

- MEDIA RELEASE -

Evidence of An Embedded Culture of Safeguarding a feature of Archdiocese of Brisbane Safeguarding Audit

A culture of safeguarding is well embedded in the ministries and agencies of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, as reported in the recent safeguarding audit of the Archdiocese.

The Archdiocese has achieved a very high maturity rating against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) - a result that affirms the Archdiocese's strong and sustained commitment to creating safe environments for children and adults-at-risk.

ACSL CEO Dr Ursula Stephens congratulated the Archdiocese on its safeguarding commitment.

“The Archdiocese of Brisbane was subject to its first safeguarding audit under the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) in 2019, where it was found to be compliant with existing regulation and Child Safe principles. This review audit included consideration of the care and protection of adults at risk, as part of the revised NCSS.”

In a significant development for this audit cycle, Centacare services, Catholic Early EdCare services, Brisbane Catholic Education schools, and Archdiocesan Ministries participated for the first time, together with a sample of 15 parishes. Their inclusion provided a comprehensive view of safeguarding practice across the breadth of the Archdiocesan parishes, ministries and services.

The extensive audit evaluated governance, policies, procedures, and safeguarding practices across these diverse service areas. ACSL commended the Archdiocese for its clear leadership, well-established safeguarding culture, and ongoing investment in continuous improvement.

Archbishop Shane Mackinlay welcomed the findings, noting that safeguarding is fundamental to the mission of the Church.

“This result reflects the dedication of our clergy, staff, and volunteers who work each day to ensure our parishes, ministries, and services are places of safety, respect, and trust. We remain committed to ongoing improvement and accountability, and to fostering a culture where the dignity of every person is upheld.”

Director of Safeguarding, Mark Eustance, said the result demonstrates the effectiveness of the Archdiocese's robust and integrated approach to safeguarding.

“The inclusion of our education, care, welfare, and ministry services in this audit has given us a deeper and more holistic understanding of our safeguarding strengths. The audit highlights

ACSL works with Catholic entities to promote and oversee a nationally consistent, comprehensive and sustainable framework for the protection of children and adults at risk within the Church in Australia.

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both what we are doing well and where we can continue to improve. Safeguarding is an ongoing effort - it requires vigilance, transparency, and collaboration.”

The Archdiocese has already commenced work on implementing the recommendations in the report and will continue supporting all parishes, ministries and services to embed the NCSS in daily practice.

The full ACSL audit report is publicly available on ACSL’s website, reflecting the Archdiocese’s commitment to openness and accountability.

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