CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

Protocol: Risk Assessment

1. Risk Assessments

It is a requirement of the Archdiocese that whenever activities or events are arranged in its Parishes or Agencies that involve Children and/or Adults at Risk, a Safeguarding Risk Assessment **must** be completed. Safeguarding Risk Assessments are developed and used to help identify and mitigate risks to Children and/or Adults at Risk who may be involved in activities and events.

This protocol provides the framework for the management of safeguarding and child protection risk for the Archdiocese, the link between risk appetite and strategy, the risk process, and the systems and culture that support risk management.

This protocol seeks to develop an environment where, as far as reasonably practical:

➢ Clergy, workers, volunteers, communities, parishioners and other persons are not put at risk from activities undertaken by the Archdiocese Parishes and Agencies;

➢ The Archdiocese is protected from adverse incidents, exposure to harm is reduced and risk is mitigated and controlled;

➢ The outcome of risk to the Archdiocese and the community is mitigated.

This protocol applies to all activities held by Parishes and Agencies that include Children and Adults at Risk. Risk can only be effectively managed by identifying and measuring it. To ensure there is appropriate coverage of risks, refer to the Safeguarding Risk Management Guidance and Risk Management Register documents that govern how risk is identified, measured and reported.

The objectives of this protocol are to:

• Ensure that risk management is responsive to change, has dynamic and decisive processes with informed knowledge and documentation;

• Ensure legal and regulatory compliance;

• Promote a culture of risk awareness and management in all aspects of safeguarding;

• Ensure that the framework for managing risk continues to remain appropriate by periodic internal and external review and

• Allow Parishes and Agencies to take informed risks within risk appetite to create safe environments.

The Archdiocese understands that it is necessary to identify and take steps to avoid or reduce any risks to Children and/or Adults at Risk that might be involved in activities or events that are arranged or conducted by the Archdiocese, its Parishes, or Agencies. An Adult at Risk who makes informed choices and decisions in relation to themselves (dignity of risk) will be

respected by the Archdiocese and taken into consideration when completing Risk Assessments for activities in which they participate.

The Archdiocese has adopted the following risk management principles for effective management of safeguarding risk:

- Maintain a risk framework that enables risks to be identified, measured, managed and reported in a structured and consider manner across the Archdiocese;

- Maintain a risk framework that enables the Archdiocese to demonstrate it meets applicable legislative and regulatory requirements as well as internal policy and protocols;

- Risk management is about opportunity to be creative, innovative and continually improve in the way we safeguard Children and Adults at Risk within our communities;

- Risk management is integral to the way we plan, manage and conduct activities and the way our clergy, workers and volunteers behave;

- Risk management is about mitigating threats at all levels;

- Risk is managed in a common language and facilities risk-based thinking;

- Continual monitoring, reporting and communication of risk management;

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the safeguarding risk framework.

A comprehensive safeguarding Risk Assessment will involve identifying the relevant risks and implementing strategies to remove or mitigate those risks. If a risk cannot be removed or mitigated, consideration should be given as to whether the event or activity should proceed. Consideration and consultation will occur on a case-by-case basis when completing Risk Assessments and implementing suitable mitigation strategies for activities and events that include Children and/or Adults at Risk with diminished capacity.

It is essential that Safeguarding Risk Assessments are completed and approved before the activity involving Children and/or Adults at Risk takes place.

2. Approval

Parish Priests and Agency Heads are responsible for final sign-off/approval of the Safeguarding Risk Assessments in relation to Parish or Agency activities or events involving Children and/or Adults at Risk.

This protocol should be distributed to all who assist with the event so they can have an understanding and awareness of the importance of Safeguarding Risk Assessments.

Parish Priests, Agency Heads, Employees, Volunteers, Contractors, Clergy and Religious Appointees, should seek advice from the Safeguarding Office if they have any questions or concerns about conducting a Safeguarding Risk Assessment for an activity or event at which Children may be present.

3. Record Keeping

After the event has taken place, a copy of the finalised Safeguarding Risk Assessment must be stored. You can refer to the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office's fact sheet, ***Fact Sheet: Keeping and Sharing Safeguarding Records***, to assist with keeping your records.

4. Evaluation

In addition to this, an evaluation of the activity must take place to assess how effective the mitigation of risks was and to determine if changes need to take place or improvements made for future activities. Please refer to the following document ***Template: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement.***

Related Documents:

- Safeguarding Risk Matrix
- Safeguarding Risk Management Register
- Guidance Document: Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies for Safe Environments
- Guide to completing a Risk Assessment for Activities involving Children and Adults at Risk
- Template: Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies Template
- Template: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement