of Conduct and child safeguarding policies and procedures. These may form part of a welcome pack or be part of an information night/session or be transmitted in fact sheets, newsletters, links to websites or mobile applications;
- ensure families, carers and communities know how, when and to whom concerns and complaints should be made. Apart from making the entity's Complaints Handling Policy available, some strategies to consider include:
 - posters displayed with a picture and the contact details of the local safeguarding co-ordinator (ensure currency). These should be located in suitable and clearly visible locations throughout the entity, such as Church and building foyers, parish/school offices, meeting rooms, community noticeboards and reception areas;
 - simple flowcharts that identify the steps to take if there is a concern and roles/individuals with specific responsibilities;
 - include your Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement and who to contact with a concern in a welcome pack for your centre, ministry or program;
- ensure that communicating messages regarding safeguarding (as suggested above) are publicly available, current, clear, timely and delivered in multiple formats, taking into account cultural relevance and different levels of English language skills (translate into relevant languages, use plain language, use images as much as possible);
- identify barriers to communication and enact specific strategies to overcome them;
- allow sufficient time to establish a rapport with families and communities, particularly for children with heightened vulnerability; and
- leaders make sure that feedback or concerns raised by families, carers or the community are followed-up promptly and families, carers or the community member are responded to and kept informed appropriately.

CPSL Tools

[What does a child-safe parish look like? – video resource](#)

[The conversations we have to have – video resource](#)

Aligned with

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - National Principle 3.2

Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 3 (b)

Royal Commission Recommendation 16.41

3.3 Families, carers and communities have a say in the entity's policies and practices.

Inviting families, carers and communities to participate in the development and review of safeguarding policies and practices helps to identify any potential safeguarding risks and encourages everyone to take a proactive approach to safeguarding, hence reinforcing the concept that safeguarding is a shared responsibility.

How could your entity implement this criterion?

- Consult families, carers and communities in the development of safeguarding policies and practices. This could be done in several different ways including:
 - having an open forum for suggestions and discussion;
 - including some parents and community members on a policy working party;
 - distributing draft policies and procedures to families and the community for comment and feedback;
 - seeking guidance from experienced others in regards to the needs of children with disabilities, complex needs or from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Include families, carers and communities in reviews of safeguarding policies and practices. This would include formal reviews as well as having mechanisms in place for ongoing and regular feedback (maybe a suggestion box could be used to gather ongoing feedback).

Aligned with

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - National Principle 3.3

Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 3 (c)

Royal Commission Recommendation 16.41

3.4 Families, carers and communities are informed about the entity's operations and governance.

Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child/ren. It is therefore crucial that families participate in decisions which affects their child and are appropriately informed about how the entity engages children and intends to keep them safe.

How could your entity implement this criterion?

- Ensure families are aware of the entity's leadership team and their safeguarding roles and responsibilities (refer to safeguarding organisation charts in Criterion 1.3).
- Ensure families are aware of the roles and responsibilities of those delivering services directly to their children. These could be clergy, religious, employees, contractors or volunteers.
- Run a family information day where families can hear about your operations and governance, meet team members involved in the delivery of services/ministries to children and provide opportunity for their input (refer to 3.1 above).

Aligned with

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - National Principle 3.4

Royal Commission Child Safe Standard 3 (d)

3.5 The entity takes a leadership role in raising community awareness of the dignity and rights of all children.

How could your entity implement this criterion?

- Display child friendly posters and discuss, where relevant, the UNHRC Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- as appropriate, celebrate UN Universal Children's Day². The goal of Universal Children's day is to improve child welfare worldwide, promote and celebrate children's rights and promote togetherness and awareness amongst all children;
- promote and/or engage in National Child Protection Week activities³. This could include:
 - having liturgies and/or masses focusing on Child Protection which may include active involvement of children; targeted prayers, hymns and homilies;
 - promoting your local diocesan or congregational safeguarding policies and procedures in posters, newsletters, social media and other formats;
 - engaging in formal recognition and thanks for those members of your local communities who are local safeguarding officers e.g. parish safeguarding personnel; or
 - inviting guest speakers with expertise in this field.
- If your entity has specific expertise, you may consider taking a leadership role in raising community awareness of child safety, child dignity and/or safeguarding in organisations. This could be in a variety of formats such as:
 - hosting information sessions with guest speakers on a range of relevant topics, such as e-safety;
 - promoting links to government and non-government websites which host safeguarding resources and information for parents and communities; or
 - providing links on the entity's website to statutory child protection agencies.

CPSL Tools

3.5.1 Prayer Resources

The conversations we have to have – video resource

² Refer to <https://www.un.org/en/events/childrenday/> (accessed 28/03/2019)

³ Refer to <https://www.napcan.org.au/national-child-protection-week/> (accessed 28/03/2019)