



Child Safety Policy- Wodonga Catholic Parish

This Child Safe Policy has been endorsed by the Parish Pastoral Council and was approved by Fr Dennis Cramer, on November 2nd 2016.

Our commitment to child safety

Our Parish is committed to child safety. All children who come to Wodonga Catholic Parish have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun. This policy was developed in collaboration with our staff, volunteers, children who come to our parish and their parents. It applies to all staff, volunteers, children and individuals involved in our parish.

Children's rights to safety and participation

Wodonga Catholic Parish staff and volunteers encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them. We encourage parents to teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

We value diversity and do not tolerate discriminatory practices in our Parish.

To achieve this we:

- **Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families**
- **Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families**
- **Welcome children with a disability and their families to promote their participation**
- **Seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds**

Recruiting staff and volunteers

Wodonga Catholic Parish applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.

Code of Conduct

Wodonga Catholic Parish seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Our Parish takes all allegations seriously and have appointed **Sonia La Motte-Schubert and Jacinta Bartlett** to be the Child Safety Persons with specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers parents or children. **Sonni can be contacted through the Parish Centre on (02) 6024 3366 - Jacinta may be contacted on 0418-470-532**

Risk management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

*This next review of this policy is due on **March 1, 2018.***