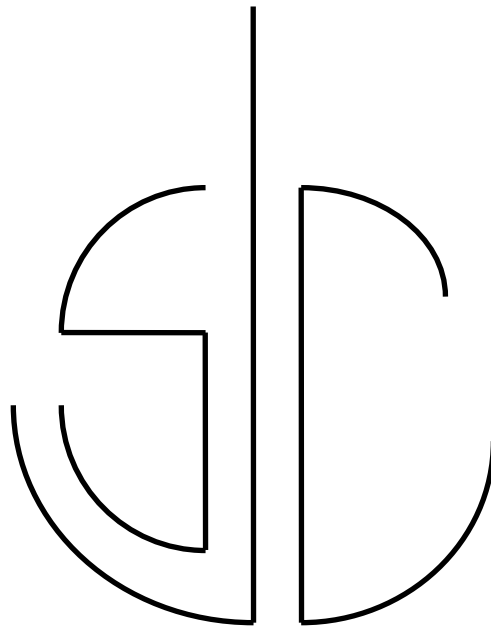


**Policy for
Safeguarding
Children and
Adults at risk**



***Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny
Australian Communities***

PREAMBLE.

The Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny are called to announce the Good News, to liberate, empower and promote the dignity of the entire human person, as did our Foundress, Anne Marie Javouhey,

In this spirit of being followers of the God of all Creation, we are committed to safeguarding the dignity and fundamental rights of all people in our care especially children and vulnerable adults. In the same way, we are committed to protecting the dignity and fundamental rights of all our members, especially the sisters in formation and the older sisters, as our relationships, one with another, reflect our call to follow Jesus.

General Chapter, Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny, Paris 2018.

The sisters in Australia live in retirement, four in an Aged Care Facility, five in independent units for the elderly, two in a community house. Formerly they were engaged in health and aged care, education and pastoral ministries. A staff member is employed part time for administrative purposes.

1. LEADERSHIP

1.1 The Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny is an international Congregation of Religious Sisters with its Generalate in Paris. The Leader of Australia and Papua New Guinea Region resides in PNG. There are two communities in Australia, each with its own community leader.

1.2 The Region Leader appoints a Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator is responsible for reporting to the Region Leader about the Congregation's performance with regards to the safety of children and adults at risk.

1.3 The Safeguarding Committee comprises of two sisters and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The committee meets regularly.

1.4 The Safeguarding Co-ordinator facilitates the implementation of this policy.

2. COMMITMENT

2.1 This policy emphasises the total commitment of all sisters and staff member to safeguarding practices ensuring the safety, well-being and protection from any form of harm or abuse of children, youth and adults at all times. For the purpose of this document, a child is somebody under the age of eighteen.

Child abuse includes physical, psychological and sexual abuse, neglect, exposure to family violence and grooming as defined as follows:

- physical abuse refers to any non-accidental physically aggressive act towards a child. Physical abuse may be intentional or may be the inadvertent result of physical punishment. Physically abusive behaviours include shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning and kicking;

- sexual abuse refers to a person who uses power, force or authority to involve a child or young person in any form of unwanted or illegal sexual activity. This can involve touching or no contact at all. This may take the form of taking sexually explicit photographs or videos of children, forcing children to watch or take part in sexual acts and forcing or coercing children to have sex or engage in sexual acts with other children or adults;
- neglect refers to a failure by a caregiver to provide the basic requirements for meeting the physical and emotional developmental needs of a child. Physically neglectful behaviours include a failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene or medical attention;
- psychological abuse refers to inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts and a failure to provide adequate non-physical nurture or emotional availability. Psychologically abusive behaviours include rejecting, ignoring, isolating, terrorising, corrupting, verbal abuse and belittlement;
- exposure to family violence is generally considered to be a form of psychologically abusive behaviour, where a child is present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse or psychological maltreatment, or is visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour; and
- grooming refers to a pattern of behaviour aimed at engaging a child as a precursor to sexual abuse. It includes establishing a 'special' friendship/ relationship with the child. Grooming can include the conditioning of parents and other adults to think that the relationship with the child is 'normal' and positive. The process can take as little as a few days or as long as months or even years.

We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes the safety and inclusiveness of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, those with culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability and/or particular vulnerabilities.

2.2 We take zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and to the abuse of adults at risk by:

- Promoting child safeguarding regularly.
- Emphasising that child safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, sisters and staff.
- Actively monitoring safeguarding compliance and risk management.
- Educating and training of sisters and staff in matters pertaining to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

2.3 We adopt the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards from the Catholic Professional Standards Ltd. We fall under Category Two (Contact with Children)

2.4 All the sisters and staff member receive a copy of this policy.

3. PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT TO CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

3.1 We aim to provide a safe, open, and visible environment for children who might visit the communities and a safe environment for our senior sisters.

3.2 The Code of Conduct on the expected behavioural standards and our responsibilities towards children is found in Appendix A. All the sisters and staff member must sign the Code of Conduct.

3.3 Should contractors be obtained for maintenance at the Region Office, they will be supervised. For more information, please refer to Appendix F.

4. COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

4.1 We have professional, legal and moral obligations to report an incident when we know a child is experiencing or is at the risk of experiencing abuse or form a suspicion of abuse or receiving a disclosure of abuse from another person

4.2 *FOR COMPLAINTS* please contact: Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny; mark attention *Safeguarding Coordinator*, email : clunymelb@bigpond.com

4.3 For more information, please refer to Appendix B – Child Safety Complaint Handling Policy.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The Safeguarding Co-ordinator carries out a regular risk management process to prevent, identify and mitigate actual and potential risks relating to children. Our dwellings are monitored for the safety of the elderly sisters, adults at risk

5.2 For more information, please refer to Appendix C– Risk Management for Child Safety.

6. SAFE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

6.1 We recognise we have a duty of care to maintain responsible use of all electronic equipment and the internet.

6.2 For more information, please refer to Appendix D – Safe Use of Technology Policy.

7. WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

7.1 All sisters (except sisters in residential age care) will have a Working with Children Check, the statutory screening requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work.

7.2 These Checks will be confirmed electronically with the Department of Justice, and will be recorded.

8. INFORMATION SHARING AND RECORD KEEPING

8.1 Any complaint relating to child safety and the safety of adults at risk, will be recorded accurately, detailing the incident, complaint, response and decision.

8.2 We may need to disclose some personal information to external regulatory bodies in accordance with statutory requirements.

8.3 For more information, please refer to Appendix E – Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy.

9, CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH

- Any breach of the Safeguarding Policy or Code of Conduct should be referred to the leader for further action
- A breach of the Safeguarding policy and/or Code of Conduct is a disciplinary matter which may result in formal warning or suspension from ministry or service. Serious breaches of the Safeguarding policy or Code of Conduct may result in dismissal for employees and volunteers, or in the case of Sisters, disciplinary action, including dismissal, in accordance with our Constitutions and the canonical process.

10. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

10.1 Recruitment of staff will reflect the Congregation's commitment to safeguarding of children and adults at risk. Recruitment documentation and employment contracts will have specific reference to safeguarding. A Working with Children Check (WWCC) will be required of candidates who will need to demonstrate that they recognise the importance of boundaries and what constitutes good behaviour around children.

10.2 New staff member/s, will receive induction on policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk before starting work.

11. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

11.1 This policy and all other relevant safeguarding practices are reviewed and updated yearly by the Safeguarding Committee.

This Policy was launched in October 2020.



SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH OF CLUNY CODE OF CONDUCT

The members and staff:

- a) Will exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity,
- b) Act lawfully and comply with all legislative requirements,
- c) Will provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written or verbal intimidation or harassment , maintaining clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour,
- d) Will avoid taking unfair advantage of a counselling relationship for their own benefit,
- e) Will not physically, sexually, verbally or emotionally abuse or neglect a minor or adult,
- f) Will share concerns about suspicions or inappropriate behaviour with the safeguarding officer
- g) Will accept their personal responsibility to protect minors or vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse.
- h) Will use the internet and other communication devices in an ethically appropriate manner.
- i) Will create and maintain an environment which promotes the safety and inclusiveness of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, those with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability and/or particular vulnerabilities.

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct

..... SignatureDate

..... Full Name



SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CLUNY

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

PURPOSE: This policy provides guidance on how to receive record and report on incidents and complaints.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all Sisters, staff members and volunteers, when receiving a disclosure or notice of an incident or complaint.

COMPLAINTS

A 'complaint' includes disclosures that may be about, or relate to, abuse perpetrated by Sisters, staff or volunteers. It also includes any allegation, suspicion, concern or breach of the Code of Conduct.

A complaint can be made by anyone – including a child, adult survivor, parent, trusted adult, independent support person, staff member, volunteer or community member.

A complaint may be made about an adult allegedly perpetrating abuse, or about a child exhibiting harmful behaviours. A complaint may relate to an incident that has occurred recently, is still occurring, or an event that may have taken place years or decades before.

When a complaint of abuse or misconduct is made to a Sister, staff member or volunteer, the person receiving the complaint must report the matter to the Leader, who will confer with the Safeguarding Coordinator to ascertain the seriousness of the matter.

In reviewing the incident or allegation, the safety of children is paramount. Where there is a reasonable belief that a child is in immediate danger, police and the relevant child protection agency must be contacted without delay. Any allegation of criminal behaviour against a child will also be immediately reported to Police.

The Safeguarding Coordinator will conduct a risk assessment at the start and throughout the investigation process and take any action necessary to ensure the safety of the complainant and related parties. In the case where a criminal or serious allegation has been made, the Leader and Safeguarding Officer must assess the respondent's current involvement with children or young people and take the appropriate risk management action. This may include standing down or removing the respondent from their role and/or ministry while the complaint is investigated.

The pastoral care and wellbeing of the complainant/victim of alleged abuse must be a key focus in the complaints handling process. Pastoral care should also be considered for other affected parties, such as other children, families and other personnel who may require support. The Leader will offer

to connect the complainant and their families with services that can provide them with support to manage difficult or traumatic experiences.

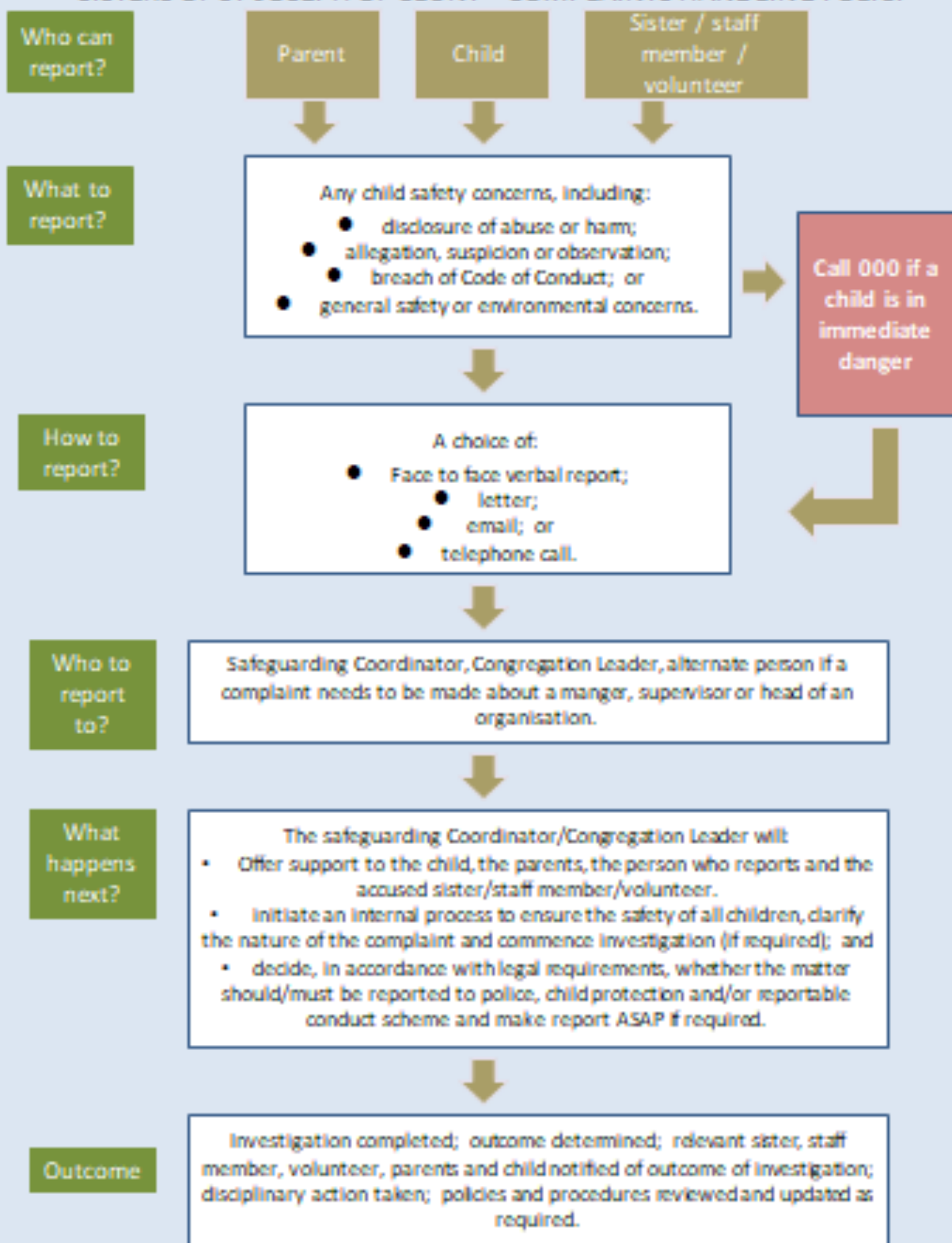
All complaints must be addressed objectively, fairly and impartially. All conflicts of interest must be declared and resolved and procedural fairness must be observed in relation to all parties. If the allegation is against the Leader, then the Safeguarding Coordinator should be notified. If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Coordinator, then the Leader should be notified.

If a staff member or volunteer is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, the person will be dismissed from work or duty.

If a Sister is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, they will be permanently removed from ministry and the Leader will follow the canonical process for dispensation from religious vows as stipulated under Canon Law.

The complaints handling process is outlined in the following flowchart .

SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH OF CLUNY – COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY





SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CLUNY

Risk management plan

IDENTIFY RISK		ASSESS RISK			MANAGE RISK
<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Likelihood</i>	<i>Consequence</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>Management Actions</i>
	Children visiting convent.	Rare			Children must always be accompanied by an adult.



SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CLUNY

Safe Use of Technology Policy.

Internet access is available in our convents. Access and use will be in accord with the Congregation's Code of Conduct.

Education and training is provided about the online environment being consistent with the Congregation's Code of Conduct. This includes the use of mobile phones, tablets and social media.

This will cover

- the articulation of clear boundaries for online conduct between adults and children
- guidelines for taking, storing and using images of children;
- guidelines on appropriate online communication with children including via personal phones, emails and social media;

Each year personal computers and lap tops will be monitored for appropriate use and content. This will be carried out by the firm that provides IT services.



SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CLUNY

PRIVACY POLICY

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY INFORMATION SHARING AND RECORD KEEPING

The Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny will keep records securely in a manner adhering to the principles laid out in the Privacy Act 1988. Only such information as is necessary for Congregational purposes is collected and that this information will only be accessible by persons who are specifically authorised to access the information.

We recognize that the rights of the individual are to be protected; nevertheless in specific circumstances and for specific purposes access by particular authorities will be permitted.

To comply with principles under privacy laws we will fulfil obligations with respect to:

1. The necessity of personal information to be collected, and the means of collection of this information
2. The use or disclosure of personal information about an individual
3. Ensuring records are accurate, complete and adequately detail all incidents, complaints, responses and decisions.
4. The protection of information from misuse, loss and unauthorised access, modification or disclosure
5. The way in which personal information is managed, including the right of individuals to know what type of personal information relating to them is collected, held, used or disclosed
6. Individuals' rights to access, amend or annotate records about themselves are recognised to the fullest extent.
7. The identification of individuals
8. The right of individuals to anonymity when entering into transactions where lawful and practicable

RETENTION OF INFORMATION

Any files relating to a complaint, active or closed, will be held for at least fifty years and in accordance with any record keeping requirements by law.



SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CLUNY

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT POLICY

SCOPE: This policy applies to all Contractors that provide paid services or maintenance works at 60 Clarence St, Brunswick East, for example, electricians, plumbers, gardeners, cleaners, maintenance workers, etc.

1. The following persons are identified as 'Supervisors' to the contractors:
 - Community leader
 - Administration assistant
2. The supervisors must ensure the Contractors are supervised whilst on our premises and work in the stipulated areas only.
3. Long term contractors have received a copy of the Safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct and have been requested to acknowledge the policies and abide by these whilst on our premises.

New contractors will be inducted by the appropriate Supervisor regarding the safety aspects of the work and place including our commitment to child safeguarding. After the induction, the Supervisor will keep a record of the induction.