

AUGUSTINIANS



PROVINCE OF OUR MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL AUSTRALASIA

AUGUSTINIAN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS POLICY **(INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS)**

The Augustinians' recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children and vulnerable adults and are committed to ensuring their safety and wellbeing.

The Augustinians' commit themselves to a 'zero tolerance' approach to any form of child abuse, which is defined as the physical, sexual, and/or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child, especially by a parent or a caregiver. Child abuse may include any act or failure to act by a parent or a caregiver that results in actual or potential harm to a child. It can occur in a child's home, or in organisations, schools or communities the child interacts with.

All members of the Augustinian Province, including those in Australia, the Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of South Korea, and their co-workers, have an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children and vulnerable persons are respected.

The Province, in its communities and ministries, recognises and affirms that each child should be cherished as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity which shall be respected, nurtured and protected.

The Province undertakes to do everything possible to create safe environments in ministries where the welfare of children, and vulnerable persons is paramount.

In partnership with primary carers the Province encourages and values the involvement of children, that enhances their spiritual, social, emotional and intellectual development.

In Augustinian organisations in Australia and in social welfare facilities in Korea and Vietnam we pledge to pay attention to the pastoral care and welfare of the children placed under Augustinian guidance.

This Professional Standards Policy strives to adhere to the principles and guidelines of the relevant documents of the Catholic Church in Australia and South Korea, and Vietnam, as well as the laws and guidelines of the civil authorities in each country in

which the Augustinians' serve and to be alert to ongoing changes to these requirements.

The Province is committed to:

- Best practice to ensure that children and other vulnerable persons are listened to and treated with respect and have both their rights protected and their welfare promoted;
- Minimising risks in order to safeguard the interests of children and other vulnerable persons;
- Ensuring that all Augustinians and their co-workers are carefully recruited, selected, trained, supported and supervised;
- Provide appropriate support for survivors of child sexual abuse:
- Provide appropriate training for members and co-workers;
- Working in partnership with statutory authorities for the prompt, just and professional management of complaints, including the immediate reporting of any child protection matter;
- Making this Professional Standards Policy widely known, accessible and understood, and implementing procedures and protocols that contribute to keeping safe children and other vulnerable persons with whom we are involved in our ministries.

(From the Acts of the Australian Province Mid-Chapter July 2016)

The Augustinians' will strive to implement the following principles and spirit of the guidelines presented in this outline of an effective child-safe institution.

1. Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture.

An appropriate response will be demonstrated by adherence to Province policies and processes which build a strong culture of safeguarding and professional boundaries, and by a pro-active attitude and alertness on the part of leadership and personnel in the area of safeguarding.

2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

The Province through its ministries and associates will be welcoming and responsive to the voice of the vulnerable.

3. Families and communities are informed and involved.

The Province will be cognitive of the need for outreach and openness towards the wider community.

4. Equity is promoted and diversity respected.

The Province in keeping with Gospel values and the 'option for the poor' will be seen to not favour any group or interest in its mission and ministry.

5. People working with children are suitable and supported.

Augustinians' by their manner of working with staff, associates and volunteers will be forthright in promoting appropriate formation and pastoral care for all such personnel.

6. Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focussed.

The Province will ensure that complaint policy and processes are clear, accessible, and effective through consultation, feedback and review. It will respond to complaints respectfully, actively and in a timely manner.

7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.

As part of initial and ongoing formation, all members and employees of the Province and its ministries, will ensure sufficient resources are directed and deployed in this task.

8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.

Augustinians' and their associates will be adequately acquainted with the norms of social behaviour and the use of and dangers of an online culture as it affects children and the vulnerable in their care.

9. Implementation of child safe standards is continuously reviewed and improved.

Both internal and external auditing of policies and procedures will be undertaken to ensure they continually support a culture and practice that puts children and vulnerable adults at the centre of our deliberations and actions.

10. Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe.

Policy makers at all level of the Order from Chapters to Provincial Councils and College Councils will be aware of the need to evaluate and revise relevant documentation and ensure its implementation.

POLICY BREACHES

Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action and may include suspension, dismissal, transfer to other duties, or termination of employment.

Updates to this Procedure

In line with OSA Policy Development, this policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if appropriate.

Revisions made to this document

Date	Major / Minor Revision	Description of Revision(s)
December '19	Major	Implementation

Contact Details

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