

# The Diocesan Office for Safeguarding Charter



CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
**BROKEN BAY**

We the people of the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay are committed to fostering communities of safety and care for all people, especially for children and others in the community who are vulnerable.

Our commitment is underscored by our faith in Jesus Christ who teaches the fundamental sanctity of each human person, and by our dedication to sustained education, practice, and conversation about our moral, legal and spiritual obligation to safeguard all those within our community.

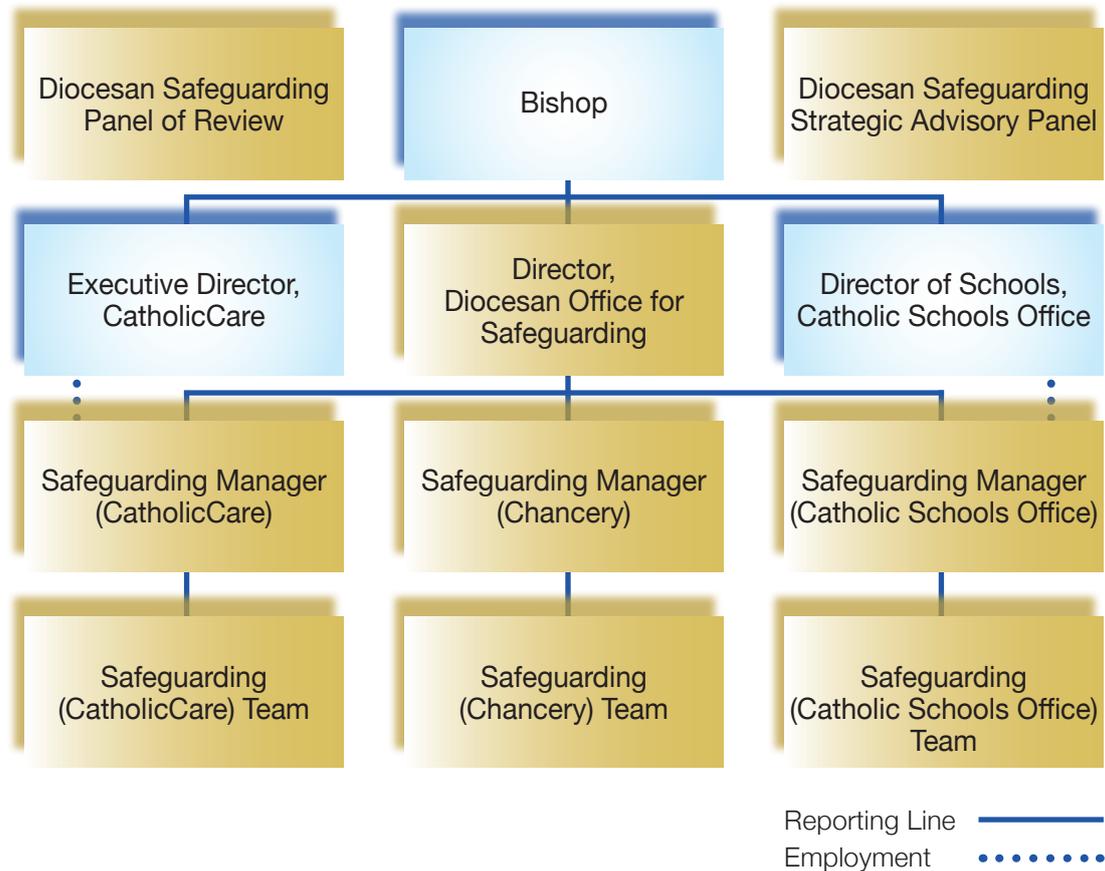
The protection of children and vulnerable adults within our Diocese will be achieved as every member of our community strives to be a person who:

1. Wants our children to be safe, to grow and to flourish, and have zero tolerance to any attitude and activity that makes children less than safe;
2. Acts with integrity, humility and sincerity, being truthful and open – hearted, and accountable and transparent, throughout our Diocesan community;
3. Shows care for the rights of all people who are supported by Diocesan systems that are clear, accessible and compliant;
4. Leads by a constant commitment to raising awareness, education, professional development and supervision;
5. Listens to others with an open heart and mind, and responds well so that concerns and risks may be identified early and addressed;
6. Reaches out with compassion to all who have experienced hurt in our community, restoring relationships and building hope through support, acknowledgement and just redress;
7. Communicates openly and honestly so that there is a clear articulation and demonstration of expectations, standards, structures and processes for Safeguarding throughout the Diocesan Community;
8. Engages the knowledge and experience of the wider community so that through dialogue and collaboration we can contribute to growth in the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

As directed by Bishop Peter Comensoli on 29 June 2018, the establishment of the Diocese of Broken Bay, Office for Safeguarding (**Diocesan Office for Safeguarding**), affirms the resolute commitment of the Diocese of Broken Bay (**Diocese**) to foster a culture of safety and care for children and vulnerable adults. This is achieved through a consistent accountable approach to safeguarding across the entire Diocese including the Catholic Schools Office (**CSO**), CatholicCare and its clergy and parishes (**Chancery**). The Diocese also acknowledges the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors and their families, the historic failure of the Catholic Church to protect, believe and respond justly to children, and the consequent breach of community trust.

## DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Bishop of the Diocese of Broken Bay (**Bishop**) is the Head of Agency under the *NSW Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)* (**the Act**) for child protection matters. He is also ultimately responsible for safeguarding matters across all sectors of the Diocese. To ensure appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns and preventative measures are in place, the following organisational chart details the response of the Diocese to safeguarding:



## OFFICES FOR SAFEGUARDING

1. Delegation for the responsibility of Safeguarding, including Head of Agency responsibilities under the Act, is provided by the Bishop to the respective Directors of the Catholic Schools Office (**CSO**) and CatholicCare (**Agency Heads**) and the Diocesan Director for Safeguarding for Chancery matters.
2. Safeguarding Offices within the Diocese consist of:
  - i. **Diocesan Office for Safeguarding (DOFS):** Members consist of the Diocesan Director for Safeguarding (DDOS) and the Administrative Assistant to the DDOS (AADDOS).
  - ii. **Office for Safeguarding (Chancery):** Members consist of the Manager for Safeguarding (Chancery) and team members as determined by the respective entity.
  - iii. **Office for Safeguarding (CSO):** Members consist of the Manager of Safeguarding (CSO) and team members as determined by the respective entity.
  - iv. **Office for Safeguarding (CatholicCare):** Members consist of the Manager for Safeguarding (CatholicCare) and team members as determined by the respective entity.
3. The Teams of each Office for Safeguarding are located in their respective Agencies as stand-alone units. Each team member will remain employed by their respective Agency Head and continue to be an integral part of their respective agency while also playing an equally integral role as part of the 'whole of Diocese' safeguarding structure. Each manager and Agency has the capacity to extend its safeguarding team as the context and circumstances require.

## DIOCESAN DIRECTOR FOR SAFEGUARDING

4. A full time Diocesan Director for Safeguarding (**DDOS**) is appointed by the Bishop.
  - i. The role of the DDOS is to ensure the Diocesan strategic vision, safeguarding strategies and best practices are in place to prevent harm to children and vulnerable adults;
  - ii. The position of the DDOS is jointly funded by the Chancery, CSO and CatholicCare in a proportion determined on the basis of the level of engagement in each Agency that is considered necessary.
5. The DDOS has an effective and clear relationship with the Agency Heads who work collaboratively with the DDOS and participate, along with the DDOS, as members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel.
6. The DDOS is assisted by the appointment of a Diocesan Safeguarding Administrative Assistant (**AADOS**). The AADOS is funded equally by Chancery, CSO and CatholicCare.
7. The Office of the DDOS enjoys its own discreet location in the Diocesan offices.
8. All files, existing as digital file records or on any other system where these files are located (except for open-case matters), of each of the entities of Chancery, CSO and CatholicCare are maintained in a central location under the authority of the DDOS so that they may be easily accessed to allow for seamless history searches relating to such data as personnel subject to complaint, alleged victims, Agency, nature and outcome of the case.

## DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING EXECUTIVE

9. Three senior positions are appointed in each of the Chancery, CSO and CatholicCare respectively, namely:
  - i. Manager for Safeguarding (Chancery)
  - ii. Manager for Safeguarding (CSO)
  - iii. Manager for Safeguarding (CatholicCare)
10. The position descriptions of each Safeguarding Manager outline:
  - i. their responsibilities and accountabilities to their respective Agency Head;
  - ii. the matters that pertain to the DDOS; and
  - iii. the mechanisms by which the collaboration between the Manager for Safeguarding (Chancery), Manager for Safeguarding (CSO) and Manager for Safeguarding (CatholicCare) (**Safeguarding Managers**) and the DDOS is effected.
11. The reporting lines for the Safeguarding Managers are to the DDOS who has the delegated authority of the Agency Heads, for line management of the Safeguarding Managers. Other than process matters that require approval from an Agency Head, such as investigation processes, results or findings, and notification of outcomes of investigations, all other matters undertaken by the Safeguarding Managers are at the direction of the DDOS. The Safeguarding Managers have extended accountabilities to the DDOS, in addition to their respective Agency Director, and through the DDOS they relate to the Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel and Safeguarding Panel of Review.
12. The Diocesan Safeguarding Executive (**DSE**) works together and has mutual accountabilities for shaping a cohesive 'whole of Diocese' approach to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The members of the DSE work collaboratively whilst respecting the distinct requirements of each sector.
13. Membership of the DSE comprises the:
  - i. Diocesan Director, Office for Safeguarding (**DDOS**) (Chair);
  - ii. Manager for Safeguarding (Chancery);
  - iii. Manager for Safeguarding (CSO); and
  - iv. Manager for Safeguarding (CatholicCare).

14. The guiding principles of the DSE, consistent with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (**NCSS**), are to:
  - i. create an environment where the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults are at the centre of thought, values and actions;
  - ii. understand the nature of abuse and risk factors;
  - iii. place emphasise on genuine engagement with, and valuing of, children and vulnerable adults;
  - iv. create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and vulnerable adults;
  - v. create conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm; and
  - vi. respond appropriately to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.
15. The DSE work as a leadership team, under the direction of the DDOS, on strategic vision for Safeguarding within the Diocese and further develop, strengthen and continuously improve policy and practice within all Agencies of the Diocese. Each Safeguarding Manager is required to work collaboratively with and demonstrate accountability to the DDOS on matters relating to safeguarding and professional standards including, without limitation:
  - i. reporting of matters prior to their consideration;
  - ii. policy and practice development;
  - iii. National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (**NCSS**);
  - iv. risk management;
  - v. training (education & awareness); and
  - vi. centralised records management.

## **DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIC ADVISORY PANEL**

16. A Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel (**Advisory Panel**) is established as an advisory panel to facilitate advice from individuals with relevant professional expertise on all matters relating to safeguarding.
17. The guiding principles of the Advisory Panel, consistent with the NCSS, are to:
  - i. create an environment where the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults are at the centre of thought, values and actions;
  - ii. understand the nature of abuse and risk factors;
  - iii. place emphasise on genuine engagement with, and valuing of, children and vulnerable adults;
  - iv. create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and vulnerable adults;
  - v. create conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm; and
  - vi. respond appropriately to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.
18. The Advisory Panel is accountable for:
  - i. benchmarking Diocesan safeguarding policy and practice with ongoing research into relevant safeguarding literature;
  - ii. contributing to Church and state policy and legislation consultations, and developments regarding safeguarding;
  - iii. integrating any amendments to Church and state policy and legislation regarding safeguarding into Diocesan policy, procedure and practice;
  - iv. approving new Diocesan safeguarding policy and procedures and reviewing existing safeguarding policy and procedures; and
  - v. informing the Diocese of relevant information.

19. The appointment of the members of the Advisory Panel will include:
  - i. three (3) persons who are external to the Diocese, who will operate as volunteers and who have the expertise and skills required for the above responsibilities; and
  - ii. three (3) persons who represent the three Agencies of the Diocese, namely the Director of Schools, CSO; Executive Director, CatholicCare; and the DDOS.
20. Advisory Panel members will be selected based on their demonstrated expertise and skills required to fulfil the responsibilities outlined.
21. The Bishop will appoint external Advisory Panel members and one member of the Advisory Panel to be the Chair.
22. The appointment of Advisory Panel members is subject to the member:
  - i. obtaining a Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) Clearance Number;
  - ii. completing of a National Criminal History Check (**NCHC**);
  - iii. Diocesan assessment of their suitability for employment based on the outcome of the NCHC and/or a WWCC Clearance;
  - iv. agreeing to undertake an induction and training process determined by the Diocese;
  - v. providing a written declaration of affiliation and business interests;
  - vi. agreeing to comply with the terms of reference of the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel, as amended from time to time; and
  - vii. agreeing to sign a confidentiality agreement and comply with the requirements of that agreement.
23. The Advisory Panel members names will be publicly available.
24. The Diocese will provide the names of Advisory Panel members to Catholic Church Insurance (**CCI**) for the purpose of including them on the Diocesan Directors and Officers policy of insurance.
25. The Diocese will reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by a member directly relating to a member's work on the Advisory Panel, subject to preapproval.
26. With the exception of the DDOS, members will be appointed for a term of three (3) years. At the discretion of the Bishop, members may serve up to three (3) successive terms on the Panel to a maximum term of no greater than nine (9) years.
27. The Advisory Panel will meet quarterly or as otherwise required by the Bishop. Dates will be provided in advance of each year to the Advisory Panel members. Meetings will be chaired by the Advisory Panel Chair.
28. The Agenda will be compiled by the Chair in collaboration with the Bishop, DDOS and Advisory Panel. Meeting papers will be circulated by email one week prior to meetings.
29. Executive support for the Advisory Panel including without limitation preparation and distribution of meeting papers, minute taking, correspondence and report preparation will be provided by the DOFS.

## **DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING PANEL OF REVIEW**

30. The Diocesan Safeguarding Panel of Review (**Review Panel**) is established as an independent panel with the responsibility to review the Diocese practices of case management, redress and pastoral care of those who have suffered from abuse from personnel of the Diocese.
31. The guiding principles of the Review Panel are to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Bishop and DDOS resulting from any panel reviews of the Diocese's practice of case management, redress and pastoral care of those who have suffered abuse from personnel of the Diocese.

32. The Review Panel is accountable for:
- i. reviewing complaints and complaint handling by the Diocese on matters referred to the Panel by the Bishop or the DDOS;
  - ii. reviewing complaints selected by the Review Panel from the DDOS Report on Diocesan Safeguarding and Child Protection complaints and make recommendations regarding case management practices;
  - iii. providing advice on the impact of abuse upon survivors, including any psychiatric or psychological impact, and providing advice regarding appropriate redress and support;
  - iv. acting as a body of appeal for any complainants who seek appeal on a decision of the Diocese arising from a complaint of abuse;
  - v. providing advice and guidance on safety and support plans for clergy on restricted ministry.
33. The Review Panel will have no role in:
- i. investigating complaints or substantive decision-making in respect of professional standards matters;
  - ii. providing legal advice to the Diocese; or
  - iii. the conduct and settlement of litigious matters except in relation to pastoral aspects of litigious claims.
34. The appointment of the members of the Review Panel will include:
- i. at least three (3) and not more than six (6) persons, excluding ex officio members, who are external to the Diocese, who will operate as volunteers and who have professional skills and personal backgrounds as a:
    - lawyer specialising in insurance law;
    - survivor of child abuse or advocate;
    - canon lawyer; and
    - social worker or psychologist.
  - ii. the DDOS (ex officio).
35. Review Panel members will be selected based on their demonstrated expertise and skills required to fulfil the responsibilities outlined.
36. The Bishop will appoint external Review Panel members and one member of the Review Panel to be the Chair.
37. Members of the Review Panel will not have any direct financial connections or business interests with the Diocese except for their unpaid role as a Review Panel member.
38. The appointment of Review Panel members is subject to the member:
- i. obtaining a Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) Clearance Number;
  - ii. completing of a National Criminal History Check (**NCHC**);
  - iii. Diocesan assessment of their suitability for employment based on the outcome of the NCHC and/or a WWCC Clearance;
  - iv. agreeing to undertake an induction and training process determined by the Diocese;
  - v. providing a written declaration of affiliation and business interests;
  - vi. agreeing to comply with the terms of reference of the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel of Review, as amended from time to time.
39. The Review Panel members experience and professional biographies, but not their names, will be publicly available.
40. The Diocese will provide the names of Review Panel members to Catholic Church Insurance (**CCI**) for the purpose of including them on the Diocesan Directors and Officers policy of insurance.

41. The Diocese will reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by a member directly relating to a member's work on the Review Panel, subject to preapproval.
42. With the exception of ex officio members, panel members will be appointed for a term of three (3) years. At the discretion of the Bishop, members may serve up to one (1) successive terms on the Review Panel to a maximum term of no greater than six (6) years.
43. The Review Panel will meet quarterly or as otherwise required by the Bishop. Dates will be provided in advance of each year to the Panel members. Meetings will be chaired by the Review Panel Chair.
44. The Agenda will be compiled by the Chair in collaboration with the DDOS and Review Panel. Meeting papers will be circulated by email one week prior to meetings.
45. Executive support for the Review Panel including without limitation preparation and distribution of meeting papers, minute taking, correspondence and report preparation will be provided by the Diocesan Office for Safeguarding.

## CHARTER REVIEW

46. Review of this Charter will be undertaken annually by the DDOS in consultation with the Heads of Agency, with a report provided to the Bishop recommending any necessary amendments or additional duties and responsibilities, and approved by the Bishop.

The children, young and vulnerable people of the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay must be kept safe.

**We will be kept safe by ADULTS who...**



**CARE**  
for us as we are a precious gift from God

**RESPECT** our rights, abilities, contributions, needs and wishes

**ASK** us how we are feeling and what we are thinking, ask us what we need

**LISTEN** to what we are really saying

**TELL** us about dangers – and what's being done to protect us

**SEE** what other adults are doing, and how they are behaving

**DO** what they are supposed to do and what they say they will do

**STEP UP AND SPEAK OUT**  
when we are being hurt, bullied or treated badly.



### APPROVAL DATE/REVISION SCHEDULE

Approved by: Diocesan Administrator, Diocese of Broken Bay

Date approved: 19 September 2018

To be Revised: 19 September 2019