

CCW Policy 1
Child Safeguarding
Controlled Document

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Version: | 3.0 | Date of approval: | 12/09/2024 | Date of next review: | 12/09/2027 |
| Document Owner: | Executive Manager, Children and Youth Services | | Approved by: | Chief Executive Officer | |
| Reviewed by: | Quality & Risk Child Safeguarding Committee | | CELT QSC | | |

Audience

This policy applies to all CatholicCare Wollongong (We/Our/CatholicCare) employees including authorised carers, advisors, contractors, and consultants working on a permanent, temporary, and casual basis.

Implementation responsibility

The purpose of this document is to provide anyone engaged by CatholicCare Wollongong to provide services to children and young people including:

- Employees,
- Authorised/Kinship carers,
- Students (e.g., work experience, professional placements),
- Contractors and sub-contractors,
- Advisors,
- Clergy and members of religious congregations with an agreement to provide services in CatholicCare Wollongong programs, and
- Members of councils, committees, and sub-committees

an understanding on the framework that CatholicCare Wollongong has implemented to ensure that a safe environment is provided for children and young people. This will enable CatholicCare Wollongong to meet all legal and reporting obligations in relation to these matters.

Where specified it also applies to adult household members living in the home of an authorised/kinship carer.

If disciplinary action or an employment proceeding has commenced in relation to a child protection allegation (regardless of whether the matter is reportable or exempt from reporting to external bodies), this policy continues to apply to a person, even after they have ceased their association or employment with CatholicCare Wollongong.

Objective and Purpose

CatholicCare Wollongong recognise that to achieve our vision of advocating with and on behalf of children and young people and intervening to protect them from all forms of abuse, violence, injury, neglect, and exploitation. It is the intention of CatholicCare Wollongong that children and young people are empowered, valued, listened to and wherever possible, participate in decision making.

This policy sets out our commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation with a child safe culture embedded in all levels of our Agency. We have a zero tolerance towards the harm of children and

young people. In doing this we will uphold the rights of all children to participate to their full capacity, regardless of their gender, sexuality, race, ability, or cultural background.

This policy provides guidance and overarching principles to all employees who represent CatholicCare Wollongong regarding child protection and safeguarding. Supporting this document are other policies, procedures, risk management tools and codes of conduct that aim to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to children and young people, while outlining appropriate behaviour and encouraging all employees, both paid and volunteer, to create, maintain and improve a child safe environment. CatholicCare Wollongong works in cooperation with government authorities and other relevant agencies, families, carers and community in the care and protection of children and young people.

Our Objective confirm that all CatholicCare Wollongong employees:

- understand and fulfil their legal and ethical obligations,
- are aware of and model the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of a Child,
- respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse, complaints, and concerns of inappropriate behaviour toward children and young people,
- employed in direct child related work are authorised to do so and have completed all relevant employment screening as required by legislation (see also WS 2. Employment Screening Policy), and
- who directly engage with or provide services to children and young people act with the best interests of the child and/or young person as a primary consideration.

All children and young people have a right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity, and protected from harm,
- be asked for their opinions about anything that may affect their lives and be listened to,
- feel and be safe in their interactions with other children and young people and adults , and
- understand as early as possible what is meant by ‘feeling and being safe’.

It is important that children and young people learn:

- about feeling safe and their right to be safe,
- to recognise appropriate touching and inappropriate touching,
- they have a right to say no to a person who touches them inappropriately or who threatens their safety,
- how to raise a complaint whether electronically or in person and know they will be taken seriously and reassured that they are believed,
- that the abuse is never their fault,
- to tell trusted adults about anything that makes them feel unsafe – they don’t need to keep it a secret, and
- that help is available to them within their communities.

Consequences of Policy Violations:

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract. The severity of the consequences will depend on the nature and impact of the violation, as determined by CatholicCare Wollongong.

What is the Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards identify what works to make organisations safer for children. They emphasise the importance of adopting multiple strategies to address child safety.

The Standards are principle-based and focused on outcomes, not a prescriptive compliance. This means organisations will have the flexibility to implement them in ways that are meaningful,

achievable and related to their size, resources and workforce. With the right focus and effort, the Standards will support the development of strong organisational cultures that keep children safe.

Our Child Safeguarding Principles

These Principles set out the standards and values that is expected for our employees when implementing and enforcing Child Safe Standards.

For everyone

- **Promotion of Child Rights:** Advocating for and upholding the rights of children as outlined in international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- **Safe Environment:** Ensuring that all environments where children are present, including schools, homes, communities, and online spaces, are safe and free from potential risks.
- **Prevention Strategies:** Implementing proactive measures to prevent child abuse and exploitation, such as education and awareness campaigns, training for employees and caregivers, and promoting positive parenting practices.
- **Reporting Mechanisms:** Establishing clear and accessible reporting mechanisms for children, caregivers, and employees to report concerns or incidents of abuse or harm.
- **Child Participation:** Involving children in decisions that affect them, respecting their opinion, and empowering them to speak up about their own safety and well-being.
- **Accountability:** Holding individuals and institutions accountable for their actions or inactions related to child safeguarding, including through transparent investigations and disciplinary measures.

Mutually beneficial

- **Trust and Confidence:** Build trust and confidence among children, caregivers, employees, and the community by demonstrating a commitment to child safeguarding principles. When stakeholders trust that an organisation prioritises the safety and well-being of children, it fosters positive relationships and collaboration.

About the team

- **Shared Responsibility:** Recognising that safeguarding children is a shared responsibility that involves not only professionals and organisations but also families, caregivers, and the broader community. Each stakeholder has a role to play in creating safe environments for children and preventing harm.
- **Accountability and Discipline:** Holding team members accountable for their actions or failures to act in accordance with child safeguarding principles. This includes establishing mechanisms for mandatory reporting and addressing breaches of conduct, as well as implementing disciplinary measures when necessary to uphold the safety and well-being of children.

Give and take

- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Establishing partnerships and collaborations between organisations, government agencies, communities, and other stakeholders to collectively address child safeguarding challenges. This involves sharing resources, expertise, and information to enhance the effectiveness of safeguarding efforts.
- **Mutual Respect and Empowerment:** Fostering mutual respect and empowerment among stakeholders, including children, caregivers, and professionals, by valuing their perspectives, experiences, and contributions to safeguarding efforts. This involves creating opportunities for meaningful participation and collaboration.

- **Reciprocal Support:** Providing support to stakeholders who are involved in safeguarding children, including training, resources, and guidance, while also recognising the need for support and assistance from others when facing challenges or addressing safeguarding concerns.
- **Information Sharing and Transparency:** Promoting transparency and information sharing among stakeholders to facilitate collaboration and coordination in safeguarding efforts. This includes sharing relevant data, reports, and updates on safeguarding initiatives while respecting confidentiality and privacy.

Leader Led

- **Leading by Example:** Modelling appropriate behaviour and attitudes towards child safeguarding and ethical conduct in interactions with children, families, staff, and the wider community. Leaders should adhere to high standards of professionalism, integrity, and respect for the rights and dignity of children.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Providing comprehensive training and ongoing professional development opportunities for team members to increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills related to child safeguarding. This includes training on recognising signs of abuse, understanding relevant policies and procedures, and knowing how to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** Encouraging open communication and collaboration among team members to share information, raise concerns, and work together to safeguard children effectively. This includes fostering a culture of transparency, trust, and accountability within the team.

Context matters

- **Cultural and Social:** Cultural norms, values, and social dynamics vary across communities and societies. Child safeguarding principles need to be sensitive to these cultural and social factors to ensure that interventions are appropriate, respectful, and effective. For example, approaches to addressing child abuse may differ based on cultural perceptions of family roles, discipline, and child-rearing practices.
- **Physical Environmental:** The physical environment in which children live and interact can pose unique risks to their safety and well-being. Contextual factors such as poverty, homelessness, grief, natural disasters, and armed conflict can increase vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, and neglect. Child safeguarding principles should address these environmental challenges and provide tailored responses to protect children in specific contexts.
- **Digital (Online Environment):** In an increasingly digital world, children are exposed to online risks such as cyberbullying, grooming, sextortion and exposure to harmful content. Child safeguarding principles must encompass strategies for protecting children in digital environments, including safe internet use, privacy protection, and awareness of online risks. Context-specific approaches may be needed to address the digital divide and ensure equitable access to online safety resources.
- **Inclusive and Equitable:** Recognise and understand disabilities in their full complexity and for advocating for inclusive and equitable environments that empower individuals of all abilities.

Child Safe Principles

CatholicCare Wollongong, as an agency, and its employees, individually, are committed to upholding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations i.e.

- **Principle 1** - Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership governance and culture.
- **Principle 2** - Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- **Principle 3** - Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- **Principle 4** - Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- **Principle 5** - People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- **Principle 6** - Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
- **Principle 7** - Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- **Principle 8** – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- **Principle 9** – Implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
- **Principle 10** – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

CatholicCare's Child Safe Culture

The term 'culture' refers to how CatholicCare Wollongong operates on a day-to-day basis, and it isn't a tangible asset. Instead, it represents a shared pattern values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviours that employees follow to establish an appropriate way of thinking and acting within CatholicCare Wollongong. CatholicCare Wollongong's policies and procedures play an important role in creating, maintaining and enhancing a culture that prioritises Child Safety. This is embedded in CatholicCare Wollongong in the following ways:

- Code of Conduct
- Based on the paramountcy principle that demonstrates a clear commitment to child safety through shared purpose, values, mindsets and behaviours,
- Visible in the relationships held by the agency and all its stakeholders,
- Established and demonstrated by the words and actions of leaders,
- Created, maintained and improved in the agency's policies and procedures, and
- Visible in the agency's rituals, stories, intentions and day-to-day practices.

Risk Management

CatholicCare Wollongong is committed to the safety and wellbeing of every child and young person and will endeavour to protect children and young people from harm through various procedures including risk management.

CatholicCare Wollongong will actively identify and mitigate risks that children and young people may face and ensure that all employees and stakeholders have read and understood the Risk Management policy.

CatholicCare Wollongong has developed a Child Safe Risk Management Plan that is reviewed annually in consultation with each program, to identify shared risks or emerging risks within an individual service.

Recruitment

CatholicCare Wollongong is committed to hiring suitable people (including authorised carers) to work with children and young people and have Recruitment and Selection policy and procedures that outlines comprehensive background checking (screening) of all prospective employees (including foster carers) including:

- holding a verified check and clearances based on their roles which could include current First Aid qualifications, Working with Children Checks (WWCC), National Police Checks (NCP) and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) checks,
- those involved in the governance of CatholicCare Wollongong, and the employee designated as Principal Officer (including their delegate) will be required to hold a verified WWCC,
- where employees do not directly work with children, but may have regular access to children or access to sensitive information regarding children, they will be required to hold, and have verified, a WWCC,
- the process the employee must follow before being considered for a position with CatholicCare Wollongong, such as having reference checks, and suitable qualifications,
- the requirement to comply with child safe policies and codes of conduct, and
- what ongoing supervision, support, training, and direction will be provided for adults working with children and young people.

Authorised Carer Household Screening

As well as potential authorised carers, anyone living in the foster home is screened. Those 16yrs and over will need to have a National Police Check and those 18yrs and over also have a WWCC.

Carers are required to notify CatholicCare in advance of anyone intending to live in the home for more than 3 weeks and screening is conducted prior to the move. If an emergency situation arises (e.g., an adult child of the carers unexpectedly returns to live in the home) and CatholicCare is informed after the event, screening is conducted immediately.

Complaints Management

CatholicCare Wollongong recognises that a child focused complaint process supports children and young people who are exposed to the risk of harm and encourages them to speak up. Children and young people, families and employees know who to tell if they want to make a complaint of child abuse. As a child safe organisation, CatholicCare Wollongong will respond by immediately protecting children and young people at risk. Complaints will be addressed promptly, thoroughly, and fairly. All employees understand their reporting obligations, including to external authorities.

Disclosure (allegations made – nonemployee related)

Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 CatholicCare employees who work wholly or partly with children are mandatory reporters.

If a child makes an allegation of harm, or during the course of their work a CatholicCare employee has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person has Risk of Significant Harm (RoSH) concerns, the mandatory reporter must complete the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) through Child Story to see if it meets the threshold and what steps are required next.

If the MRG Decision Report says to **immediately** report to the Child Protection Helpline (phone 132 111), **immediately** contact the Child Protection Helpline and then inform your line manager. If the MRG Decision Report gives any other reporting advice for RoSH, call the Child Protection Helpline as a priority before the end of your working day for their advice and ask if a submission of an eReport is required, and document and record their advice then brief your line manager for any other necessary action. For Non-RoSH, consult with your line manager or any other senior manager before the end of your working day.



Abuse disclosed could be one of or a combination of:

- Physical Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse
- Danger to Self or Other
- Carer Concerns
- Relinquishing Care
- Unborn Child

These forms of abuse may occur either within the physical environment or online environment including but not limited to online bullying or grooming.

If the concerns are related to an online environment, report to the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) and e-safety commissioner.

Remember, the safety and well-being of the child or young person should always be the primary concern. When a child discloses any alleged harm, the way that it is managed has a significant impact on their long-term wellbeing.

In the event of a breach of this policy or the law, the matter will be reported to NSW Police or other relevant government agencies. CCW 5 Child Safeguarding Disciplinary and Misconduct (Reportable Conduct) and appendix 1 outlines how to report concerns, including:

- lines of report,
- confidentiality and privacy, and
- legal obligations to report.

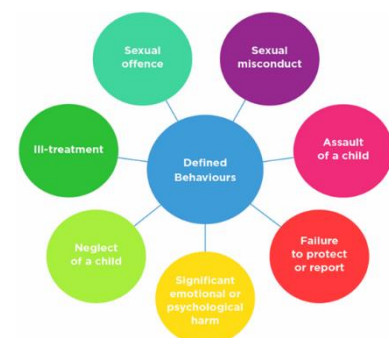
The Reportable Conduct Scheme – allegations against an employee

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is governed by the Children’s Guardian Act 2019 and is administered by the Office of the Children’s Guardian (OCG).

Reportable allegation is an allegation that the employee has engaged in conduct that may be reportable conduct. At the allegation stage, there does not need to be any proof that the alleged conduct occurred, or that it is likely to have occurred.

For an allegation to be deemed a reportable allegation, the following 3 criteria must be met:

- The alleged harm has occurred to a child or young person,
- The alleged harm has been caused by an employee,



- The alleged harm meets the defined behaviours criteria which are:
 - Sexual offence
 - Sexual misconduct
 - Assault of a child or young person
 - Failure to protect or report harm
 - Significant physical or psychological harm
 - Neglect of a child or young person
 - Ill treatment

When an employee is made aware of a reportable conduct allegation, they must immediately inform their Program Executive Manager. On receipt of this information, the Program Executive Manager must inform the following people:

- Chief Operating Officer who will brief the Chief Executive Officer,
- Executive Manager People & Culture,
- Executive Manager Quality & Risk, and
- Principal Officer if involving a child or young person in out of home care.

The Chief Operating Officer, will assess whether this qualifies as a critical incident, assign an investigator, and promptly arrange for a risk assessment.

The head of entity or their delegate, must notify the OCG of the reportable allegation or reportable conviction within 7 business days of becoming aware of it.

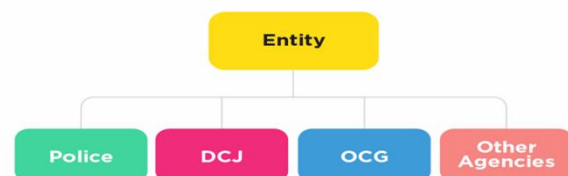


Reporting Considerations.

Other agencies other than the OCG may need to be informed of reportable conduct.

These include but not exclusive to

- NSW Police,
- Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), and or
- Other Agencies such as National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Commission if the alleged misconduct is against and NDIS participant.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance.

As stated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth", growing up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness,

love and understanding and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.

We must listen to the child or young person and ensure the best interests of the child or young person becomes the top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children and young people.

Basic principles of the Convention:

- All children are equal and have the same rights.
- Every child has the right to have his or her basic needs fulfilled.
- Every child has the right to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- Every child has the right to express his or her opinion and to be respected.

Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|----------------|--|
| Violence | Mainly involves child maltreatment (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect) at the hands of parents and other authority figures. Boys and girls are at equal risk of physical and emotional abuse and neglect, and girls are at greater risk of sexual abuse. As children reach adolescence, peer violence and intimate partner violence, in addition to child maltreatment, become highly prevalent. (World Health Organization) |
| Abuse | “All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power” - World Health Organization (2016), Child abuse and neglect by parents and other caregivers. |
| Sexual abuse | When someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children or young people are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Sexual abuse is a crime. |
| Physical abuse | A non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or young person caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation. Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints. The application of any unreasonable physical force to a child is a crime in NSW. For example, hitting a child or young person around the head or neck, or using a stick, belt or other object to |

| Term | Definition |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| | discipline or punish a child or young person (in a manner that is not trivial or negligible) may be considered a crime |
| Emotional abuse or psychological harm | <p>Serious psychological harm can occur where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma.</p> <p>Although it is possible for 'one off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child or young person.</p> <p>This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.</p> |
| Neglect | <p>A significant failure to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the child, that causes or is likely to cause harm to a child, by:</p> <p>(a) a person with parental responsibility for the child, or (b) an authorised carer of the child, or (c) an employee, if the child is in the employee's care.</p> |
| Exploitation | <p>"The use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child.</p> <p>These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimisation, oppression or ill-treatment." (Save the Children, 2020)</p> |
| Discrimination | <p>When a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics. This is known as 'direct discrimination'.</p> <p>It is also discrimination when an unreasonable rule or policy applies to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging some people because of a personal characteristic they share. This is known as 'indirect discrimination'. (Australian Human Rights Commission)</p> |
| Grooming | Any act with the aim of befriending, building rapport, and gaining the trust of a child for the purpose of subjecting them to abuse. Signs of grooming include giving gifts or special attention, or inappropriate touching such as tickling or wrestling with a child. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| | Perpetrators can also 'groom' family members, and workers in organisations, to be seen as 'trusted' and enable them to spend time with the child they are targeting. |
| Online grooming | Establishing a relationship with a child or young person online with the aim of meeting him/her in person for sexual activity. This can include online chat or sexting, and the abuser may lie about their age or identity. |
| Harm | Different states or territories may have differing definitions of harm in relation to child protection legislation, but in general it refers to any significant detrimental effect on a child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. |
| Head of Entity | Under the <i>Children's Guardian Act 2019</i> , the Chief Executive Officer of CatholicCare, Diocese of Wollongong represents the Bishop of Wollongong as head of relevant entity. |
| CatholicCare Executive Leadership Team (CELT) | The CELT considers and provides advice to the Director on high level strategic issues and significant policy and operational matters impacting on CatholicCare. It comprises of Executive Managers of CatholicCare. |
| Child Safeguarding Committee | A diverse team that has membership of all service programs that work with Children and Young People. Membership also includes People & Culture Representative and Quality & Risk. There is also representation from Professional Standards at Office of the Bishop and Catholic Education Office Child Protection. |
| Quality Systems Committee (QSC) | A diverse team that oversees & contributes to the promotion, development, and implementation of systems to ensure continuous improvement in the provision of high-quality client-centric services that achieve positive outcomes for clients |
| Employees | A person employed by CatholicCare, or a person who volunteers for CatholicCare, but excludes authorised carers |
| Contractors | Individuals or companies who are engaged to perform a specific service or task for a client or CatholicCare Wollongong, usually for a fee or other agreed compensation. |
| Authorised carer | A person authorised by CatholicCare as a foster or relative kinship carer who, for a period of time, takes on the responsibilities of parents to provide a safe, nurturing and secure family environment for children and young people needing care. |
| Department of Community & Justice (DCJ) | The Department of Communities and Justice works with children, adults, families and communities to improve lives and help people realise their potential. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) | An independent statutory authority in NSW Government, promoting, regulating, and overseeing the quality of child safe organisations in NSW to uphold children and young people's right to be safe. Includes administration of the Reportable Conduct Scheme. |
| Consultants | A person or agency engaged or on a temporary basis to provide advice and recommendations to a service program. |
| Advisors | A person who gives others advice or guidance. |
| Child | A person under the age of 18 years (unless otherwise specified in relevant legislation) – Children's Guardian Act 2019 and Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 |
| Young Person | A person who is aged 16 years or above but who is under the age of 18 years - Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. |
| Child Protection | Any measure taken to safeguard children and young people from abuse or harm. |
| Mandatory Reporter | <p>Mandatory reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities.</p> <p>Mandatory reporters are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their professional work or other paid employment, and those in management positions in these services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care — registered medical practitioners, specialists, enrolled and registered nurses, registered midwives, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, psychologists, dentists and other allied health professionals working in sole practice or in public or private health practices. • Welfare — registered psychologists, social workers, caseworkers and youth workers. • Education — teachers, counsellors, principals, • Children's services — childcare workers, family day carers and home-based carers. • Residential services — refuge workers, community housing providers. • Law enforcement — police. • Disability services – disability support workers and personal care workers |
| Non-Risk of Significant Harm (Non-RoSH) | <p>Where there are child protection concerns that do not meet the threshold for "significant" harm (i.e. RoSH), they are described as Non-RoSH. It is important to note that employees still follow procedure to determine whether RoSH or Non-RoSH.</p> <p>Non-RoSH information is collected by CatholicCare Wollongong as it may over time provide evidence of a</p> |

| Term | Definition |
|---------------------------------|--|
| | pattern of behaviour that could constitute cumulative harm (detailed below) which would be considered RoSH. |
| Risk of Significant Harm (RoSH) | <p>Where circumstances cause sufficiently serious concern about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person to warrant a response by a statutory authority (i.e. NSW Department of Communities and Justice) regardless of a family's consent.</p> <p>Concerns that are not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing</p> <p>Harm may relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical or psychological needs not being met - lack of necessary medical care - inadequate arrangements for education - actual or risk of physical or sexual abuse or ill-treatment - risk of physical or psychological harm including as a consequence of living in a household where there has been domestic violence - situations where a child is subject to a pre-natal report and the mother did not engage with support services to minimise the risk factors giving rise to the report - RoSH includes cumulative harm (i.e. a series of acts or omissions that, when viewed separately, may not indicate significant risk, but when viewed together suggest a pattern of significant harm). <p>For additional information, refer to Sect 23 of Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the NSW Online Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG).</p> |
| Paramourncy Principle | Children's safety should be the most important focus of any child-related organisation and it should be evident in all aspects of an organisation, including its stated values, how it is championed by leaders, and how it is embedded into everyday practice. |
| Principal Officer | For the purposes of fulfilling CatholicCare Wollongong's responsibilities under the Children & Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Children & Young Persons (Care & Protection) Regulation 2012 the Executive Manager, Children & Youth Services, Michelle Ferrara, is the designated Principal Officer (in her absence, Executive Manager, Family Services, Roseanne Plunket) and also has overall responsibility for supervising CatholicCare Wollongong's arrangements for providing Out of Home Care. |
| Reportable Allegation/Conduct | The following conduct, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the conduct has been commenced or concluded - |

| Term | Definition |
|------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (d) a sexual offence, (e) sexual misconduct, (f) ill-treatment of a child, (g) neglect of a child, (h) an assault against a child, (i) an offence under section 43B or 316A of the <i>Crimes Act 1900</i>, (j) behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child. |

Induction and ongoing training

- Upon commencing employment with CatholicCare, employees will undergo an induction process that includes training on the principles and guidelines outlined in this policy. Furthermore, ongoing training and educational resources will be made available to ensure that employees maintain a thorough understanding of these principles and guidelines throughout their tenure with CatholicCare.
- Regular updates and reminders may also be provided to keep employees informed about changes in best practice.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any necessary updates or modifications to ensure compliance with legislative and standard requirements will be communicated to all employees, contractors, and representatives of CatholicCare Wollongong.

The agency will formally review this Policy every three years as part of the policy's known life cycle period.

References

Legislation

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Care and Protection Act 1998
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) (Child Employment) Regulation 2015
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013
- Children's Guardian Act 2019
- Crimes Act 1900
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
- Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
- NDIS (Quality & Safeguards Commission and Other Measures) Act 2018

Standards

- Council of Australian Governments – National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics
- Office of the Children's Guardian – NSW Child Safe Standards
- Office of the Children's Guardian – NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- National Catholic Safeguarding Standards
- NSW Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Out of Home Care
- NQF – My Time, My Place: Framework for School Aged Children for Australia
- NQF – Being, Belonging and Becoming: The Early Learning Years Framework for Australia
- NQF – Education and Care Services National Laws and National Regulations
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- Department of Social Services - Families and Children Activity Administrative Approval Requirements
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission – NDIS Practice Standards

Agency Policies

- Code of Ethics and Conduct
- CCW Policy 2 Child Safeguarding – Risk Management
- CCW Policy 3 Child Safeguarding – Equity and Inclusion for Children and Young People
- CCW Policy 4 Child Safeguarding – Complaints Management
- CCW Policy 5 Child Safeguarding Disciplinary and Misconduct (Reportable Conduct)
- CCW Policy 6 Child Safeguarding Training and Development
- CCW Policy 7 Mandatory Reporting of Harm, Abuse & Neglect of a child (MRG)
- CS Policy 9 - Preventing and Responding to Harm and Abuse of Vulnerable People
- WS Policy 2.1 - Recruitment and Selection
- WS Policy 2.5 - Employment Screening
- WS Policy 2.7 - Employee Files
- WS Policy 2.8 - Position Descriptions
- WS Policy 4.1 - Performance Planning and Review
- WS Policy 5.1 - Training & Development
- WS Policy 4.3 - Management of Reportable Conduct Allegations against an Employee

Forms, Record Keeping and Other Documents

Forms

- NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide (NSW Government)

Other Documents

CatholicCare

- Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
 - Making a Child Protection Report Making a Child Protection Report (CatholicCare Work Instruction)
- Professional Conduct & Child Protection: Responding to allegations involving people working for CatholicCare (CS FORMS)

NSW Dept of Family & Community Services - [Family & Community Services \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://nsw.gov.au)

- Child Wellbeing and Child Protection – NSW Interagency Guidelines
- Keep Them Safe – a shared approach to child wellbeing
- Community Services Website Resources
- Letter requesting information under Chapter 16A

- Letter agreeing to a Chapter 16A request
- Letter declining a Chapter 16A request
- Letter providing information under Chapter 16A without request

NSW Office of the Children's Guardian - [Home | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

- Become a Child Safe Organisation - guidelines and fact sheets
- Fact Sheet 12 Bars and Appeals - February 2018
- Statutory OOHC Fact Sheet 6 – Principal Officers - January 2016
- Fact Sheet 23 – Work Deemed Child Related by the Guardian
- Application to the Children's Guardian to Have Work Deemed Child-Related

United Nations

- UN Human Rights - Office of High Commissioner Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations International Emergency Fund (UNICEF) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – Simplified Version **NSW Police**
- Form - Incident Report to NSW Police Force by a Non-Government Organisation (NGO)

| Approval Rating | Type of Policy |
|-------------------|--|
| Approval rating 1 | New agency policy/adjustments that are legislated or are a Diocesan directive. Minimal collaboration required. |
| Approval rating 2 | High level agency policies that are developed at executive management level (such as employee entitlements) go to CELT for final review before COO recommendation for approval by the CEO. |
| Approval rating 3 | Operational agency policies are endorsed by the QSC to ensure policy is applicable across all program areas. Then go to CELT for final review before COO recommendation for approval by the CEO. |
| Approval rating 4 | Program specific where it is only the individual program that need to ensure that the policy meets practice requirements. No QSC, CELT or CEO. However, if it is a new policy, courtesy email outlining what they are should go to the CEO, COO and EM Quality & Risk (EM Q&R) for information only. |

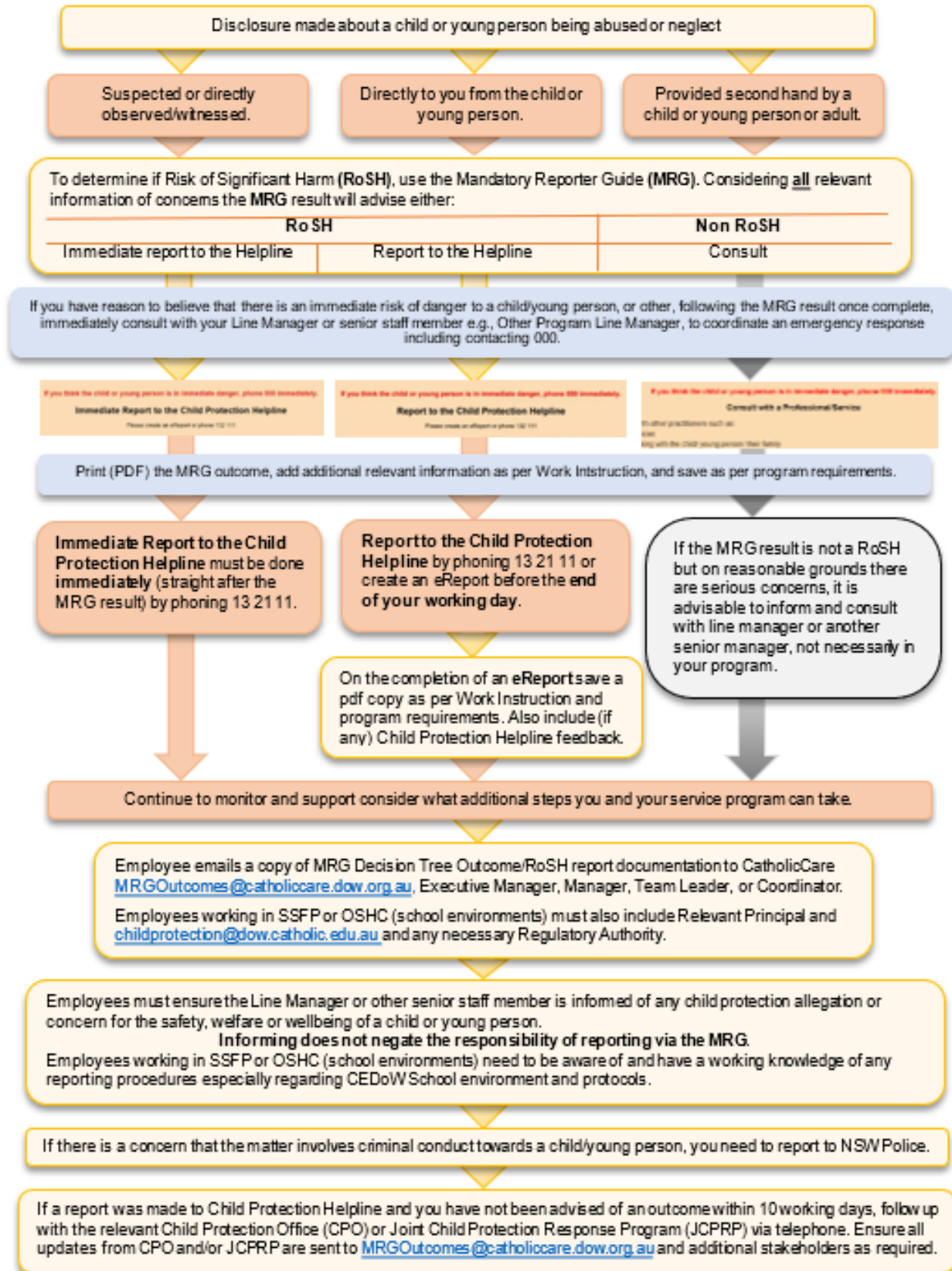
Attachments

Flowcharts

- Appendix 1 – CatholicCare Mandatory Reporting Flow Chart
- Appendix 2 – CatholicCare Reportable allegation against and employee

Reporting Child Protection Concerns for CCW Children & Young People

NOTE: Collaboration is an important part of promoting safety for children and young persons. Employees can contact their Line Manager or Executive Leadership Team to consult on child protection matters at any point, as well as calling the Child Protection Helpline on 13 21 11.



Reportable allegation against an employee

