

## **- MEDIA RELEASE -**

### **Archdiocese of Perth becomes first Western Australian diocese to undergo safeguarding audit**

**26 February 2025**

A comprehensive safeguarding audit led by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) has found the Archdiocese of Perth has substantially implemented 90 per cent of National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) indicators relevant to their operations.

The audit assessed whether appropriate and proactive strategies are in place to protect children and adults at risk from harm in the Archdiocese.

The audit was conducted by ACSL in partnership with Perth-based audit firm Australian Audit in late 2024.

Audit processes included a desktop review of policies, site visits to 25 per cent of parishes and a variety of ministries spread across the Archdiocese, plus interviews with 130 personnel.

Commenting on the release of the audit report, ACSL Chief Executive Dr Ursula Stephens noted that the Archdiocese is committed to providing persistent and strong leadership and solid role modelling of appropriate safeguarding practices.

‘The central safeguarding office is efficient and doing great work investing in safeguarding resources,’ Dr Stephens said.

‘This is a commendable achievement for a geographically dispersed archdiocese encompassing metropolitan and remote communities, from Perth to Kalgoorlie.’

‘A particular strength of the Archdiocese is that there are excellent age-appropriate strategies used to engage children, seek their views about what makes them feel safe, and enable them to participate in decisions that affect them.’

‘Hearing the voice of children and young people is essential to good safeguarding practice, and the Archdiocese will now also be focusing on ensuring adults at risk in church communities are similarly heard and consulted in safeguarding processes.’

‘Our audit found that 10 per cent of NCSS indicators are still in the initial stages of implementation.’

‘There was one high priority audit outcome regarding professional supervision for clergy. While mentoring programmes, professional/pastoral supervision, professional development and regular appraisals are available, not all clergy and religious in ministry are availing themselves of these opportunities on a more regular basis.’

‘The Archdiocese foresaw this issue after completing their initial self-assessment via the NCSS Portal and has already commenced a remediation plan to offer further resources and support in this area,’ Dr Stephens said.

The publication of the audit report marks the 51<sup>st</sup> published safeguarding audit completed by ACSL.

ACSL is currently working with a range of Australian Catholic Church entities which will be audited against the NCSS.

Audits look for areas for improvement to enhance the safety of children and adults at risk by measuring compliance with the NCSS, which align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The full audit report for the Archdiocese of Perth is available on both ACSL’s [website](#) and the Archdiocese of Perth’s [website](#).