

Reporting on the implementation of recommendations by major institutions – Response of St Carthage’s Primary School Lismore

Section 1: Identifying the institutions

- St Carthage’s Primary School
- Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Lismore
- Sally Towns, Director of Catholic Schools
- Religious Institution, Catholic School

Section 2: General reporting against recommendations relevant to all institutions

Theme 1: Making institutions child safe

Measure:

1. *Measure 1.1: New or revised Code of Conduct, policies and procedures for a child safe institution*

Report Volume:

Volume 6 and Volume 7

Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:

Recommendations 6.6, 7.8

- 6.6 Relates to Standard 10 recommendations of core components when implementing the child safe standards.
- 7.8 Recommendations for a Code of Conduct

Examples from the Recommendations

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Catholic Schools Office Code of Conduct

Description of measures implemented prior to December 2019:

- A revised Child Protection Policy was developed in June 2019 and is available to the staff, parents, students and the wider community on the St Carthage’s primary school website.
- Senior leadership were inducted into the Child Protection Policy on 29 August 2019
- Senior leadership then inducted and trained staff and volunteers at the school on the new policy
- School staff at St Carthage’s abide by the Catholic Schools Office Code of Conduct issued April 2019
- St Carthage’s Primary School have been deemed compliant in the Safe and Supportive area (which includes child protection) of the NESA requirements
- Mandatory online SALT (Self Administered Legal Training) child protection training must be completed by all staff annually

Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2019 to implement this measure:

- Face to face child protection training with all staff will be conducted in 2020
- Ongoing SALT online child protection training will be conducted as per annual requirements
- Collaboration with the Catholic Schools Office Parent Assembly Community will be sought to determine how to gather evidence on the confidence and awareness of parents and carer's with respect to policy
- Explore avenues to ensure understanding of the complaints policy by children, staff, volunteers and families.
- Continue to follow all relevant policies and procedures

2. *Measure 1.2: Improvements to institutional responding and reporting*

Report Volume:

Volume 7

Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:

Recommendations 7.7 & 7.8

7.7 Relates to Child Focused Complaint Handling Policy.

7.8 Recommendations for a Code of Conduct

Examples from the Recommendations

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Parent and Caregiver Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedures
- St Carthage's Lismore Anti-Bullying Plan

Description of measures implemented prior to December 2019

- The above policies and procedures are available to the staff, parents, students and the wider community on the St Carthage's primary school website.
- Senior leadership were inducted into the child protection policy on 29 August 2019
- Senior leadership then inducted and trained staff at the school on the new policy
- School staff at St Carthage's abide by the Catholic Schools Office Code of Conduct issued April 2019
- St Carthage's Primary School have been deemed compliant in the Safe and Supportive area (which includes child protection) of the NESA requirements
- The Catholic Schools Office in conjunction with the Principal and the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager will conduct a risk assessment in line with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Appropriate disciplinary action is taken by the school in conjunction with the Catholic Schools Office with respect to sustained findings

Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2019 to implement this measure

- Review the Parent and Caregiver Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedures to ensure that the policy and procedures with respect to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused.
- Explore avenues to ensure understanding of the complaints policy by children, staff, volunteers and families.
- Continue to follow all relevant policies and procedures
- Senior Leadership will train Volunteers on the Child Protection Policy.

3.. Measure 1.3: Improvements to Record Keeping and Information Sharing

Report Volume:

Volume 8

Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:

Recommendations 8.1 and 8.4

8.1 Retaining records regarding Child Sexual Abuse for at least 45 years

8.4 Following principles for records and record keeping

Examples from the Recommendations

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Description of measures implemented prior to December 2019

Nil action

Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2019 to implement this measure

- Recommendation 8.1 states that institutions that engage in child related work should retain for at least 45 years records relating to child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred. St Carthage's Primary School Lismore will follow Diocesan protocol and provide all child abuse files to the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Manager and the Catholic Schools Office will develop a retention procedure to ensure records are retained for at least 45 years
- The Catholic Schools Office will update the Retention and Disposal Authority document to come in line with the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Theme 2: Children's Voices

Measure 2.1: Children participate in decisions that affect them

Examples from the Recommendations

- Diocese of Lismore School Improvement Surveys (DOLSIS)

Description of measures implemented prior to December 2019

- St Carthage's Primary School Lismore have participated in the DOLSIS survey for four of the last five years with students in Years 4, 5 and 6 participating each year. Students respond to questions concerning the wellbeing, their safety, their relationships with their teachers, their engagement with their learning and the pastoral care at school. The school can get an indication of their strengths and their challenges in relation to benchmarked schools. The data is also triangulated with staff and parent surveys.
- The results of these surveys were broadly considered as a data set when formulating their three year cyclical school improvement plan to meet system requirements.
- Primary students (Years 3-6) were involved in surveys regarding their wellbeing and relationships. The data is also triangulated with staff and parent surveys.

Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2019 to implement this measure

- An option is available for St Carthage's to attend workshops on student participation (train the trainer) to progress a conversation around student participation and agency in school life.

Section 3: Reporting for specific non-government institutions

Institution-specific Recommendation Non-Government Schools Volume 13 Recommendations 13.1 -13.8

Report Volume: Volume 13 – Non-Government Schools Recommendations

Recommendations:

- 13.1 All schools should implement the child safe standards implemented by the Royal Commission

Examples from the recommendations:

- Along with all systemic Diocesan schools St Carthage's will implement the child safe standards and the Catholic Schools Office will be meeting with the Office of the Children's Guardian, Child Safe Coordinator for the Education Sector on 12 December 2019 to discuss the implementation of the Standards.

13.2 State and Territory independent oversight authorities responsible for implementing the Child Safe Standards should delegate to school registration authorities the responsibility for monitoring and enforcing the Child Safe Standards in Government and Non-Government schools.

Examples from the recommendations:

- This is the mandate of State Government however St Carthage's will comply with the legislation.

13.3 School registration authorities should place particular emphasis on monitoring Government and Non-Government boarding schools to ensure they meet Child Safe Standards. Policy guidance and practical support should be provided to all Boarding Schools to meet these standards, including advice on complaint handling.

Examples from the recommendations:

- St Carthage's Primary School Lismore is not a Boarding School.

13.4 & 13.5 Are specific recommendations to support Boarding Schools and as such are not applicable to St Carthage's Primary School Lismore

13.6 Consistent with the Child Safe Standards complaint handling policies for schools should include effective policies and procedures for managing complaints about children with harmful sexual behaviours.

Examples from the recommendations:

- A working party involving Child Safety Practitioners from Dioceses in NSW have revised a support manual on *Responding to Concerns about Sexualised Behaviour of Children and Young People*. This manual includes effective procedures for managing children with harmful sexual behaviours. Professional learning will be implemented in 2020 with an emphasis on School Leadership. St Carthage's will comply and manage all complaints in line with this support manual.

13.7 State and Territory Governments should provide Nationally Consistent and easily accessible guidance to teachers and principals on preventing and responding to child sexual abuse in all Government and Non-Government schools.

Examples from the recommendations:

- This is the mandate of State Government however St Carthage's will comply with the provided guidelines.

- 13.8 The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) should consider strengthening Teacher Registration Requirements to better protect children from sexual abuse in schools. In particular, COAG should review minimum national requirements for assessing the suitability of teachers and conducting disciplinary investigations.

Examples from the recommendations:

- This would be the mandate of National Government.

Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2019 to implement this measure:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• St Carthage's will attend and participate in the implementation roll out and training of <i>Responding to Concerns about Sexualised Behaviour of Children and Young People</i>. |
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Section 4: Attachments

- Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Lismore Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Lismore Code of Conduct Standard Operating Procedures
- Catholic Schools Office and Parish Schools Diocese of Lismore Parent and Caregiver Concerns and Complaints Policy
- St Carthage's Primary School Lismore Anti-Bullying Plan