



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

19 September 2018

### **Launch of new Diocesan Office for Safeguarding in Broken Bay**

Following an extensive review of Safeguarding structures and the resolute commitment to fostering a culture of safety and care for children and those who are vulnerable, the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay officially launched its new Diocesan Office for Safeguarding at a function in Waitara on Wednesday evening.

In the presence of Mr Robert Fitzgerald AM (Commissioner with the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse); Narelle McMahon (Catholic Professional Standards Ltd); Jacqueline Highfield (Director, Professional Standards Office NSW & ACT); Kelvin Simon (Fmr Snr Investigator for the NSW Ombudsman), and more than 80 Clergy, Principals, Parish representatives and Staff from across the Diocese, the launch acknowledged the imperative for the people of Broken Bay to be able to experience the Diocese and its works as a place of safety, welcome and inclusion.

This integrated model of Safeguarding is a significant direction for the Diocese put in place by Most Rev Peter A Comensoli before his appointment as Archbishop to Melbourne and is the first stage in drawing together the important work being done in the areas of Safeguarding, Child Protection and Professional Standards across all sectors.

Diocesan Administrator, Very Rev Dr David Ranson, has warmly welcomed the new structure.

“It is very fitting and appropriate that we make this announcement during our Diocesan month for Safeguarding awareness and education,” he said.

“This new structure and organisation – along with a Safeguarding Charter launched tonight, represent Bishop Peter’s resolute commitment to this area and are one of his most enduring legacies to our Diocese.”

“The way a diocese is structured is not a small factor that either contributes to a healthy culture of responsibility, accountability and transparency – or which descends into an organisation that is closed, self-reliant and secretive. We have begun to realise that the wounds of sexual abuse carried by our community cannot simply be addressed by necessary preventative measures such as screening and protocols. They will be healed by creating a new paradigm of inclusion, participation and openness – a framework in which people can work and lead together in the most life-giving way possible.”



Newly appointed Diocesan Director for the Office for Safeguarding, Ms Jodie Crisafulli, will direct and oversee a consistent and accountable approach for Safeguarding and Professional Standards across the entire Diocese incorporating Clergy, Parishes, Schools, CatholicCare and Chancery Offices.

The Director will be supported by a new Safeguarding Executive comprising three Safeguarding Managers representing Chancery, CatholicCare and the Catholic Schools Office along with specialised staff embedded in these agencies. The Managers in turn will be informed by a Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel (to be appointed) which will bring national and international policy and best practice to Diocesan endeavours. The Safeguarding Offices across the Agencies will also be accountable to a Safeguarding Panel of Review (also to be appointed), which will provide independent evaluation of the redress the Diocese seeks to provide those who have suffered abuse.

“This important ministry of Safeguarding involves us all. Fostering a culture of care, that nourishes communities as places of safety and care is a responsibility we all must carry,” Director, Jodie Crisafulli said.

“I thank both Father David and Bishop Peter for the commitment they have given towards the safety and care of our most vulnerable, and look forward to working with the Priests, Parishes, Schools, Agencies and the people of the Diocese as we continue to build and affirm a culture of care and safety amongst all the people of our Diocese.”

The Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay is committed to the promotion of an inclusive, welcoming environment that provides the foundation for transparent, accountable and risk-based approaches to ensure the safety of children and those who are vulnerable.

For anyone who has suffered abuse and is seeking counselling, support or advice, please contact:

**Lifeline** - 24-hour crisis support on 13 11 14

**Relationships Australia NSW** - family, relationship and specialised counselling on 1800 052 674 or 1300 364 277

**Knowmore** – independent service providing legal advice and information on options about compensation, redress and other legal issues relating to institutional child sexual abuse 1800 605 762

**The Diocesan Office for Safeguarding, Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay** on 8379-1605 or [safeguarding@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@bbcatholic.org.au)

**For further information about this release please contact the Diocesan Office for Communications Broken Bay**

T: 02 8379 1618 | [communications@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:communications@bbcatholic.org.au)