

MEDIA RELEASE



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New Child Protection Office Part of Archdiocese of Sydney Review

The Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP has announced a new child protection office as part of a widespread Archdiocesan review.

On becoming Archbishop of Sydney last November, Archbishop Fisher said the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults would be a priority for him.

He called for a review of practices and policies, regarding among other matters, child protection.

The new child protection office will be known as the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office. Together with the Vicar General of the Archdiocese the new Office will work to achieve best practice when dealing with child protection, education, training, working with parishes and responding pastorally to survivors of abuse.

The Office will also work closely with government statutory bodies including the NSW Ombudsman and the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian.

Ms Karen Larkman who has more than 25 years experience in child protection, family services and operating procedures, complaint investigation, early intervention programs and government liaison internationally and here in Australia has been appointed Director of the new Office.

She has worked in the United Kingdom in the area of child protection and also for the British Forces in Cyprus. More recently Ms Larkman was General Manager, Families and Communities and the Designated Child Protection Officer for CatholicCare working closely with the NSW Ombudsman. She also led a working party for a Royal Commission case study into abuse in Out-of-Home Care.

Also as a result of the review the Archdiocese of Sydney has published its response to the case study in the Royal Commission last year involving John Ellis and the Archdiocese's failure to adequately take into account Mr Ellis's pastoral and other needs as a victim of sex abuse. (Read full response [here](#)).

The Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office will build on the work undertaken by the Archdiocese on child protection while bringing together the resources of the Archdiocese to provide innovative, strategic and compassionate pathways to assist victims and protect the vulnerable.

“We will also focus on the professional integrity of clergy and church workers and all those engaged in activities involving children. We must deliver more than words. We must deliver action and outcomes. I think our new Director will help us greatly in delivering those outcomes,” Archbishop Fisher said.

Ms Larkman will begin her role as Director of the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office on 16 November 2015.

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