

Protocol: Risk Assessment

1. Risk Assessments

It is a requirement of the Archdiocese that whenever activities or events are arranged by its Parishes or Agencies that involve children and young people, a Safeguarding Risk Assessment **must** be completed. Safeguarding Risk Assessments are developed and used to help identify and reduce risks to children and young people 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.

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, monitored, responded to and controlled;
- The outcome for the Archdiocese is a risk level deemed acceptable within the organisation's risk management framework.

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 safety management in all aspects of safeguarding;
- Ensure that the framework for managing risk is continuously reviewed and improved as required over time; and,
- Enable Parishes and Agencies to take informed risks that allow for safe participation in events and activities to create safe environments.

The Archdiocese understands that it is necessary to identify and take steps to mitigate risks to participants that might be involved in activities or events that are arranged or conducted by the Archdiocese, its Parishes, or Agencies.

The Archdiocese uses these guiding principles to support risk management within the safeguarding framework:

- Maintain a risk framework that enables risks to be identified, measured, managed and reported in a structured and contextually appropriate 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 an opportunity to be creative, innovative and continually improve in the way we safeguard children and young people 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 reducing threats at all levels;
- Risk is managed in a common language for clear communication and utilising risk-based thinking (the application of information, knowledge, and actions to determine uncertainties and potential opportunities);
- 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 mitigate those risks. If a risk cannot be removed or reduced, 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 young people.

It is essential that Safeguarding Risk Assessments are completed and approved before the activity involving children and young people 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 young people.

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 and young people 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 or events.

Related Documents:

- [Risk Assessment](#)
- [Risk Assessment Guide](#)

Addendum to Archdiocese Safeguarding Policy:

Please note:

*All parish and community activities involving children or young people **must** have a safeguarding risk assessment. While adult-only events do not currently require one, it is strongly encouraged, particularly where vulnerable adults are involved.*

The safeguarding risk management framework is regularly reviewed and may change. Any updates to policy will be reflected in the protocol and communicated widely.