



Tarrowarra
Abbey

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

**This Child Safeguarding Policy is signed and approved
on 1 May 2019.**

Steele Hartmann.

Rt Rev Dom Steele Hartmann OCSO
Abbot of Tarrowarra Abbey

CONTENTS

• Commitment	Page 3
• Leadership	Page 3
• Standard 1 Committed leadership, governance and culture	Page 4
• Standard 2 Children are safe, informed and participate	Page 5
• Standard 3 Partnering with families, carers and communities	Page 5
• Standard 4 Equity is promoted and diversity is respected	Page 5
• Standard 5 Robust human resource management	Page 5
• Standard 6 Effective Complaints Management	Page 7
• Standard 7 Ongoing Education and Training	Page 8
• Standard 8 Safe Physical and Online Environments	Page 8
• Standard 9 Continuous Improvement	Page 10
• Standard 10 Policies and Procedures Support Child Safety	Page 10
• Bibliography	Page 11

- Appendix A Page 12
Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement
of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)
- Appendix B Page 14
Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)
- Appendix C Page 16
Information Sharing and Record-Keeping
Policy and Procedure of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)
- Appendix D Page 17
Safeguarding Implementation Plan
of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)
- Appendix E Page 18
Complaints Handling Policy
of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)

COMMITMENT

1. This *Child Safeguarding Policy* (Policy) emphasises the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (Cistercians) in Australia's total commitment to safeguarding practices for the protection of children. By definition, a child is a person who is under 18 years of age.
2. We adopt the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards* from the *Catholic Professional Standards Ltd*. We fall under Category Two (Contact with Children).
3. The Standards provide the framework for Catholic Church entities to build child-safe cultures and to advance the safety of children and vulnerable adults across the Catholic Church in Australia.
4. The Policy and the relevant practices are reviewed yearly by the Safeguarding Committee.

LEADERSHIP

1. The current Abbot of Tarrawarra Abbey is Dom Steele Hartmann ocsso.
2. The Abbot appoints the Safeguarding Coordinator. The Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for reporting to the Abbot about the monastery's child safe performance. The current Safeguarding Coordinator is Fr Samuel Chua ocsso.
3. The Safeguarding Committee comprises of the following monks:
 - Dom Steele Hartmann ocsso (Abbot)
 - Br Bernard Redden ocsso (Prior)
 - Fr Joseph Chua ocsso (Sub-Prior)
 - Fr Samuel Chua ocsso (Safeguarding Coordinator)

1. **STANDARD 1**

COMMITTED LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

“Child safeguarding is embedded in the entity’s leadership, governance and culture.”

- 1.1 We are committed to child safeguarding and we take a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse by:
 - 1.1.1 Promoting child safeguarding regularly.
 - 1.1.2 Emphasising that child safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.
 - 1.1.3 Actively monitoring safeguarding compliance and risk management.
- 1.2 All monks and staff members receive a copy of the Policy.
- 1.3 A *Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement* (see Appendix A) is displayed at the entrances to the church and in the guesthouse. It is also available on the website of the monastery.
- 1.4 The *Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct* on the expected behavioural standards and responsibilities towards children is found in Appendix B.
- 1.5 The Policy outlines the risk management strategies to prevent, identify and mitigate risks to children through regular monitoring and review of the processes.
- 1.6 The information sharing and record keeping policy and procedure is found in Appendix C.
- 1.7 The Safeguarding Committee facilitates the implementation of the Policy in Tarrawarra Abbey. A sample of the Safeguarding Implementation Plan is found in Appendix D.
- 1.8 The Safeguarding Committee, assisted by the Tarrawarra Advisory Group, carries out a risk management process which accesses, evaluates, reviews and oversees the safeguarding of children.

2. **STANDARD 2**
CHILDREN ARE SAFE, INFORMED AND PARTICIPATE
“Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.”

This standard is not applicable to the Cistercians.

3. **STANDARD 3**
PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES, CARERS AND COMMUNITIES
“Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safeguarding.”

This standard is not applicable to the Cistercians.

4. **STANDARD 4**
EQUITY IS PROMOTED AND DIVERSITY IS RESPECTED
“Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.”

This standard is not applicable to the Cistercians.

5. **STANDARD 5**
ROBUST HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
“People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safeguarding values in practice.”

5.1 Recruitment including advertising, interview questions, referee checks and pre-employment screening of new staff members must emphasise child safeguarding. All recruitment of staff members for the Cistercians is handled by the *Human Resources Department of the Archdiocese of Melbourne*.

5.2 All monks (except those who are retired) and staff members are required to have a current *Working With Children Check (WWCC)*. WWCC is a statutory screening requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. Currently, each state and territory in Australia has its own name and procedures.

- 5.3 The Safeguarding Coordinator keeps records and monitors the status of the WWCC of all monks and staff members.
- 5.4 Monks who are priests (including those in formation who are priests) and solemnly professed monks must register themselves with the *Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR)*.
 - 5.4.1 ACMR is an online system for a Church Authority to verify that an individual coming to exercise ministry in a new jurisdiction is currently in good standing.
 - 5.4.2 A ministry includes celebrating or concelebrating mass, serving at mass, and giving a lecture or retreat.
 - 5.4.3 When a monk celebrates mass or conducts a lecture or retreat outside of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, he is obliged to provide the ACMR number and a copy of his WWCC to the organiser. Once the approval is given in writing, a copy is to be given to the Safeguarding Coordinator. Sometimes, within the Archdiocese of Melbourne, providing the ACMR number and a copy of the WWCC are also required.
 - 5.4.4 We require bishops and priests who wish to concelebrate at our masses to provide their ACMR numbers and the equivalent WWCC to us. A register is kept in the sacristy.
 - 5.4.5 Priests from overseas are required to present a Letter of Introduction (*celebret*) from their bishops or superiors which declares that they are in good standing before coming to Australia. A register is kept in the sacristy.
- 5.5 New candidates are required to undergo psychological testing. The screening process includes a psychosexual assessment. Further psychological and psychosexual evaluations may be required before first profession, solemn profession and ordination.
- 5.6 New staff members receive induction on child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 5.7 Formation courses include the understanding of the Policy, *Appropriate Relationships with Adults Policy*, and relevant topics on sexuality.
- 5.8 Newly ordained monks and newly solemnly professed monks are supported with a suitable mentor for at least five years.

- 5.9 Visiting monks and nuns of our Order will be given a copy of the Policy and *Appropriate Relationships with Adults Policy* at the beginning of their stay in Australia.
- 5.10 All monks who are involved in initial formation of new members, and/or giving spiritual direction are required to attend monthly professional supervision, with a minimum of 10 hours a year.

6. **STANDARD 6**
EFFECTIVE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

“Processes for raising concerns and complaints are responsive, understood, accessible and used by children, families, carers, communities and personnel.”

- 6.1 Historical or current complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly, respectfully, and thoroughly, and meet all reporting, privacy, employment, and canon law obligations.
- 6.2 When the Abbot is made aware of an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a monk or a staff member, the allegation is reported to police.
- 6.3 The Abbot will do all he reasonably can to provide information, support and care to the child and the parents. If circumstances permit, the Abbot is encouraged to have another monk present with him at the time of a report.
- 6.3.1 For adult complainants, if appropriate, will be referred to *Towards Healing*. If the complaint is of a criminal nature, we encourage the adult complainant to report the matter to the police.
- 6.4 If a complaint of child abuse against a monk or a staff member occurs, the Abbot will stand them down from ministry or work while the complaint is investigated. Appropriate support is provided to the monk or a staff member concerned.
- 6.5 If the Abbot himself is the subject of a complaint, then the Prior will act as per above after informing the Father Immediate and the Council Members.

6.6 We record all complaints, incidents, allegations, suspicions and referrals. All information must be stored, protected and retained for fifty years.

6.7 The *Complaints Handling Policy* is found in Appendix E.

7. **STANDARD 7**

ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

“Personnel are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through information, ongoing education and training.”

7.1 Annual child safeguarding seminar or refresher training is held for all monks and staff members.

7.2 All members of the Safeguarding Committee must participate in *CPSL Introductory Safeguarding Training*.

7.3 Monks who have child safeguarding responsibilities are in supervision and are required to attend relevant professional development courses, such as online courses provided by CPSL.

7.4 The Safeguarding Coordinator keeps records of ongoing training and professional development of all monks and staff.

8. **STANDARD 8**

SAFE PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

“Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.”

8.1 We aim to provide a safe, open, visible and enriching environment for children who visit the monastery. Guidance is given to all monks and staff members as to behaviours and practices that promote an open and safe environment with children. All children who visit the monastery are accompanied by an external adult, for example, parents or teachers.

- 8.2 Situations where children are present in the monastery:
 - 8.2.1 Attendance at Masses and Liturgy of the Hours.
 - 8.2.2 School groups such as Confirmation or Religious Education classes.
 - 8.2.3 Children of visiting family members, friends, guests or visitors.
- 8.3 We require a Letter of Introduction from the principal of a school before a visit to the monastery. The letter must indicate the names of the teachers and their WWCC numbers.
- 8.4 Safety issues:
 - 8.4.1 We are aware of the limited facilities we have for the reception of children and the Guestmaster shall make this known to groups wishing to bring children to the monastery.
 - 8.4.2 Families are usually offered the use of the cottage and their children are their responsibility. Parents are to be instructed not to let their children wander without adequate adult supervision.
 - 8.4.3 The Guestmaster should inform the adults responsible for the children about the physical environment of the property, for examples, the presence of machinery on the farm, the cattle, and the danger of electric fences.
 - 8.4.4 Children should not be allowed to wander unescorted by those responsible for their safety.
- 8.5 Current Victorian laws ensure that a failure to protect children, or a failure to report sexual abuse against children is a criminal offence.
- 8.6 It is understood that in exceptional circumstances, such as an emergency, a departure from the principles set out in the policy may be necessary or unavoidable. If this is the case, any deviation should be taken in such a way as to ensure safety and accountability to the maximum extent possible. This will include reporting to the Abbot or the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- 8.7 If we have become aware that a visitor to the monastery is a subject of a substantiated complaint of a child abuse or has been convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, we implement the process for assessing and managing the risks posed to children by the person's ongoing involvement in the abbey.

9. **STANDARD 9**
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

“Entities regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children safe.”

- 9.1 We regularly review and improve our child safeguarding practices. The *Safeguarding Implementation Plan* in Appendix D outlines the monitoring and continual improvement of child safeguarding practices. It is regularly reviewed and updated by the Safeguarding Committee.
- 9.2 The Policy is reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Committee.
- 9.3 Input on the current processes received from the monks and staff members are taken seriously.
- 9.4 The Abbot reports on input from the monks and staff members before making changes to the various safeguarding policies and practices.

10. **STANDARD 10**
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SUPPORT CHILD SAFETY

“Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.”

- 10.1 We ensure that all our safeguarding policies and procedures address the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*.
- 10.2 We aim to produce safeguarding policies and procedures that are accessible and easy to understand.
- 10.3 We believe that consulting our monks and staff members is the best practice to develop good child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 10.4 We promote and enact relevant child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 10.5 We encourage regular discussion and feedback from monks and staff members on their understanding and the practical implementation of the safeguarding policies and procedures.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Integrity in Ministry: A Document of Principles and Standards for Catholic Clergy and Religious in Australia (Jun 2004)

Integrity in the Service of the Church: A Resource Document of Principles and Standards for Lay Workers in the Catholic Church in Australia (Sep 2011)

May Our Children Flourish: Code of Conduct for Caring for Children (2011)

National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Jan 2019)

New Laws for the Protection of Children in Victoria (Oct 2014)

Towards Healing (Jan 2016 – digital edition)

Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme (Mar 2018)

Appendix A

Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)

Tarrawarra Abbey of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (Cistercians) is actively committed to fostering communities of safeguarding that recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children.

We encourage open communication whereby families and communities are informed of relevant issues and participate in decisions about the safety of children. It is particularly important to us to look for avenues to empower children to have a say and be listened to.

We actively seek to become and remain informed of the causes and signs of child abuse and neglect.

When we receive information about concerns or witness any matter relating to abuse of a child, we respond appropriately and report any such concerns to the appropriate authority. This includes contacting the police immediately where there may be immediate risk of harm to any person, especially a child.

Every person within Tarrawarra Abbey who comes into contact, or works, with children seeks to uphold the dignity of all children and commits to establishing safe and supportive relationships.

Tarrawarra Abbey has documented policies and procedures to prevent risks to children and build a strong culture of safeguarding. All monks, staff members and volunteers are expected to follow these policies and procedures and contribute to the culture of care and protection of all children.

We plan, organise and review all activities with children, proactively considering potential risks and strive to ensure risks are reduced, and eliminated where possible. Everyone is encouraged to communicate any area of concern or where you think our approach may need improvement.

Anyone who brings forward a suspicion, concerns, knowledge or allegation of current or past abuse of a child to Tarrawarra Abbey will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in line with our lawful obligations and our own Complaints Handling Policy.

We regularly undertake internal and external auditing of our safeguarding policies and practices to make sure that they always support a culture and practice that puts the safety of children at the centre of our thinking and action.

We listen to the voices of children as we constantly strive to remain vigilant and make improvements.

For more information or to raise a concern, please contact:

Fr Samuel Chua oco

Safeguarding Coordinator

Tarrawarra Abbey

Email: admin@cistercian.org.au

Appendix B

Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)

This *Code of Conduct* clarifies and confirms the child safeguarding standards of behaviour that are expected of monks and staff member of Tarrawarra Abbey.

We support the rights of children and will act to make sure a safe and caring environment is maintained at all times.

We encourage the active participation of monks and staff member in creating and maintaining a respectful and secure environment for Tarrawarra Abbey

As a monk or staff member, your responsibilities are to:

1. Maintain clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour with children.
2. Treat everyone with respect and conduct yourself at all times in a way that is a positive example to children with whom you interact so that your attitude and language sustains dignity and self-worth.
3. Protect the safety and wellbeing of children with whom you come into contact through your role.
4. Report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Safeguarding Coordinator.
5. Raise any concerns, issues and problems about child protection with the Safeguarding Coordinator.
6. Ensure that another adult is present or close by when providing pastoral ministry to children.
7. Hear confession for children in an open space within the clear line of sight of another adult.
8. Refrain from accepting the offer of communication from children through any form of electronic communication, including social media unless you are related to the child.

The following are unacceptable behaviours with children:

1. Discriminatory behaviour or language about any of the following is not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, physical development, religion, sexuality or political views.
2. References to physical development.
3. Ridiculing, demeaning, intimidating or threatening statements.
4. Sexually suggestive comments or jokes.
5. Inappropriate physical contact that may be construed as sexual, for example, tickling games, wrestling, or allowing children to sit on a lap.

6. Developing any special relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism, for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children.
7. Photographing or videoing a child without the consent of the parent or guardians.
8. Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal or legal drugs that are reasonably likely to impair judgement.

All monks and staff are accountable for their own conduct. Any breaches of the *Code of Conduct* have implications for Tarrawarra Abbey as a whole.

Appendix C

Information Sharing and Record-Keeping Policy and Procedure of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)

Tarrawarra Abbey of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (Cistercians) is bound by the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act). We collect and hold your personal information, that is, information about you such as your name, contact details and records of our dealings with you.

Use and disclosure

We will normally use or disclose your personal information only for the purposes that it was given to us, and for purposes that are related to one of our ministries or activities. We may disclose your personal information to external organisation, including:

1. Regulatory bodies.
2. Our professional advisors, including our accountants, internal and external auditors and lawyers.
3. Government departments or agencies who provide funding Tarrawarra Abbey's services.

Except as set out above, we will not disclose your personal information to a third party unless one of the following applies:

1. You (or the individual for whom you are the representative) have consented.
2. If we believe you would reasonable expect us to use or disclose the information for another purpose related to the purpose for which it was collected.
3. If required to do so by law.
4. If it will prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to somebody's life, health or safety or to public health or safety.
5. If it is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of a law conducted by an enforcement body.
6. If it is reasonably necessary to assist in locating a missing person;

For more information please contact:

Fr Samuel Chua ocso

Safeguarding Coordinator

Tarrawarra Abbey

Email: admin@cistercian.org.au

Appendix D

Safeguarding Implementation Plan of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)

Date	
Safeguarding Policy Reference No.	
Goal	
Actions To Be Taken	
Responsible Person	
Expected Completion Date	
Supporting Documents Required	
Status	<p>Started on _____</p> <p>Completed on _____</p>
Comments	

Appendix E

Complaints Handling Policy of Tarrawarra Abbey (May 2019)

