

Don Bosco Retreat Centre
Lysterfield



Safeguarding Policy Documents

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

Reporting Procedures

Code of Conduct

Don Bosco Retreat Centre Lysterfield

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

Don Bosco Retreat Centre is a Catholic centre animated by the Salesian charism and committed to Gospel values. Correspondingly, Don Bosco Retreat Centre is committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of all staff, volunteers and visitors. All people, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family or social background have equal rights to this protection.

All people (including children and vulnerable adults) have the right to be respected, valued and feel emotionally, physically and spiritually safe at all times.

This policy has been developed to uphold this commitment to safeguarding, to adhere to National and State legislation, and to comply with the policies and guidelines of the Catholic Church and the Salesians of Don Bosco.

2. Scope of Our Child Safe Policy

This Policy applies to:

- all members of the Salesian Community, Lysterfield;
- all paid staff;
- all volunteers;
- all contractors and their agents;
- all group organisers, leaders and instructors conducting programmes and activities at Don Bosco Retreat Centre, regardless of the group, organisation or body responsible for the programme or activity;
- all participants in programmes and activities conducted at Don Bosco Retreat Centre;
- all visitors.

3. The Purpose of this Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide a framework for safeguarding all involved with the ministries, programmes and activities that occur at or under the auspices of Don Bosco Retreat Centre;
- protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and harm;
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guides our approach to safeguarding.

Don Bosco Retreat Centre believes that no child, young person or vulnerable person should ever experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and are committed to their safety and wellbeing. Correspondingly, we are committed to professional practice that protects and promotes their welfare.

4. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- minimise the risk of abuse, misconduct and the misuse of positional power;
- ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and misconduct are handled professionally, and reported according to the relevant legal and ethical requirements;
- ensure that staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors are safe;
- promote the dignity and wellbeing of all.

5. Statement of Commitment to Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Don Bosco Retreat Centre is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults by providing an environment that is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe.

Don Bosco Retreat Centre is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and endeavours to provide a safe and supportive environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults by implementing the following safeguarding measures:

- a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers;
- appropriate recruitment processes, including screening and selection staff;
- orientation and training of new staff;
- ongoing training for all staff;
- requiring all staff and volunteers to have Working with Children Checks (WWCC);
- regularly verifying the WWCC status of all staff;
- ensuring supervision of staff and volunteers;
- ensuring visiting groups have appropriate safeguarding policies, practices and processes.

The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting at Don Bosco Retreat Centre:

- due diligence;
- integrity;
- duty of care;
- transparency;
- inclusivity;
- teamwork.

Accordingly, we recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, and is everyone's responsibility as outlined in the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children*;
- all children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other organisations/agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

6. Legal Framework

This Policy reflects legislation and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- National Legislation
 - National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children "Protecting Children is Everyone's Business" 2009 - 2020 (Commonwealth of Australia)
- State Legislation

- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)
- Working With Children Checks
 - Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic.)

7. Our Commitment

a) Code of Conduct

We will adopt and implement a Code of Conduct for all staff and volunteers, including boundaries of behaviour and expectations of interactions with visitors, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. All staff and volunteers will be expected to agree to implementing the Code of Conduct.

b) Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

We will ensure prospective staff and volunteers are selected by a transparent recruitment process that includes an interview, referee report and a Working with Children Checks (WWCC). Staff and volunteers will undertake induction training upon commencement of working.

c) Supervision, Training and Support of Staff and Volunteers

We will appropriate supervision of, conduct annual safeguarding training for, and provide support mechanisms for staff and volunteers.

d) Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious misconduct

We will listen to and believe children, young people and vulnerable adults who raise concerns. We will ensure that we have clear and appropriate procedures for responding to allegations of risk of harm, abuse or serious misconduct. All staff and volunteers will be expected to report disclosures or suspicions of abuse according to our procedures. Where an allegation of misconduct is made against a person in the organisation in relation to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, we will prioritise support to the child, young person or vulnerable adult and seek appropriate support to protect their safety as the paramount consideration.

e) Responding to other disclosures of abuse

We will understand the processes of responding to disclosures of abuse and harm including self-harm and suicide ideation.

We will ensure that appropriate training takes place to recognise and respond to indicators of abuse and neglect and offer support for all involved in the disclosure (including the staff and volunteers).

We understand that responding to abuse is not limited to children, but also includes adults within our programs who may be vulnerable at any given time where abuse could be present and that everyone understands the most appropriate steps to take in supporting vulnerable people within our community.

f) Provide an open safe environment

We will afford participants a say in the programmes and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation. We will be accountable and transparent.

We will create a child-friendly environment, allowing people to raise their concerns in an appropriate manner. We will obtain appropriate information relating to the programme participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

g) Understanding and valuing diversity

We will be mindful in our approach for all programmes to be inclusive of all people. This includes adapting programs for anyone with a disability to receive access to various programs, as well as provide adequate training for leaders.

We will be sensitive to those from 'Culturally and Linguistic Diverse' (CALD) backgrounds and those within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities with our programs, information, support and services. As well as upholding respect to all cultures and encourage the participation of all people and recognise their unique contribution to our community.

8. Updating this Policy

We are committed to reviewing this Policy and good practice annually.

During the next twelve months we commit to bring this policy into closer alignment with the Child Safe Standards of the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People and the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards* published by Catholic Professional Standards Limited.

9. Definitions

Abuse:

Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Family Violence
- Sexual Abuse
- Grooming
- Neglect

Child:

a person who is under the age of 18 years (eg: the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012, Victoria)

Disclosure:

a disclosure occurs when someone informs a person in authority/leadership (or a trusted adult) at Don Bosco Retreat Centre that they have been subject to abuse or know of abuse. A disclosure may or may not be an allegation or a notifiable circumstance, but it is the responsibility of the person in authority to investigate and take any appropriate action.

Child Safe Environment:

an environment in which duty of care is discharged by taking steps to keep all those in our care physically, emotionally and spiritually safe; an implements policies, professes and practices to minimise the risk of harm, including physical, sexual or emotional abuse (including bullying) or neglect.

Child Safe Staff:

Staff who have been through a recruitment process, undertake safeguarding training, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team member.

Child Safe Programme:

A programme in which events and activities have been thoroughly planned, and assessed for risks.

Vulnerable Person: a person who may be considered to be susceptible to abuse or exploitation based on factors such as their health status (physical or mental), age, grief, previous experience of abuse, social isolation or financial hardship. In this sense vulnerability can be temporary or permanent.

Don Bosco Retreat Centre Lysterfield

Interim Reporting Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of these procedures is to have a clear and comprehensible set of procedures for staff, volunteers or others to make a report regarding:

- the physical or sexual abuse or suspected abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult being at risk of harm or neglect;
- breaches of Don Bosco Retreat Centre's Code of Conduct by a staff member or volunteer;
- concerns regarding the programmes conducted at Don Bosco Retreat Centre and / or those conducting the programmes.

2. Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory reporting refers to the legal requirement of certain professional groups to report a reasonable belief of child physical or sexual abuse to child protection authorities.

In Victoria, under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, mandated reporters must make a report to child protection, if:

- in the course of practising their profession or carrying out duties of their office, position or employment
- they form a reasonable belief, that a child has been or is at risk of significant harm, as a result of physical or sexual abuse, and
- the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from that abuse.

The report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief and after each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

At present, in Victoria, the following are mandated reporters: police officers, registered medical practitioners, nurses including midwives, registered teachers, school principals, out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers), early childhood workers, youth justice workers, registered psychologists, and school counsellors (effective 31 January 2020). At a date, yet to be determined, religious ministers will also become mandated reporters.

Mandated reporters are required to make a report to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection. It is mandatory to report concerns relating to physical and sexual abuse. While not mandated, making a report to DHHS Child Protection may also be needed for other reasons including emotional abuse, neglect, medical neglect, family violence, human trafficking (including forced marriage), sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution), risk-taking behaviour, female genital mutilation, risk to an unborn child and a child or young person exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours.

A "reasonable belief" or a "belief on reasonable grounds" is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A "reasonable belief" is formed is a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if:

- a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- a child or young person exhibits sexually-abusive or age-inappropriate behaviours;

- professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused;
- signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

While some professional groups are mandated reporters, in Victoria, all adults and professionals are encouraged to exercise their duty of care to report concerns of child abuse and neglect. Any person is able to make a report to DHHS or Child FIRST or Orange Door.

Under Victorian law, “child” refers to a person 17 years of age or younger.

3. Reporting Concerns at Don Bosco Retreat Centre

a) If a mandated reporter has formed a reasonable belief of physical or sexual abuse or has other concerns regarding the welfare of a child:

- Discuss the matter with the Director
 - Discussing the matter with the Director does not negate the legal responsibility of a mandated reporter to make a report to DHHS Child Protection if he / she has formed a reasonable belief that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse (irrespective of whether or not the Director agrees).
- Make the report to DHHS Child Protection as soon as practicably possible
- Inform the Rector the Salesian Community and the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer
- If there is suspicion that a sexual offence involving an adult and a child under 16 has taken place, it must be reported to the police.
- If there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, but it is determined that the child is not at risk of significant harm, and the immediate safety of the child is not compromised, a referral to Child FIRST or The Orange Door may be appropriate.
- Determine and implement strategies to safeguard the well-being of the child
 - It is a sensible cause of action to seek advice from DHHS regarding this at the time the report is made.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

b) If a person who is not a mandated reporter has formed a reasonable belief of physical or sexual abuse or has other concerns regarding the welfare of a child:

- Discuss the matter with the Director
 - Discussing the matter with the Director does not preclude the possibility of the concerned person making a report to DHHS Child Protection if he / she has formed a reasonable belief that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse (irrespective of whether or not the Director agrees).
- Make the report to DHHS Child Protection as soon as practicably possible
- Inform the Rector the Salesian Community and the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer
- If there is suspicion that a sexual offence involving an adult and a child under 16 has taken place, it must be reported to the police.
- If there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, but it is determined that the child is not at risk of significant harm, and the immediate safety of the child is not compromised, a referral to Child FIRST or The Orange Door may be appropriate.
- Determine and implement strategies to safeguard the well-being of the child
 - It is a sensible cause of action to seek advice from DHHS regarding this at the time the report is made.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

c) Reporting concerns about alleged inappropriate behaviour by Don Bosco Retreat Centre Staff and / or Volunteers, including alleged breaches of the Don Bosco Retreat Centre Code of Conduct:

- Discuss the concern, which may involve an alleged breach of the Don Bosco Retreat Centre Code of Conduct, with the Director.
- If the concern involves the Director, the concern should be reported to the Rector of the Salesian Community or the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer.
- If the Rector and the Director are one and the same person, the concern should be reported to the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer.
- If the person making the report is not satisfied with the response of the Director and / or Staff of Don Bosco Retreat Centre, he/she may make a report to the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer.
- Irrespective of the statements above, a person may make a report directly to the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

d) Reporting concerns about alleged inappropriate behaviour by a visitor to or participant in a programme being conducted at Don Bosco Retreat Centre

- Discuss the concern with the Director
- If the Director determines, in discussion with the complainant, that further investigation is merited, a plan of action should be implemented.
- Under normal circumstances, the Director should discuss the concern with the leader, organiser or representative of the group or organisation that is visiting, however there may, at times, be circumstances such that this may be deemed inappropriate or impractical.
- If the person making the report is not satisfied with the response of the Director and / or Staff of Don Bosco Retreat Centre, he/she may make a report to the Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer.
- If the person expressing the concern is a mandated reporter then the procedures in (a), above, apply.
- If it is suspected an alleged criminal offence has been committed, the matter should be reported to the police.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

4. Contact Information

Don Bosco Retreat Centre
 465 Lysterfield Road
 Lysterfield Vic 3156
 Phone: 9752 2432
 Email: dbrclysterfield@gmail.com

Salesian Province Safeguarding Officer
 3 Middle Street, Ascot Vale, 3032
 PO Box 264, Ascot Vale, 3032
 Phone: 9377 6000
 Email: 9377 6000

DHHS Child Protection
 East Division Intake - 1300 360 391

Child FIRST
 Outer East: 1300 369 146

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Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

Staff and volunteers are responsible for maintaining a professional role with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries which serve to protect everyone for misunderstandings.

This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour which Don Bosco Camp Retreat Centre expects from all people associated with or representing it.

2. Purpose

Following this code will help to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them. Having a Code of Conduct that everyone adheres to also protects the organisation because opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

3. Upholding this Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code according to the procedures established by Don Bosco Retreat Centre.

Staff and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures, including any breaches involving external workers or volunteers.

All allegations of child abuse will be reported to statutory authorities, such as police or child protection. A report may/will also be made to the Salesian Province Safe-Guarding Officer - but this will not replace or negate the obligation to report to statutory authorities.

Don Bosco Camp and Centre, Safety Beach condemns all forms of child abuse, discrimination and sexual exploitation. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety for people involved in our programs including all children, people with a disability, people from a CALD background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

4. Commitment of Staff and Volunteers

I WILL

- Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of the Don Bosco Retreat Centre;
- Treat everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for everyone, including children, young people, vulnerable adults, visitors, staff and volunteers;
- Report any concerns of risk of harm, abuse or discrimination in accordance with the Don Bosco Retreat Centre's safeguarding policies and procedures;

- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by a fellow worker, volunteer, contactor or visitor via Don Bosco Retreat Centre safeguarding reporting procedures;
- Keep all information regarding safeguarding concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures;
- Respect all cultural differences;
- Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, and allow children, young people and vulnerable adults to participate in the decisions that affect them;
- Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts;
- Take responsibility for being accountable and not placing myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made against me or my behaviour misinterpreted;
- Wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working with or near children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Self-assess my behaviour, actions, language and relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Comply with all relevant Australian Commonwealth and Victorian State legislation;
- Immediately disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse or policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. This includes disclosing any charges or convictions made against oneself or others;
- Avoid favouritism;
- Ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and within the parameters of the programme or event;
- Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory;
- Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities;
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse;
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like;
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

I WILL NOT

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate;
- Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with or about others including children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Allow allegations, suspected abuse, risk of harm or disclosures go unreported;
- Do things of a personal nature that a child, young person or vulnerable adult can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform my supervisor first and be as open as possible in my behaviour, and ensure that safeguards are implemented;
- Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children;
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- Conduct a sexual relationship, or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- Seek to make contact and/or spend time with any child, young person or vulnerable adult that I come into contact with as a representative of the Don Bosco Retreat Centre outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of Don Bosco Retreat Centre;
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children, young people or vulnerable adults that is illegal, unsafe or abusive;

- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Child Safe Concerns Person and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures;
- Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- Let children and young people have my personal contact details (mobile number or address);
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive;
- Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality;
- Jump to conclusions about others;
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues;
- Rely on my reputation or that of the organisation to protect me.

5. Personal Statement of Commitment

I am responsible for my own actions and for utilising safeguarding standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviours that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Safeguarding policies of Don Bosco Camp Retreat Centre.

I have read the Don Bosco Retreat Centre Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and participated in training in them. I am aware that Don Bosco Retreat Centre expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct above. I agree to act in accordance with the provisions of this Code of Conduct during the course of my association with Don Bosco Retreat Centre.

I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of this Code of Conduct. I understand that in making that report, Don Bosco Centre may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner to meet obligations under Australian Commonwealth and Victorian State Law.

Name _____

Witness Name _____

Signature _____

Witness Signature _____

Date ____ / ____ / ____

Witness Date ____ / ____ / ____