



# Safe Ministry NEWSLETTER

Edition 1 / 2024

Welcome to the first edition of the Safe Ministry Newsletter for 2024. Thank you for your time reading this newsletter.

Keeping all people safe is everyone's responsibility. Thank you for playing your part in ensuring our parishes and congregations are safe places where all people can thrive and hear the good news of Jesus.

## A Message from Anne (Safe Ministry and Inclusion Officer)



And just like that, we are in February 2024. I hope the Christmas and New Year time has given you space to relax and refresh for the year ahead of us, ready for another year of sharing the love of Jesus with our communities.

In this first newsletter for 2024, I encourage you to read information on:

- the Child Abuse Risk Management Tool that has recently been made available for parishes and congregations
- our Disability Inclusion Officer and their work

Thank you for continuing to invest in developing and building the culture of safety in all areas of ministry and church life across our diocese.

As always, please keep in touch sharing stories and asking questions via email, [safeministry@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:safeministry@melbourneanglican.org.au).

*Anne*

**Important updates in this Newsletter include:**

**Child Abuse Risk Management Plan**

**Disability Inclusion work**

**PVAW Event**

**Important Reminder:**

**Clergy Declarations and Volunteer and Lay Employee Registers were due in December as part of each parish's Annual Return and safe ministry requirements**



## In this Edition

### News & Updates

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## News & Updates

### Child Abuse Risk Management Tool

After much work by the Safe Ministry Reference Group and representative parishes, our diocesan Child Abuse Risk Management Tool (Tool) is now available. This Tool is part of the diocesan Action Plan for meeting the new Victorian Child Safe Standards (Action Plan) as part of Standards 2 and 9. This Tool is specific to mitigating the risk of child abuse in our churches and ministries. This is different to other risk management tools that are used for safety issues.

As this Tool is part of the Action Plan all parishes, congregations and ministries are required to work through this at least annually. It is set out in a similar format to the Action Plan and includes information on what it is and how to use it on the first couple pages.

The [Risk Tool](#) is a word file and can be found on the [Child Safe Standards page](#) of the Safe Ministry Toolbox, underneath the Action Plan.

### Volunteer and Lay Employee Registers

The [Volunteer and Lay Employee Register](#) and the Clergy Declaration are now part of the parish annual return as part of safe ministry compliance requirements. These returns were due to be emailed to [registryservices@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:registryservices@melbourneanglican.org.au) by 15th December 2023. For those parishes who are still to email their complete return please do this as soon as practical.

These registers are an ongoing, living document that is to be kept up to date by each parish and congregation recording the screening and training undertaken by each volunteer/employee. Each parish will have their own administrative processes however the Vicar holds overall responsibility for ensuring that safe ministry screening and training requirements are met, including the upkeep of this register.



## Disability Inclusion update

- Virginia McDonald



I am deeply appreciative of the warm welcome I have received as the new Disability Inclusion Officer in the Diocesan and Parish Partnerships Team. It is both an honour and a privilege to collaborate with members of our church community, embracing individuals of all abilities, as we work together to create and nurture inclusive environments and communities, so that we can make the word of God fully known, especially reaching out to the twenty percent of our population who may be excluded due to disabilities, along with their families and caregivers.

With over 25 years in the allied health sector, I've held various roles, particularly at Vision Australia, focusing on supporting those with blindness, low vision, and disabilities. My experience includes leading service quality, clinical risk management, the introduction of telehealth services and the development of health professionals and volunteers. I have also worked on partnerships to deliver innovative services in communities, ensuring equitable access for people in remote areas, including First Nation Peoples.

Returning to Melbourne last year after a decade of serving in parish ministry and church planting in Bendigo alongside my husband, Brendan, I am excited to bring my unique blend of professional, church, and personal experiences to this role, being fully aware of the impact of living with disability, having grown up and cared for my mother and other family members living with mental illness.

My passion lies in fostering accessible and supportive environments within local communities and parishes, ensuring churches can share the gospel with individuals of all abilities so they can fully engage in the life of the church, find their place as valued and loved members of the body of Christ, and pursue their callings unhindered.

In collaboration with the Brotherhood of St Lawrence and our dedicated disability inclusion working group, we are initiating the development of a comprehensive Disability Action Plan, which will include aspects of theology of disability. This plan is intended to steer our collective efforts toward creating a more inclusive space for individuals with diverse abilities across our church communities, furthering the mission of making God's word fully accessible to all.



I warmly invite you to share your stories and insights with me. I am available from Monday to Thursday and can be reached at [inclusion@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:inclusion@melbourneanglican.org.au). Your contributions are invaluable as we endeavour to build a more inclusive and supportive Anglican community, ensuring equal access for everyone to participate in God's mission.

**Does everyone in your parish or congregation know how to **Speak Up** if they have a concern about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person?**

If something doesn't look, feel, or sound right, **Speak Up**.

Adults can support children and young people to tell someone they trust if they have a concern.



## Diocesan Action Plan for Meeting the Victorian Child Safe Standards

Embedding safe ministry practices builds our culture of keeping all people safe. Across our diocese, we are continuing to work on both parish and diocesan actions in this Action Plan. It is important to continue working through the parish actions as we come to the end of the first year of the Action Plan in April. Please use the Parish Self-Assessment template to record your parish examples. This template and the Action Plan can be found on the [Child Safe Standards page](#) of the Safe Ministry Toolbox.

## Safe Ministry Training

Following our Parish Annual Meetings and the start of the new year, there will be new staff and volunteers as well as those changing roles who need to complete Safe Ministry Training. Please use the links on the [Training page](#) of the Toolbox to access this training.

In the last half of 2023, our training partner has been working on Safe Ministry training videos for junior leaders and volunteers, these will be available in the next month or so. These are designed to be used by a parish leader with their junior leaders and volunteers in a group setting. More information will be included when these are ready to be distributed.

## Preventing Violence Against Women Event

**FAITH COMMUNITIES AND PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**  
*A Round Table*

**SPEAKER**  
**DR. AYRA INDRIAS PATRAS**  
FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, LAHORE

**SPEAKER**  
**PROF. CATHY VAUGHAN**  
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

**SPEAKER**  
**KERRY N LEWIS & SARAH ARULIAH**  
PVAW TEAM (ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE)

**MARCH 8TH, 2024**  
**10 AM - 1 PM**

**ST MICHAEL'S**  
**NORTH CARLTON, VIC**

**Register Now!**  
**\$20 per person**  
<http://bit.ly/registerPVAW>

SCAN TO REGISTER

EVENT IS FOLLOWED BY LUNCH & NETWORKING  
INVITING ALL CHURCHES AND FAMILY VIOLENCE ORGANISATIONS

CONTACT DETAILS: [kiewis@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:kiewis@melbourneanglican.org.au)

preventing violence against women program

A MELBOURNE ANGLICAN INITIATIVE

Don't forget to register for the PVAW round table event for International Women's Day – Faith Communities and Preventing Violence Against Women.

All churches and family violence sector organisations are welcome to register.

### Event details:

📅 8 March 2024

🕒 10 am – 1 pm

💰 \$20

📍 St Michael's North Carlton, 14 McIlwraith St, North Carlton VIC 3054

📄 [Register here / http://bit.ly/registerPVAW](http://bit.ly/registerPVAW)



## Safe Ministry Toolbox

The [Safe Ministry Toolbox](#) is the first place to go for all diocesan Safe Ministry resources. These resources are updated regularly, and additional resources are added as they are developed. Please familiarise yourself, your staff and volunteers with this Toolbox.

The resources in this Toolbox are found in these pages:

- [Child Safe Standards](#) - Child Safe Standards, Action Plan and Child Abuse Risk Management tool
- [Document Library](#) - Safe Ministry and Child Safety and Wellbeing policies and procedures
- [Complaints](#) - how to report, our duty to report and Reportable Conduct
- [Training](#) - handouts, guides, and links to safe ministry training modules
- [Clearances](#) - clearance for service requirements and information
- [Latest News and Updates](#) - previous Safe Ministry Newsletter editions and videos
- [Parish & Congregation Administration](#) - determination charts, template forms, info booklets, posters
- [Support & Redress](#) - Redress scheme information and variety of support service contact details

Parish websites are to be linked to the Safe Ministry Toolbox for all safe ministry information, including policies and procedures. The link to use is <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/safe-ministry/>

### A Safe Ministry Prayer

Dear God,

We are so sorry for the times our church has hurt others and not been a safe place.

Please forgive us. Please comfort and heal those people.

May your Spirit enable us to right wrongs and help us to make and keep our churches safe.

Help us look after everyone, including children and vulnerable people.

Please guide our leaders as they make decisions that keep our ministries safe.

Help each one of us do our part in making church a safe place for everyone.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen

- written by Revd. Amy Brown with Bishop Genieve Blackwell, 2022





# Helpful Links

[Commission for Children and Young People \(CCYP\)](#) - useful guides and information about the new Child Safe Standards, including [translated information sheets](#) in many languages.

[eSafety Commissioner](#) - See the eSafety website for more information about popular and emerging online technologies and ways to support vulnerable people including children, youth, seniors and First Nations people in online spaces. eSafety also run parent webinars, the schedule can be downloaded from the [parents page](#).

[Kids Helpline](#) - a great resource for children, youth and families

[Kooyoora](#) - As well as reporting concerns to Kooyoora, they can also be contacted for advice and support.

[International Day of People with Disabilities \(IDPwD\)](#) - Resources for inclusion and access for people with disabilities

## REPORTING CHILD ABUSE IS A COMMUNITY-WIDE RESPONSIBILITY



**ANGLICAN  
DIOCESE OF  
MELBOURNE**

Reporting Child Abuse in the  
Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

**1** If a child is in **immediate danger** at any point **CALL 000**

**2** All suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to:

Police  
Child Protection  
Kooyoora  
Professional Standards

**What is Child Abuse?**

Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to:  
**Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Family Violence, Sexual Abuse, Grooming and Neglect.**

**Who can report neglect and abuse of a child under the age of 18?**

Children, Parents, Staff, Volunteers, Anyone.

**What sorts of things must be reported?**

All child safety concerns must be reported:

- Disclosure of past and present abuse and harm
- Allegations, suspicions or observations
- Breaches of the Code of Conduct

**CONTACT NUMBERS:**

**POLICE 000**

**CHILD PROTECTION SEE BELOW**

**KOOYOORA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS 1800 135 246**

**Contact the child protection intake service that covers the area in which the child lives:**

North Division <b>1300 664 977</b>	South Division <b>1300 655 795</b>	East Division <b>1300 369 391</b>	West Division (Rural and regional only) <b>1800 075 599</b>	West Division (Metropolitan only) <b>1300 664 977</b>
Area Includes: Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Macedon Ranges, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Yarra.	Area Includes: Bayside, Cardinia, Casey, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Mornington Peninsula, Port Phillip, Stonnington.	Area Includes: Sporcoondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Mitchell, Monash, Murrindindi, Whitehorse, Yarra Ranges.	Area Includes: Calden Plains, Greater Geelong, Moorabool, Queenscliffe, Surf Coast.	Area Includes: Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley, Wyndham.

