

# St Patrick's Catholic Parish Glen Innes NSW

## ENSURING THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL CHILDREN IN OUR CARE

*Matthew 18:5 Jesus said, <sup>5</sup>Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.*

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Creating child-safe environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by parishes, schools, families and communities committed to remaining vigilant and making constant improvements.

**We are committed to a safe and nurturing community for all children in our Church which upholds their dignity and rights. Every person who comes into contact with children commits to establishing safe and supportive relationships.**

*Luke 18:16 Jesus, however, called the children to himself and said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*

St Patrick's Catholic Church holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children as central and fundamental responsibilities of the Church and community. This commitment is drawn from, and inherent to, the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity and dignity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

**We want all our children to be safe, happy and empowered.**

*Matt. 18:3 Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

St Patrick's Catholic Church has a universal expectation for the protection of all children. It is resolutely committed to ensuring that those engaged in the Church promote the inherent dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected, and nurtured.

The Catholic Church has a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing environments where children are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe.

**We have zero tolerance of child abuse and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated appropriately and seriously and reported in line with our legal obligations, our moral obligations and our Church policies. This includes contacting the police immediately where there may be immediate risk of harm.**

*Matt. 18:6 If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

We encourage open communication where all are informed of relevant issues, participate in decisions, and encourage children to have a say and be listened to in regards to all relevant issues regarding the safety of children.

**St Patrick's Parish Glen Innes has documented policies and procedures to prevent risks to children and build a strong culture of safeguarding. All lay faithful, clergy, staff 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.

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.

**It is required by criminal law and Diocesan policy that all reported illegal activity involving children (and vulnerable persons) must be referred to the Diocesan Chancery Safeguarding Office for referral to the Police. The Diocese is committed to cooperating fully with the Police.**

**We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and then reducing or removing them.**

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

**If you would like more information or have a concern, please contact**

**[glensafeguarding@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:glensafeguarding@armidale.catholic.org.au)**

**OR**

**The Parish Priest**

**Saint Patrick's Parish**

**PO Box 46, Glen Innes NSW 2370**

**OR**

**Phone: (02) 6732 5191 and leave a message and contact details.**

**Anyone who brings forward a suspicion, concerns, knowledge or allegation of current or past abuse of a child will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner in line with our lawful obligations and our complaint handling policy.**

**Every person involved in the Catholic Church has a responsibility to understand the importance of and the specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all vulnerable people; including children, young people and the elderly, is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.**