



## **DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Diocese of Broken Bay, consistent with its Mission Statement, affirms the dignity and worth of all children and young people in its care. The Diocese has a strong commitment to the wellbeing, belonging and security of children and young people.

All persons performing ministry in any capacity within the Diocese are expected to promote child safety and wellbeing and provide an environment which fosters the child's developmental needs, spirituality, self-respect and dignity.

The Diocese is committed to:

- Implementing protective systems and practices;
- Planning safe and supportive environments; and
- Responding appropriately to disclosures of abuse and concerns of inappropriate behaviour toward children and young people.

The Diocese also has a duty of care and a legislated responsibility to promote the wellbeing, safety and protection of children and young persons, particularly those in care, from all forms of harm. The Diocese recognises the principles of the child protection legislation:

- Ombudsman Act 1974
- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

This Policy is not intended as a 'stand alone' document rather it supplements existing documents which have been developed within the individual areas of the Diocese: Catholic Schools Office; Centacare and the Office of the Bishop and parishes. Persons engaged in these areas should familiarise themselves with the respective procedures which apply.

### **Statement of Principles**

Within the Diocese of Broken Bay, our approach to creating a safe environment and our procedures for responding to allegations and disclosures of reportable conduct of children and young people, are based on the following principles:

- All children and young people have a right to safety and freedom from abuse of any kind.

- All adults working with children and young people have a responsibility to care for them, to promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any form of reportable conduct.
- When any action is taken to prevent or respond to any type of reportable conduct, the welfare and wellbeing of the child or young person are the primary concerns.
- The integrity of the family unit is respected but not to the detriment of the child or young person.
- The dignity of persons involved in situations where reportable conduct is suspected or disclosed should be respected; they should be treated with fairness, sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- In the interests of justice, appropriate confidentiality should be maintained, with information that relates to suspected or disclosed abuse being provided only to those who have a right or a need to be informed.