

CORE SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES

in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand

The following are core safeguarding practices which must be followed throughout all usual activities and special events or programmes.

1. *Two adult rule*

No fewer than two adults should be present at all times during any activity, programme or event involving children or vulnerable adults. This is important in terms of drastically reducing the risk of an incident of abuse or harm and decreasing the likelihood of adults being subject to allegations of inappropriate actions.

2. *Behaviour management*

At the outset of any activity, expectations about appropriate and socially acceptable behaviour and taking responsibility for one's own behaviour should be made clear to participating children and vulnerable adults.

Managing the behaviour of children and vulnerable adults should always take the form of positive reinforcement wherever possible - i.e. affirming them for positive actions. At all times, adults must ensure that behaviour management is at no time punitive, humiliating or aggressive.

Bullying is unacceptable and must be addressed appropriately and without delay.

3. *Physical contact*

Physical contact with children and vulnerable adults should be avoided. In instances where this is required - for example, when managing an injury - a clear explanation of what is occurring and why should occur. Consideration should be given to whether it is necessary to seek permission from a parent/caregiver in relation to the physical contact and any supervision which is required in relation to the physical contact (depending on the nature of the contact).

(Continued)

4. *Transport*

As a general rule, a child or vulnerable adult should only be transported with specific permission from their parent/caregiver. In the event that a child or vulnerable adult needs to be transported, the 'two adult rule' applies. Alternatively, if two adults are not available to provide transport, children may be transported in instances where there will be no fewer than two children in the vehicle at all times.

All people travelling in a vehicle must wear seat belts, the driver should be appropriately licensed and the vehicle should be registered, warranted and safe to drive.

5. *Changing rooms/toileting*

Children and vulnerable adults should be afforded privacy when using toilets and change rooms. Supervising adults should work to maintain the privacy of the individuals e.g. announcing entry to the room. The 'two adult rule' applies.

Those working with children and vulnerable adults through a role with the church entity should not be involved in providing toileting assistance at any time unless they are officially assigned that role with appropriate safeguarding training provided. In most cases, if toileting assistance is required, the child or vulnerable adult's parent/caregiver must be available to do this.

6. *Visibility*

Wherever possible, consideration should be given to the visibility of ministry to children and/or vulnerable adults, such as: ensuring doors are left open, that there are glass panels to see into rooms where meetings may occur, that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered in a setting which allows visibility, etc.

7. *Identification*

A badge, or similar method, identifying a person who is carrying out a ministry should be worn at appropriate times such as when taking Holy Communion to a person in their home. The ministries to which this applies may vary among entities; however, clear communication of a person's role will give reassurance to all those involved.