

New Victorian Child Safe Standard 1

Victorian Child Safe Standard 1: Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

Changes – What's different to our existing framework?

- This standard is *new* and addresses *how* we can make Aboriginal parishioners, including children, feel welcome and safe in our parish. It also asks organisations to *identify* and *address* incidences of racism with the involvement of Aboriginal children and young people, and their families.
- The Discrimination Policy of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, which in the past has applied only to employees and has covered racism and reporting procedures, has been extended to apply to volunteers and parishioners within the Archdiocese.
- This new standard requires you to create culturally safe environments for Aboriginal children, and this requirement exists regardless of whether you know Aboriginal children are currently present at your parish.

Implementation hints:

These implementation hints are not an exhaustive list, but are rather practical suggestions for bringing the standards to life within a parish. Some of these hints may not be relevant to your parish context, so you will need to contextualise the suggestions to reflect your parish setting.

- Read and action our existing information sheet on [Promoting the Cultural Safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People](#).

- Reflect on and identify ways your parish can establish an environment that demonstrates Aboriginal parishioners are welcome. This may include: public displays recognising the land the parish is on and its people (specific to the area); an Acknowledgement of Country and First Nations people in your newsletter and on your website; an Aboriginal flag displayed in places of meeting and prayer (parish office, church, meeting rooms, rooms for children's liturgy); local symbols and signs from the land on which your parishioners are meeting; a plaque acknowledging the traditional owners of the land.
- Include an Acknowledgement of Country and First Nations people before meetings and/or the celebration of Mass (not during or as part of the liturgical Rite).
- Consider acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday, Harmony Week, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week.
- Find out who the Traditional Owner groups or registered Aboriginal organisations are in your area and publicise this information in your community.
- Celebrate your local Aboriginal community by sharing learnings with staff, volunteers and families through existing communication channels at the parish, such as bulletins, magazines and the parish website.
- Create opportunities in parish child-centred programs to include information on 'inclusion and diversity' and the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's zero tolerance of discrimination.
- Consult with Aboriginal organisations for guidance on how your parish can be culturally safe. If you have Aboriginal people attending the parish activities, engage with them.

Links to additional resources:

- [INFORMATION SHEET—Promoting the Safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People](#)
- [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council—Acknowledgement Booklet](#)
- [CCYP—Cultural Safety for Aboriginal Children: Tip Sheet](#)
- [SNAICC Video Resource—Keeping Our Kids Safe: Understanding Cultural Safety in Child Safe Organisations](#)
- [Keeping Our Kids Safe: Cultural Safety and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)
- [CCYP—A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation](#)
- [CCYP—Short Guide to the Child Safe Standards](#)
- [CCYP—Victoria's New Child Safe Standards \(information sheet\)](#)

Where to for support?

You can contact the Safeguarding Unit for support on 9926 5621 / 0448 488 614 or send an email to the team at safeguardingunit@cam.org.au.

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