



*St. Ursula* by Hans Memling. St. John's Church Bruges

# SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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# AUSTRALIAN URSULINES POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

## 1. PREAMBLE:

In carrying out our mission to proclaim Jesus Christ and to extend the reign of God through our various ministries, the Australian Ursulines, our employees and volunteers may have contact with children, young people and adults at risk.

Each of our Sisters, employees and volunteers is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is safe, respectful, supportive, nurturing and caring for all people, especially children<sup>1</sup> and vulnerable persons<sup>2</sup>. We categorically state that any and all abuse of a child or adult at risk is wrong.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the welfare and safety of children and adults at risk. All who are involved directly with children and adults at risk in any ministry or professional role, or incidentally in carrying out other works such as ministry with adults or volunteer works, have a duty to ensure safety and protection.

Each person must be familiar with this policy, be aware of other professional and legal requirements and know how to respond when there is knowledge or suspicion of harm to a child or adult at risk. Any report or suspicion of abuse is handled promptly, with compassion and integrity. Any breach of this policy should be referred to the Province Leader for further action. It may be a disciplinary matter which may result in a formal warning and subsequent actions. Serious breaches of the policy may result in dismissal for employees and volunteers and, in the case of our Sisters, disciplinary action in accordance with our constitutions and the canonical process.

The Australian Ursulines actively promote ‘zero tolerance’ in all of our safeguarding policies and procedures.

## 2. SCOPE

In fulfilling our mission today in the church, Ursuline Sisters are involved in a variety of ministries, many of which include working with *children* and *adults at risk*. Safeguarding of

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<sup>1</sup> Those defined as a “minor” in accord with the Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi* 2019 Art. 1§2, (a).

<sup>2</sup> As defined in the Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi* 2019 Art. 1§2, (b). Throughout this policy the recommended term ‘adults at risk’ will be used. For Definitions of Terms please see Appendix 1.

children and adults at risk is the responsibility of all. Each sister has a duty to make herself aware of her responsibilities in ministry to protect those children and adults at risk with whom she works. This includes the reporting obligations imposed on a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life under the *Motu proprio Vos estis lux mundi 2019* Art. 3. (Appendix 2)

This policy applies to the whole Province, to any ministry by a community or an individual undertaken in the name of the province or incidentally as an Ursuline. It also applies to any employee or volunteer who is working on behalf of the Australian Ursulines, whether in a formal contractual manner or through an informal agreement. It aims to complement existing policies developed by the Conferences of Major Superiors of Religious Institutes (CRA) and the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference (ACBC).

### **3. AUTHORITY**

This Policy has been developed in line with the international Ursulines of the Roman Union Safeguarding Policy and the requirements of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards for Australia. It has been approved by the Provincial and Provincial Council of the Australian Ursulines. Unless required sooner the policy will be reviewed every three years and after the appointment of a new Provincial.

### **4. CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS**

The creation of safe environments for children and adults at risk is the responsibility of all concerned. For this reason, it is important to work with others – parents, employees, volunteers, civil authorities, community organisations – in developing safe environments.

In creating a safe environment for children and adults at risk to achieve their highest potential, due attention should be given to the following:

1. Openness of the physical environment; e.g. open doors, glass panels, spaces in clear view of others in the building
2. An environment of listening and respectful caring for all
3. Clear understanding of civil requirements and canonical obligations such as mandatory reporting
4. Clear policies in relation to supervision and risk management, the use of photos and all forms of social media
5. Appropriate and timely response where the safety, welfare or well-being of a child or vulnerable person is at risk
6. Demonstration of personal behaviours that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and adults at risk
7. Pastoral support, risk management and counselling for Complainants and other affected persons;
8. Pastoral support, risk management and counselling for Respondents;
9. Management of conflict of interest issues and ensuring due process when an allegation is made
10. Transparency of rules and values demonstrated in the working environment.

All those for whom this policy applies, must familiarise themselves with the *Australian Ursulines' Code of Conduct* (Appendix 3) which has been developed for all Ursulines, employees and volunteers. This Code will be the subject of formation sessions in which those concerned will commit to upholding the Code.

## **5. MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING**

The Australian Ursulines will appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and a Safeguarding Committee.

### **Role of the Safeguarding Coordinator and the Safeguarding Committee**

These roles, responsibilities and methods of appointment are outlined in *Appendix 4: Safeguarding Coordinator and Committee: Roles and Responsibilities*.

## **6. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING PROCESSES**

Recruitment refers to the engagement of staff and volunteers in our ministries.

Situations vary according to the nature and purpose of a particular position. In any recruitment process the following will be adhered to:

- a) Clear role descriptions and accountabilities are outlined
- b) There are open advertising and application processes
- c) Interviews are carried out
- d) There is checking of identification documents and references, including referee checking and information sharing with former employers and/or organisations
- e) Police clearance is carried out to establish that there is no legal impediment to working with children or adults at risk
- f) All contracts and other forms of agreement have specific forms of reference to safeguarding
- g) Where applicable, a Working with Children Check (or its equivalent) will be required of personnel who will also need to demonstrate that they recognise the importance of boundaries and of what constitutes good behaviour around children and adults at risk
- h) Contractors, while working in our communities, must show evidence of Working with Children Check or its equivalent for the jurisdiction in which they are working.

## **7. FORMATION**

Formation refers to both initial formation as Ursuline religious, employees or volunteers and to ongoing formation and training (c. 659§1) which needs to be consistent, current and relevant. Formation is to be systematic and practical (c. 660§1).

All stages of formation should include specific education on abuse and safeguarding, dealing with such issues as

- I. Creating safe environments
- II. Recognising the signs of sexual abuse
- III. Reporting any instances or allegations of misconduct or abuse
- IV. Identifying the different forms of abuse – physical, sexual, emotional/psychological and neglect - and managing risks, indicators and warning signs
- V. The damage to victims of sexual abuse
- VI. The impact on families and communities of sexual abuse
- VII. Ministry to those who have been abused
- VIII. Support of staff

This ongoing formation (in Safeguarding) of Ursulines is to continue as part of their practical formation through their entire life (c. 661) and of employees and volunteers during the time they are engaged by the Ursulines.

## **8. USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS**

We are aware of the many benefits of being part of the digital age. Communication, information and research are integral to our life and mission. As Ursulines, work colleagues and volunteers we have a duty of care to use all electronic equipment and the internet responsibly. Privacy with personal information will be upheld as well as confidentiality with work related matters. (Refer to separate Policy: *Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications Systems*)

## **9. WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS**

All sisters, employees and volunteers who work in any way with children and/or adults at risk are required to have a Working with Children Check issued in the jurisdiction in which they live and work e.g. Ochre Card in Northern Territory, Blue Card in Queensland. This applies also to any who are incidentally in contact with children through the exercise of their ministry whether as a volunteer, a stipended religious or a wage earner. To be clear, if a sister does any work with adults either in their own home, in one of our communities or in another venue and there is any possibility of children being present, then this is a requirement.

A register of Working with Children Checks is kept at the Province Office and checked every 6 months for monitoring of upcoming renewal dates. Members will be advised of their need for renewal and followed up until this is finalised.

## **10. RISK MANAGEMENT**

In all our daily activities risk management is part of what we do. In any activities involving children and/or adults at risk we undertake to develop a Risk Management Plan. This plan will give due emphasis to identifying risks, assessing the level, likelihood and possible consequences of such risks and outlining strategies for the management of these risks (refer Appendix 5). In addition to specific activities, such risk assessment will form part of our annual health and safety checks undertaken in each community and workplace.

As part of our risk management, those who are involved in leadership and/or formation will undergo a police check. These sisters will also engage in formal supervision- either individually or as part of a group – for the duration of their role and report on such on an annual basis.

## **11. RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS**

Ursuline Sisters, their employees, volunteers and contractors are in a special position of trust and authority in relation to those with whom they are ministering, those in their care, those who seek advice or assistance in any way.

Any attempt to sexualise a relationship with any child or adult at risk is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority and professional misconduct. Physical and emotional cruelty and bullying also constitute an abuse of power (See Appendix 6A: Some guidelines for receiving an allegation).

Any complaint received by the Australian Ursulines will be taken very seriously and will be responded to promptly. The Australian Ursulines will provide a just and compassionate response respecting the dignity and diversity of all involved. The safety and care of, and concern for, the complainant is paramount. These complaints could range from a disclosure of current sexual abuse of a child or adult at risk, an historic complaint or a breach of the Code of Conduct (See Appendix 6B).

The Provincial is responsible for dealing with any complaint brought against a sister, an employee, a volunteer or a contractor. She will act with integrity and accountability in compliance with the relevant laws and this policy.

The Provincial will notify the appropriate authorities so that an investigation can be carried out with objectivity and fairness. In the case of a criminal investigation, the police will be informed immediately. A risk assessment will be carried out as soon as practicable. All those with mandatory reporting requirements must fulfil their obligations in this regard.<sup>3</sup> Depending on the nature of the complaint and the outcome of the risk assessment, the person against whom the allegation has been made may be stood aside during the investigation.

It is vital that before, during and after the investigative process those involved will work and communicate effectively with all relevant people and agencies. Both the claimant and respondent will be given clear information about the investigative process with outcomes given in writing. A respondent has a right to a review and to ongoing pastoral care through the process.

Good record keeping at all stages of this process is essential. Every allegation, whether current or historical, must be investigated by the appropriate authority.

If there is a complaint against an Ursuline sister, including the Provincial, then the procedures of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* and the Institute Safeguarding Policy of the Ursulines of the Roman Union must be followed.

In any complaints process it is important to distinguish between civil, criminal and canonical processes.

## **12. PRIVACY**

Please refer to Appendix 7: Privacy Policy

## **13. RECORD KEEPING**

All records which the province is required to maintain will be kept in a secure place in the Province Office. Access to such records is limited to the provincial or her delegate.

Records will be maintained/ disposed of in accordance with legislative requirements, or after 50 years, whichever is higher. Individual's rights to access, amend or annotate records about themselves are recognised to the fullest extent.

Records will be kept in a systematic manner with clear designation of title, subject etc. On change of leadership in the province, the outgoing provincial will induct the incoming provincial in the system and content of record keeping.

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<sup>3</sup> Mandatory obligations for various States available on Ursuline intranet



## APPENDIX I

### DEFINITIONS

Child	Any person under the age of 18 years. A child is one defined as a “minor” in <i>Vos estis lux mundi</i> 2019 Art. 1§2, (a).
Adults at risk	Any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want to or otherwise resist the offence.
Abuse of Power	This can occur in any relationship where there is uneven balance of power. It can be characterised by grooming, bullying, harassment or any behaviour which seeks to advantage a person because of the position s/he holds in relation to the other. The abuse of an ecclesiastical power or function is a delict in canon law (c. 1389§1).
Child Abuse <sup>4</sup>	Child abuse is the mistreatment of children through any act or omission that results in harm or violence. There are four major categories of child abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and psychological/emotional abuse:  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. It results in – or has a high likelihood of resulting in – harm for the child’s health, survival, development or dignity. 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 adult at risk 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

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<sup>4</sup> World Health Organisation 2006 **Preventing Child Maltreatment: a guide to taking action and generating evidence** and Catholic Professional Standards Ltd Australia <https://www.cpsltd.org.au/safe-church/support-materials/glossary/>

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. Psychological abuse involves both isolated incidents, and a pattern of failure over time on the part of a caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Acts in this category may have a high probability of damaging the child's physical or mental health, or its physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Psychologically abusive behaviours include rejecting, ignoring, isolating, terrorising, corrupting, verbal abuse and belittlement.

- 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.
- Sexting refers to the act of sending sexually explicit photographs or messages electronically.
- Self-harm is deliberate and voluntary physical self-injury in an attempt to cope with strong feelings such as anger, despair and self-hatred. It may be by direct means including cutting and burning but could also be by engaging in serious risk-taking behaviours such as alcohol/substance abuse, reckless dangerous physical activities and/or unsafe promiscuity. Some cases of self-harm may be an indication of sexual abuse.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **REPORTING OBLIGATION IMPOSED ON A MEMBER OF AN INSTITUTE OF CONSECRATED LIFE UNDER THE MOTU PROPRIO *VOS ESTIS LUX MUNDI* 2019**

#### **Art. 3 – Reporting**

§1. Except as provided for by canons 1548 §2 CIC and 1229 §2 CCEO, whenever a cleric or a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life or of a Society of Apostolic Life has notice of, or well-founded motives to believe that, one of the facts referred to in article 1 (see Note below) has been committed, that person is obliged to report promptly the fact to the local Ordinary where the events are said to have occurred or to another Ordinary among those referred to in canons 134 CIC and 984 CCEO, except for what is established by §3 of the present article.

§2. Any person can submit a report concerning the conduct referred to in article 1, using the methods referred to in the preceding article, or by any other appropriate means.

§3. When the report concerns one of the persons indicated in article 6, it is to be addressed to the Authority identified based upon articles 8 and 9. The report can always be sent to the Holy See directly or through the Pontifical Representative.

§4. The report shall include as many particulars as possible, such as indications of time and place of the facts, of the persons involved or informed, as well as any other circumstance that may be useful in order to ensure an accurate assessment of the facts.

§5. Information can also be acquired *ex officio*.

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#### **Note: Art. 1 – Scope of application**

§1. These norms apply to reports regarding clerics or members of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life and concerning:

a) delicts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue consisting of:

- i. forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts;
- ii. performing sexual acts with a minor or a vulnerable person;
- iii. the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by electronic means, of child pornography, as well as by the recruitment of or inducement of a minor or a vulnerable person to participate in pornographic exhibitions;

b) conduct carried out by the subjects referred to in article 6, consisting of actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a cleric or a religious regarding the delicts referred to in letter a) of this paragraph.

§2. For the purposes of these norms,

a) “*minor*” means: any person under the age of eighteen, or who is considered by law to be the equivalent of a minor;

b) “*vulnerable person*” means: any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence;

c) “*child pornography*” means: any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes.



## AUSTRALIAN URSULINES

### CODE OF CONDUCT

A Code of Conduct for Ursuline Sisters, our Employees, Volunteers and Contractors is intrinsically related to a few simple, yet profound values, born out of a deeply lived experience and tradition dating back to 1535. The foundational inspiration for this tradition is that of St. Angela Merici - acknowledged at the time as a spiritual leader, and a woman of exceptional vision, originality and genius. Two of the values she espoused and proposed and with which we wish to imbue all our actions are:

**1. A profound respect for the *individuality* of all in our care:**

“have engraved in your minds and hearts, each one, and, one by one, not only their names...but also their background, and everything concerning them”

“... all and each one separately, because this is how real love works.”  
(*Testaments and Counsels of Angela Merici: Second Legacy: 1535*)

**2. An education and formation tradition based on *love* rather than *power and control*:**

“ try to lead them **with love**...with a mild and kindly hand....not imperiously and harshly...but in everything, willingly be gentle.”

“ you will achieve more with kindness, than with harshness and sharp rebukes...  
“ **never** use force”....( Third Legacy)

“ **esteem** them...the more you esteem them, the more you will love them...the more you will love them...the more you will care and watch over them...”(Prologue: Counsels)

In keeping with this foundation and tradition, we commit ourselves to creating and maintaining a supportive and caring environment which promotes safety and inclusiveness of all children and adults at risk, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander background, those with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability and/or particular vulnerabilities. Further, we commit ourselves to:

- Establish just structures in community, employment and ministry
- Respect and maintain appropriate confidentiality
- Listen and seek to understand different points of view
- Be honest and act with integrity
- Acknowledge and respect differences in cultural and religious traditions
- Extend respect and courtesy to all especially those who have particular needs
- Acknowledge the genuine contributions that others make
- Not harass, bully or discriminate against colleagues or members of the public
- Report any instances or allegations of misconduct or abuse
- Refrain from accepting the offer of communication from children through any form of electronic communication, including social media
- Refrain from photographing or videoing children or adults at risk without the consent of the parents or carers responsible

Since our life and work mean that we may often, or even incidentally, be in contact with children and adults at risk we will take responsibility for current working with children authorisation for the jurisdiction in which we are living and working. In addition, as a recognised Church organisation, employees and volunteers will be familiar with the document ***Integrity in Ministry***.

**Use of electronic communication and research**

We are aware of the many benefits of being part of the digital age. Communication, information and research are integral to our life and mission.

As Ursulines, we have a duty of care to use all electronic equipment and the internet responsibly. Privacy with personal information will be upheld as well as confidentiality with work related matters.

Our technology usage, including the use of the internet, will be done in an ethically appropriate manner and always promote human dignity and respectful relationships. (Refer to Policy: *Acceptable use of electronic communication systems and devices*)

*I have read this Code of Conduct and I understand what is being asked of me in both my personal and professional behaviour. I understand that a breach of the Code of Conduct is a serious matter; it will be followed up and may result in further action.*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 3B: EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

# AUSTRALIAN URSULINES

## CODE OF CONDUCT

A Code of Conduct for Ursuline Sisters, our Employees, Volunteers and Contractors is intrinsically related to a few simple, yet profound values, born out of a deeply lived experience and tradition dating back to 1535. The foundational inspiration for this tradition is that of St. Angela Merici - acknowledged at the time as a spiritual leader, and a woman of exceptional vision, originality and genius. Two of the values she espoused and proposed and with which we wish to imbue all our actions are:

**1. A profound respect for the *individuality* of all in our care:**

“have engraved in your minds and hearts, each one, and, one by one, not only their names...but also their background, and everything concerning them”

“... all and each one separately, because this is how real love works.”  
(*Testaments and Counsels of Angela Merici: Second Legacy: 1535*)

**2. An education and formation tradition based on *love* rather than *power and control*:**

“ try to lead them *with love*...with a mild and kindly hand....not imperiously and harshly...but in everything, willingly be gentle.”

“ you will achieve more with kindness, than with harshness and sharp rebukes...  
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“ **esteem** them...the more you esteem them, the more you will love them....the more you will love them...the more you will care and watch over them...”(Prologue: Counsels)

In keeping with this foundation and tradition, we commit ourselves to:

- Establish just structures in community, employment and ministry
- Respect and maintain appropriate confidentiality
- Listen and seek to understand different points of view
- Be honest and act with integrity
- Acknowledge and respect differences in cultural and religious traditions
- Extend respect and courtesy to all especially those who have particular needs
- Acknowledge the genuine contributions that others make
- Not harass, bully or discriminate against colleagues or members of the public
- Report any instances or allegations of misconduct or abuse
- Refrain from accepting the offer of communication from children through any form of electronic communication, including social media
- Refrain from photographing or videoing children or adults at risk without the consent of the parents or carers responsible

Since our life and work mean that we may often, or even incidentally, be in contact with children and adults at risk we will take responsibility for current working with children authorisation for the jurisdiction in which we are living and working. In addition, as a recognised Church organisation, employees and volunteers will be familiar with the document ***Integrity in the Service of the Church.***

### **Use of electronic communication and research**

We are aware of the many benefits of being part of the digital age. Communication, information and research are integral to our life and mission.

As employees and volunteers, we have a duty of care to use all electronic equipment and the internet responsibly. Privacy with personal information will be upheld as well as confidentiality with work related matters. Our technology usage will always promote human dignity and respectful relationships. . (Refer to Policy: *Acceptable use of electronic communication systems and devices*)

### **In addition, employees of the Ursulines will:**

- I. agree to respect the confidentiality of information and documents to which you have access in the course of, or arising from, your employment. You must not, during your employment or after you cease employment, for any reason, directly or indirectly, use or disclose any personal or confidential information to another party unless authorised to do so. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. personal information about individuals engaged by the employer, those seeking assistance or access to services or participating in activities provided by the employer;
  - b. all other information obtained from or in the course of your employment that is, by its nature, confidential or personal information.
- II. serve the employer faithfully, efficiently and diligently and exercise all due care and skill in the performance of your duties;
- III. carry out all lawful and reasonable instructions given to you in relation to your employment;
- IV. preserve and promote the best interests of the employer, and refrain from acting contrary to the interests of the employer; and
- V. be present at work during working hours and devote your whole time and attention to your employment.
- VI. You are also required to carry out other duties reasonably required by the employer that you have the skill and competence to perform. Your position, role description and responsibilities may be changed in accordance with the employer's needs.

*I have read this Code of Conduct and I understand what is being asked of me in both my personal and professional behaviour. I understand that a breach of the Code of Conduct is a disciplinary matter which may result in a formal warning, suspension or termination in accordance with industrial processes.*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



## **APPENDIX 4: SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR**

The Safeguarding Coordinator will oversee the Safeguarding Policy. Training and education will be a priority as well as the development of comprehensive and secure record keeping practices. All records will be kept at the Province Office in Croydon Park. Risk management policies will be reviewed and all personnel will know how to respond to concerns about any allegations of professional misconduct.

The Safeguarding Coordinator will be a member of the Safeguarding Committee.

### **SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE**

#### **1. Authority**

1.1 The Safeguarding Committee is a formally constituted Committee reporting to the Provincial Council of the Australian Ursulines. It is chaired by an Appointee of the Provincial with her Council.

1.2 The Safeguarding Committee has delegated authority to oversee and monitor policies, procedures and practices which safeguard children and adults at risk engaging with the Australian Ursulines and to ensure safeguarding functions are embedded in their governance structures and practices.

#### **2. Membership**

The Committee has at least 3 and no more than 5 members comprising:

2.1 Chairperson, appointed by the Provincial with her Council

2.2 Two to four other members who may include: A Member of the Provincial Council, the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator if not already the Chairperson, Independent/external members with expertise in safeguarding or child protection or organisational culture

#### **3. Purpose**

The Safeguarding Committee:

3.1 Oversees the effective ongoing implementation of child safeguarding practices, including the Child Safeguarding Policy and related procedures and practices in relation to all children engaged with Ursulines.

3.2 Co-ordinates annual self-audits at a local level of compliance with the requirements of policies and procedures, of the Australian Ursulines, in line with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

3.3 Monitors, tracks progress and reviews the Safeguarding Implementation Plan for the Australian Ursulines.

3.4 Provides support and advice in relation to complaint handling, including responses to and support for all persons affected by reported/alleged incidents relating to breaches of child safeguarding.

#### **4. Responsibilities**

The onus of the Committee is to support the province leadership to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding by:

4.1 Identifying and contributing to the development and/or ongoing review of a Child Safeguarding Policy, Commitment Statement and appropriate elements of a Code of Conduct.

4.2 Contributing to the development of the province Safeguarding Implementation Plan which outlines the monitoring and continual improvement of child safeguarding practices.

4.3 Monitoring, tracking progress and regularly reviewing the Safeguarding Implementation Plan.

4.4 Supporting the Ursuline leadership team and province to implement all aspects of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

4.5 Monitoring local and national implementation of safeguarding legislation and policy to ensure practice is appropriate, effective and consistently applied across the province.

4.6 Ensuring children are given opportunities to understand and contribute appropriately to the Ursulines' safeguarding practices.

#### **5. Term of Office**

5.1 Members are appointed for a term of two years.

5.2 Gaps in knowledge, skill or background of the Committee are reviewed annually and the Chair makes recommendations to the Provincial and her Council for any necessary changes or additions to membership.

5.3 Members are approved by the Provincial and her Council.

#### **6. Frequency of meetings**

The Committee meets twice a year (with additional meetings organised on a needs basis).

#### **7. Quorum**

Half the total number of members, including the Chair, is considered a quorum for meetings of the Committee.

#### **8. Decision making**

The Safeguarding Committee will endeavour to achieve consensus in relation to matters requiring a decision. In the absence of consensus, matters for decision by the Committee shall be decided by a majority of votes of those present.

**Note:** The Safeguarding Committee does not oversee day-to-day management of safeguarding practices or the core work of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. It does however provide strategic and skilled guidance and advice to the provincial and her Council, including the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

## **APPENDIX 5A: RISK ANALYSIS ASSESMENT**

In carrying out our daily activities as members of the province, as employees, contractors and volunteers there may be risks associated with any of our activities. We have obligations under various forms of legislation relating to safety in our communities and workplaces and legislation relating to the safety and protection of children and adults at risk.

The following provides a framework for risk analysis to be undertaken for any activity. There is a Risk Analysis Form to complete for any necessary risk assessment.



### **Risk Analysis**

#### **Step 1: Identify possible hazards and risks that may arise.**

A hazard is a circumstance or situation that may create a danger of injury or harm e.g. unsuitable/risky people in contact with children and adults at risk.

A risk is the injury or harm that may be caused as a result of a hazard e.g. grooming or abuse of children and/or adults at risk.

#### **Step 2: Determine the likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring.**

Likelihood levels

<b>Rare</b>	May occur in exceptional circumstances (i.e. possible but extremely unlikely)
<b>Unlikely</b>	Not likely to occur (i.e. possible but not very likely)
<b>Possible</b>	May occur (i.e. has happened before but seldom)
<b>Likely</b>	Will probably occur (i.e. has happened a number of times before)
<b>Almost certain</b>	Expected to occur (i.e. anticipated that it will happen)

**Step 3: Determine the consequences should the risk occur.**

<b>Insignificant</b>	Very little impact on the emotional or physical wellbeing or safety of a person, with the person feeling only a bit worried, temporarily upset, and/or very minor or no injury.
<b>Minor</b>	Minor impact on the emotional or physical wellbeing or safety of a person, with the person feeling minor anxiety, requiring first aid, follow-up and/or support.
<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate impact on the emotional or physical wellbeing or safety of a person, with the person feeling moderate anxiety, requiring follow-up support and/or medical treatment.
<b>Major</b>	Significant impact on the emotional or physical wellbeing or safety of a person, with the person feeling overwhelmed, requiring police intervention, paramedic or comparable medical/hospital treatment, person is separated from primary care provider, and/or the person might be traumatised.
<b>Severe</b>	Hospital admission is required, or significant, severe and ongoing impact on the emotional or physical wellbeing or safety of a person.

**Step 4: Determine the level of risk.**

<b>Low</b>	Risk acceptable, managed by routine procedures & controls. Periodically monitor & review.
<b>Medium</b>	Controls required. Reduce risks to as low as reasonably practical. Monitor & review.
<b>High</b>	Controls required. Reduce risks to as low as reasonably practical. Develop contingency plans. Approval/oversight by authorised personnel. Actively monitor & review.
<b>Extreme</b>	Risk level is not acceptable. Do not proceed. Discontinue. Immediate action/controls required. Approval/oversight by authorised personnel. Actively monitor & review.

**Step 5: What control measures have been introduced to reduce or eliminate the risk?**

**APPENDIX 5B: RISK ANALYSIS FORM**

**AUSTRALIAN URSULINES:  
RISK ASSESSMENT**



Please complete this form and return it to the Province Office:  
[ursadmin@bigpond.com](mailto:ursadmin@bigpond.com) or  
P.O. Box 272 Croydon Park NSW 2133

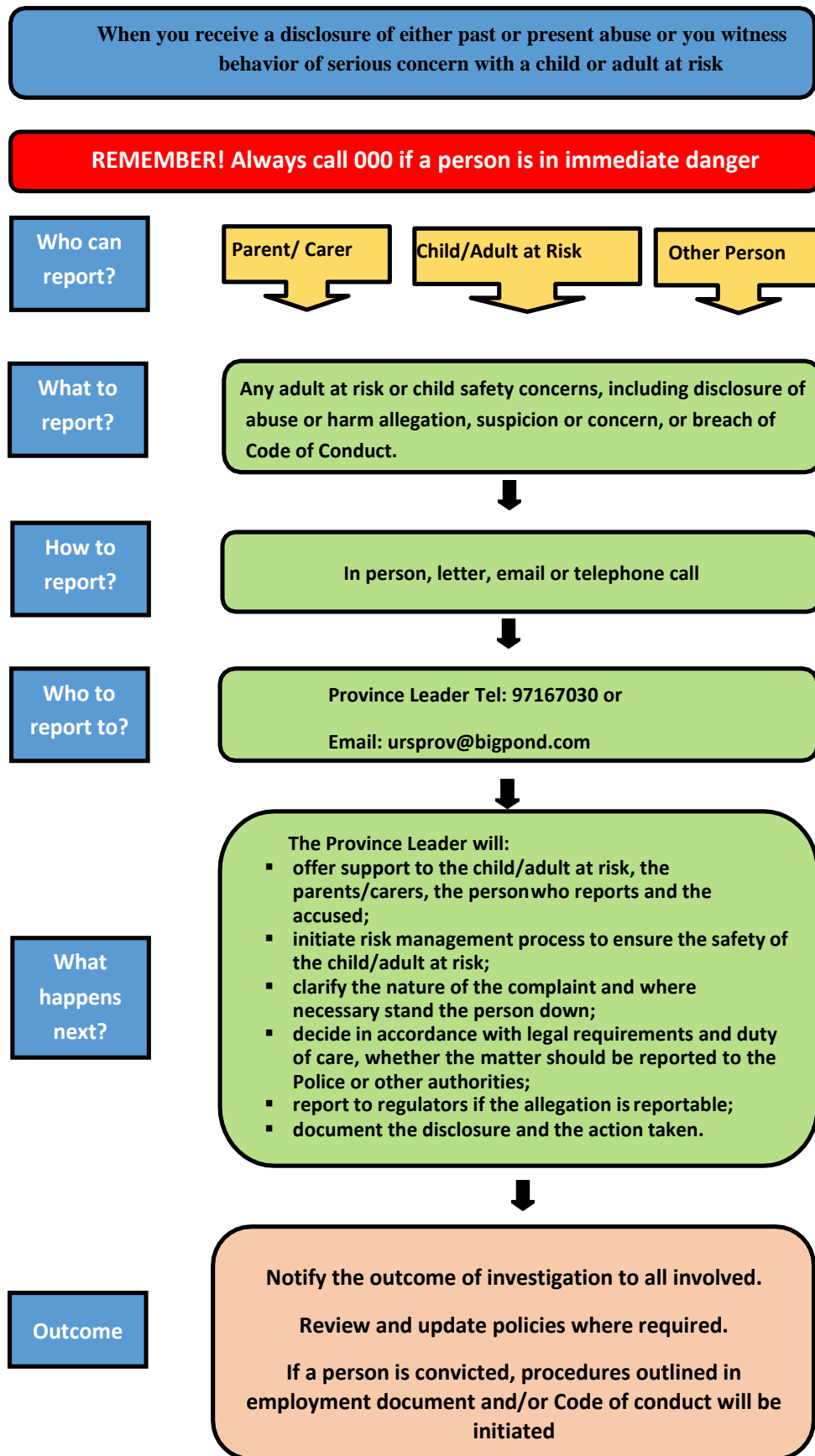
<b>NAME:</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY BEING ASSESSED</b>	
<b>Nature of Activity</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Step 1:</b>	<b>Are there any possible hazards or risks? If yes, describe them.</b>
<b>Step 2:</b>	<b>What is the likelihood of the risk occurring? (circle)</b> <b>Rare; Unlikely; Possible; Likely; Almost Certain</b>
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>What are the possible consequences if the risk does occur?</b>

	<p><b>What would be their possible impact? (circle)</b></p> <p><b>Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe</b></p>
<b>Step 4</b>	<p><b>What is the level of risk? (circle)</b></p> <p><b>Low Medium High Extreme</b></p>
<b>Step 5</b>	<p><b>What control measures have been introduced to lower or eliminate the level of risk?</b></p>

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 6: COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

### 6A: COMPLAINT HANDLING FLOWCHART



## 6B: RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE AND/OR COMPLAINTS – SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER



- Move to a suitable environment, free of distractions.
- Be calm and patient—allow for the person to be heard. Let the person use their own words—avoid asking leading questions.
- Avoid “quizzing” the person about details of the abuse. Listening supportively is more important than what you say.



- ◆ Reassure the person that it is OK that they have told you what’s been happening.
- ◆ Address any concerns about the person’s safety.
- ◆ Reassure the person that he or she is *not* at fault.



- ✓ Respect that the person may only reveal some details.
- ✓ Acknowledge the person’s courage and strength.
- ✓ Avoid making promises you can’t keep—manage the person’s expectations.
- ✓ Explain to the child, young person or adult at risk that in order for them to be safe and for the matter to be dealt with appropriately you will need to report their experience to someone else.





**REPORT TO AN URSULINE, AN EMPLOYEE  
OR VOLUNTEER OF AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE  
OR BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Name of person receiving the complaint \_\_\_\_\_

Contact detail \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the complaint \_\_\_\_\_



Date of the incident/s \_\_\_\_\_

How was the information received?

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Letter \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

In person \_\_\_\_\_

Details of the person making the disclosure or raising a concern

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



Telephone

Mobile

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to the alleged victim \_\_\_\_\_



Details of the alleged victim

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



Contact details

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Name of the person against whom the allegation has been made:

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Details of the allegation:

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Provincial

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Date

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**ACTION PLAN**

## APPENDIX 7: PRIVACY POLICY



In relation to Privacy it is our policy to operate the Australian Ursuline province in a manner that reflects the principles in our *Code of Conduct*:

1. A profound respect for the *individuality* of all in our care
2. An education and formation tradition based on *love* rather than *power and control*

and which meets our legal rights and obligations in regard to privacy and confidentiality, by ensuring compliance with the provisions of relevant privacy legislation.

We will ensure that only such information as is necessary for province, administration, employment and business purposes is collected and that such information will only be accessible by persons who are specifically authorised to access the information.

We will pay specific attention to the following:

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 that information held is accurate, complete and up to date
4. The protection of information from misuse, loss and unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.