



The Catholic Parish of Sacred Heart and St Columba

*Our Parish is a Christian community which welcomes all to walk together
in a spirit of compassion, justice and hope.*

*Our Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity
of all children and vulnerable adults.*

June 2025 Safeguarding Report

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL)

As stated in the February 2025 Safeguarding Report, ACSL will be auditing the Melbourne Archdiocese later this year and parish self assessment tools will be used as evidence in the audit.

ACSL's Director, Safeguarding and Compliance, Dr David Treanor shared an update on ACSL's audit and review program in ACSL's June newsletter.

Why an NCSS audit matters

I'm sometimes asked what a Church Authority should undertake an audit against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS). It's a great question - and one that reflects a genuine commitment to doing things well.

Firstly, the NCSS have been deeply considered and developed with respect to key government enquiries (including the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse) and align with the National Principles adopted by the federal and state governments.

Not only this, the Standards also embed principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST).

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) addresses contemporary issues within our society's social structures and articulates a set of social principles to help us guide our decision making. The linchpin for CST principles are: **human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity**. CST can be used as a structure to promote, underpin and direct safeguarding policies, procedures and processes.

In short, the NCSS align with legislative requirements and offer Catholic entities a robust safeguarding framework, guided by principles of CST.

(cont.)

We respectfully acknowledge the Yaluk-ut Weelam clan of the Boonwurrung Nation who are the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land.

The benefit of undertaking an NCSS audit then is to enable a thorough and thoughtful review of how this safeguarding framework has been embraced within a Catholic entity. The audit ultimately allows improvements to be identified, and risks highlighted.

The NCSS audit moves beyond a focus on 'compliance', it is much more than 'ticking boxes'. Each stage of the audit process examines how leadership is nurturing and implementing a safeguarding culture through robust governance systems.

In particular, the fieldwork component of the audit is where thoughtful and engaging interviews are conducted to confirm the maturity of safeguarding processes and systems.

Entities that commit to the audit process gain a new safeguarding blueprint which can enhance the safety, and protect the human dignity, of every person it engages with.

Our audit program for 2025 continues and we expect to publish two new reports in early July.

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