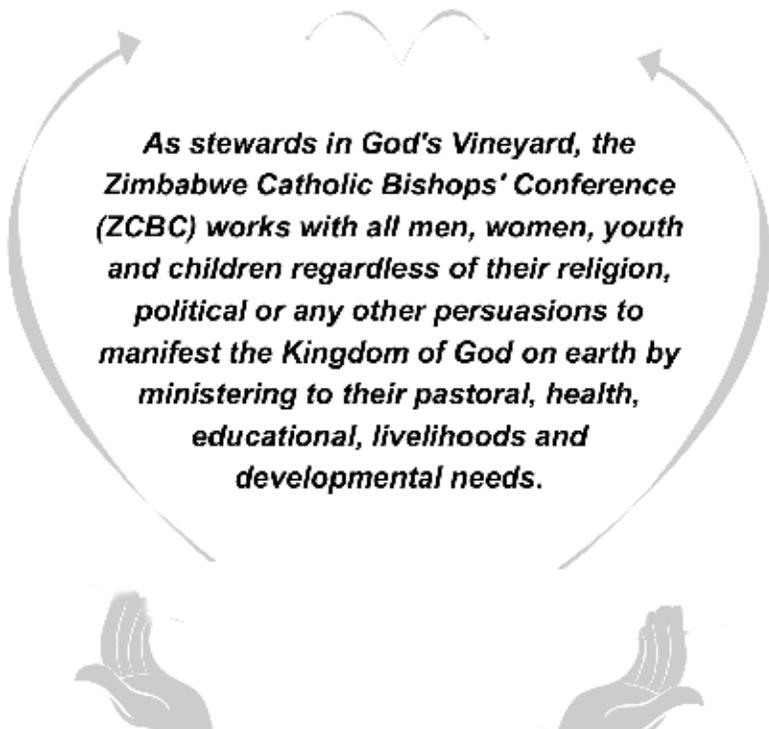




**ZIMBABWE CATHOLIC  
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE**

# **CHILD SAFEGUARDING**

## **Policy Document**



*As stewards in God's Vineyard, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) works with all men, women, youth and children regardless of their religion, political or any other persuasions to manifest the Kingdom of God on earth by ministering to their pastoral, health, educational, livelihoods and developmental needs.*

## FOREWORD

Children occupy a central role in the teachings of Jesus, who pointed to the child as the ultimate symbol of the Kingdom of God. "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as." (*Lk 18:16*). This places a sacred duty on everyone in the Catholic Church, to ensure that children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church. Each child should be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all. Thus, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) has developed a Child Safeguarding Policy for all Catholic Institutions in Zimbabwe which aims at ensuring that all those who work with children and young people create a respectful, caring and safe environment where the dignity of every child is valued.

The ZCBC Child Safeguarding Policy outlines and explores the key principles and issues relevant to child protection, as well as outlining the steps that are needed in order to develop a child holistically. The principles stated in this policy can be used by any Catholic institution in our country in order to safeguard children from all forms of abuses which includes, sexual, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual. This Policy has been developed in line with the Gospel values which promotes justices

and the dignity of human beings especially children as reflected in the Gospels which state that “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me” (Mk 9:37). This Child Safeguarding Policy helps our Catholic Institutions to respect the lives of the children who reflect God’s love to us. In the *Declaration of Rome World Congress: Child Dignity in the Digital World* 6 October 2017 Pope Francis highlighted that, “A society can be judged by the way it treats its children.” He also emphasized that every child’s life is unique, meaningful and precious and every child has a right to dignity and safety.

The safeguarding and protection of children is everybody’s responsibility. We all share this responsibility and we need to play our part actively.

May the work, initiatives and structures presented in this Child Safeguarding Policy give us courage and hope to engage in promoting the safety of children for the good of the Church and also for the good of the society. May God bless us in our work.



**Bishop Rudolf Nyandoro**  
**Bishop Chairman**  
**ZCBC Education Commission**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge the teamwork and invaluable contributions which went into the reviewing of the ZCBC Child Safeguarding Policy. Child Safeguarding being the measures, actions and structures put in place to prevent and respond to the abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect of children, crafting a Policy is one of the noble ideas to guard children against harm. It is from this understanding that Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference saw the need to develop the Child Safeguarding Policy Document in order to create safe environment for all children in the Catholic institutions, parishes, colleges, universities and schools in Zimbabwe.

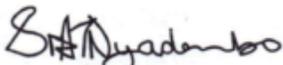
I also recognized the support we have received from all our editors who have worked tirelessly to make sure that this policy is in order. Bishop Rudolf Nyandoro - Bishop of Gokwe, Bishop Paul Horan - Bishop of Mutare, Fr. Fradreck Chiromba ZCBC Secretary General, Mr. Nicholas Aribino, Ms. Patricia Frances Pacey and other editors who have assisted behind the scenes.

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I would like also to acknowledge the sterling job and commitment displayed within the Education Commission by staff members in this following order, Constance Chifamba, Leorcadia Ncube and Theresa Sanyatwe.

The success of developing and reviewing this policy would have not been possible without the valuable support of our Funding Partners. All of us are called to safeguard children as one of our mandates in the church, to promote a holistic approach to the learning, growth, and formation of character to all our learners at different levels in schools, parishes, children's homes, hospitals and Catholic Institutions.

May God bless all of you



**Sr. Dr. Theresa Nyadombo HLMC**  
**ZCBC National Education Coordinator**

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# ACRONYMNS

- ACRWC - African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of  
the Child
- CLC- Child Led Committee
- CDF - Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith
- CMRS - Conference of Major Religious Superiors
- CSA - Child Safeguarding Advisor
- CSC - Child Safeguarding Committee
- CSO - Child Safeguarding Officer
- CS - Child Safeguarding
- CSP - Child Safeguarding Policy
- DCWPS - Department of Child Welfare and Protection  
Services
- UNCRC - United Nations Convention on the Rights of  
Children
- ZCBC - Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### **Assessment:**

The systematic process of gathering information to provide a comprehensive understanding of a child and their environment.

### **Canon Law:**

In the Catholic Church, Canon Law is the system of laws and legal principles made and enforced by the Church's hierarchical authorities to regulate its internal organisation and government, and to order and direct the activities of Catholics toward the mission of the Church.

### **Catholic Catechism:**

It is a major document containing the teachings of the Catholic Church.

### **Case:**

Each individual child who is identified as vulnerable and potentially in need of services.

### **United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child:**

It is a treaty adopted by the United Nations Assembly in 1989 which sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children.

### **African Charter on the rights and Welfare of the child:**

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (also called the ACRWC or Children's Charter) was adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1990 (in 2001, the OAU legally became the African Union) and was entered into force in 1999.

### **Child:**

Section 81(1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe defines a child as every boy or girl under the age of eighteen years

### **Child Safeguarding / Protection:**

According to Save the Children International, the definition of Child safeguarding means the measures, actions and structures that were put in place to prevent and respond to the abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect of children.

### **Child abuse:**

Is child maltreatment is physical, sexual, or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children, especially by a parent or other caregiver. Child abuse may include any act or failure to act by a parent or other caregiver that results in actual or potential harm to a child,

and can occur in a child's home, or in the organizations, schools or communities the child interacts with.

**Child safeguarding / Protection Committee:**

Child Safeguarding Committee (CSC) is responsible for to making sure all aspects of child safeguarding work are done as well as possible so that children and young people are kept safe from harm from abuse and neglect.

**Child Safeguarding Officer:**

An individual assigned with all activities and technical work in Child Safeguarding.

**Confidentiality:**

The duty to respect the privacy of information shared by and about children and families.

**Conference of Religious Major Superiors:**

The Council of *Major Superiors* of all Religious institutions or Congregations in the Catholic Church.

**Human Trafficking:**

Trafficking in persons means the recruitment ,transportation

,transfer ,harboring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or the other forms of coercion of, abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

**Orphan:**

A child aged 0-18 for whom one or both parents are deceased.

**Vulnerable clientele:**

A child or adult who is living or prone to unpleasant life threatening circumstances.

**Referral:**

The process of connection a child to a specific service provider to address an identified need.

**Supervision:**

The process of providing oversight and support to the individuals engaged in service delivery to ensure quality care.

# COMMITMENT

# 1

## 1.0 ZIMBABWE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN

This policy document demonstrates the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC)'s commitment to safeguarding children from any form of harm. Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference will continue to implement programs aimed at safeguarding children and young people who are in its parishes or institutions. This policy document will seek to create and proactively maintain an environment that prevents any actions, whether deliberate or inadvertent, that place children at risk of any kind of child abuse. The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference values all children equally, in line with the teachings of the Gospel and the Catholic Catechism of the Church.

***"Being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He/she is capable of self-knowledge, self-possession as well as freely giving himself / herself and entering into communion with other persons. He is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give."*** -

(Catholic Catechism No.1730-1735).

The ZCBC implements such teachings through diverse Catholic ministries that provide education and a support system for families with vulnerable children. ZCBC recognizes its role in earning children's trust and its accountability to the families and communities it serves through a selection process of those who work with children. ZCBC aims at safeguarding children from all forms of abuse and maltreatment in all institutions. As Jesus Himself says, *"Let the*

*Children come to me: do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. In truth I tell you, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of like a child will never enter it. "...." (Mark10:13-16)*

## 1.1 VISION

To facilitate holistic development of children with special focus on physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual well-being.

## 1.2 MISSION

To nurture an environment that respects, promotes and fulfills the needs and rights of children by raising partners and associates awareness of child safeguarding issues through continuous trainings.

## 1.3 VALUES

Commitment	Team work	Love	Integrity	Dignity
Peace	Transparency	Accountability	Honesty	Trust
Compassion	Respect	Fairness	Prayer	Tolerance
Option for the Poor		Ubuntu		

## 1.4 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) recognizes child rights and child responsibilities and the need to safeguard children from any form of abuse, harm and trafficking of persons. This Policy will be informed and grounded upon the four principles of child rights as enshrined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child;

non - discrimination, the best interest of the child, participation and survival and development.

## 1.5 ZCBC PRINCIPLES

Children should be protected by employees and volunteers of ZCBC regardless of their geographic location within and outside the church property. All people both adults and children are protected by this policy, whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say and whatever type of family they come from.

This policy shall apply to all Catholic institutions in Zimbabwe. These institutions will publicly display mission statements showing the names of the institution's Child Safeguarding Officers and Child Safeguarding Advisors together with their contact details. The characteristics encompass principles that best explain ZCBC's characteristics as follows:

### 1.5.1 Impartiality

Investigations into possible misconduct will be handled in an open minded and impartial manner.

### 1.5.2 Safety

ZCBC will respond swiftly to allegations of misconduct as well as cases of actual child abuse to maximize the safety of the children in their care.

### 1.5.3 Speed

Efforts will be made to conclude investigations in a timely manner.

### 1.5.4 Confidentially

The ability to remain discreet on sensitive issues or reports.

- ❖ Any details about individual cases which lead to the identification of participants will remain confidential and shared only on a need-to-

know basis. This is paramount to safeguard the interests of both parties.

- ❖ Care is to be taken so that investigations will not inadvertently call into question anyone's good name.
- ❖ ZCBC will take strong action against anyone who knowingly broadcasts confidential information concerning an abuse case.
- ❖ It is important that the investigators should also consider the safety of the perpetrator while at the same time making way for the legal process to take its full course.

### **1.5.5 Whistle blowers**

This is suspicious behavior to report issues and investigations will then follow. All disclosures will be treated in confidence. Any employee or volunteer of ZCBC who raises concerns of child abuse will be protected as far as possible from victimization or any other detrimental treatment.

### **1.5.6 Dignity**

The dignity of the child, the witnesses and the accused staff member will be respected at all times.

### **1.5.7 Partnership with Parents/Guardians**

ZCBC will work in partnership with parents and guardians to safeguard children and will seriously consider the psycho-social needs of the survivor and the parents /guardians in the form of psychosocial counseling and involvement during the full term of the process.

### **1.5.8 Separation of investigation and disciplinary decision making**

The person designated by the Child Safeguarding Officer or Major superior to run a full investigation should be able to be impartial in the matter and not in any way biased against the accused prior to the investigation. This is particularly important in cases which may result in a formal written warning or dismissal from the Catholic Institutions.

# COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

## 2

### 2.1 ZIMBABWE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE POLICY ON COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference's Policy is to ensure compliance with International structures as well as within local Child Welfare and local legislation statutes.

ZCBC also recognizes the universal law of the Catholic Church. This policy is intended to be in harmony with the New Code of Canon Law 1983: No .135 and Congregation Major Religious Superiors (CMRS) Protocol for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct (2012).

International and Legal statutes

- UN Convention on the Rights Children (UN CRC); 1990.
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (AC); 1995.
- Constitution of Zimbabwe No.20:2013.

### 2.2. THE RELEVANT PARTIES

The provisions of this Policy apply to the following parties:

- All pastoral members of the ZCBC, including the clergy, religious and lay people;
- All staff members of the institutions of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe;
- All volunteers and contractors working with such institutions;
- Board governors and members
- School Development Committees thereof;
- Parents and guardians thereof.
- Any other person who may be given access to children in any of our Catholic Institutions.

## 2.3 DIFFERENT ROLES

The roles and responsibilities of key players referred to in this policy are:

### 2.3.1 Role of Child Safeguarding Officers (CSOs)

These are delegated people within institutions who are responsible for Child Safeguarding issues. They chair Child Safeguarding Committee meetings/ activities and network with other agencies to keep abreast in all issues pertaining to Child Safeguarding.

- ✓ They receive information about a concern or allegation.
- ✓ Ensure the procedure about how to manage concerns, suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse involving staff and volunteers is followed and that a referral has been made to the statutory authority if appropriate.
- ✓ Create a child safeguarding case file for every referral that include log of actions ,events and information received. Entries should be made as soon as possible after the event they must be timed ,dated and signed by the author.
- ✓ Explain the procedures for addressing the concern, allegation or disclosure to the person who has raised the concern confidentially. Contact emergency or appropriate services when a child is at immediate and serious risk of them
- ✓ Inform relevant staff that a complainant has been made and make recommendations about any immediate action that may need to be taken to safeguard a child or children.
- ✓ Contact an internal investigation and to communicate with relevant personnel where necessary.
- ✓ The contact details of the Child Safeguarding Officer and of the Committee members will be widely displayed in Catholic institutions so that anyone with concerns about child abuse knows where they will find help.

### 2.3.2 Responsibilities of Child Safeguarding officer and the Committee

- Child Safeguarding Focal persons will give technical advice for they evaluated experience in the area of Child Safeguarding, hence they will assist Child safeguarding officer in carrying out investigations.
- Act as referral points for those who have concerns about the safety and care of children within institutions.
- They attend Child Safeguarding meetings called for by institutions and communities.
- They advise the Child Safeguarding Officer and the Committee on matters relating to child safety.

## 2.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ZCBC

The ZCBC itself shall be responsible for:

### 2.4.1 Management

The responsibilities of Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) and Conference of Major Religious Superiors (CMRS)

ZCBC and CMRS are responsible for responding to allegations of child abuse, swiftly and appropriately. They will ensure that the necessary structures are in place for receiving and dealing with allegations of misconduct, as outlined in the ZCBC and CMRS guidelines booklet entitled *A Pastoral and Procedural Protocol for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct* (2012).

- Ensuring that information about keeping children safe is disseminated through selected key authorities;
- Monitoring the implementation process of this policy using data from all Catholic dioceses and institutions in Zimbabwe;
- Amending and updating this policy to improve its contents and procedures on a three year basis;

- Ensuring that Child Safeguarding strategies are incorporated into the systems of schools, colleges, university campus, hospitals, parishes and all organizations under their auspices;
- Creating a National Child Safeguarding Advisory Committee comprising members of proven integrity and experience in matters relating to Child Safeguarding. Similar Committees will be established in each Arch/diocese for carrying out the responsibilities mentioned above.

#### **2.4.2 Accountability**

- ❖ Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference will be accountable for taking the steps following any evidence of a widespread violation of this Child Safeguarding Policy.
- ❖ ZCBC in response to findings from various institutions will initiate and review the applicable policies, procedures and protocols to identify and address any gaps.
- ❖ ZCBC is committed to take all appropriate corrective disciplinary actions against the responsible individuals.

#### **2.4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these children safeguarding measures and will make amendments where necessary.
- ZCBC's Policy on Child Safeguarding and its procedures and practice will be reviewed every three years.
- ZCBC will also assess and actively manage the risks of all child-related activities and evidence of such risk management assessment will be freely available for inspection.

#### **2.4.4 Mandatory tasks of Catholic Institutions**

- ❖ To monitor and evaluate the implementation of the policy;
- ❖ Appoint a Child Safeguarding Officer;
- ❖ Appoint a Child Safeguarding Committee;
- ❖ Organize ongoing training for the officers mentioned and all the parties involved;
- ❖ Disseminate the Code of Conduct to all the staff members and volunteers.
- ❖ Raise awareness on Child Safeguarding issues amongst parents and guardians, schools, colleges, universities, communities, parishes, etc.
- ❖ Undertake regular evaluation relating to safeguarding issues within the institutions.

# CREATING A SAFE ORGANISATION

## 3

### 3.0 CODES OF BEHAVIOR

Organizations falling under ZCBC will:

- Adopt policies and measures to ensure that in matters relating to children, the children's best interests are of paramount concern;
- Eliminate all forms of abuse of children; the abuses are as follows  
Physical Abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse
- Provide strong emphasis on safeguarding Children living with disability, in accordance with the Section 83 of **the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 20 of 2013**.

ZCBC members and associated organizations will:

- Behave in ways that clearly reflect the Catholic Church principles on respecting the dignity of the human being;
- Create and maintain an environment that minimizes the likelihood of all forms of abuse and exploitation;
- Refrain from physically abusing children (even where this is considered to be part of child discipline and/or to be 'normal' or 'culturally acceptable'. ZCBC and its members will use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behavior within their workplaces which may be children's homes, learning institutions, hospitals, parishes and in the community at large;
- Not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex or for other forms of inappropriate, humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior;
- Not misuse gadgets such as computers, phones, pads etc. to view or to download, create or distribute inappropriate material such as pornography;

- Seek consent from parents /guardians in cases of children under the age of 18, for those activities that require approval of parents such as travelling to and from their school or parishes, before carrying out any activity with children or using stories about or images of the children in their care. Such stories and images of children should be based on the child's best interest;
- Provide a good example of acceptable behavior in line with the Gospel and the Vision, Mission and Values of ZCBC;
- Refrain from making suggestive remarks and avoid sexually provocative games or conversations with children.

### **3.1 SAFE RECRUITMENT**

In recruitment and selection process of any ZCBC employee or in Catholic institutions, the following steps should be observed.

#### **3.1.0 The employing institution or parish will require from the candidate for employment:**

- A statement of personal details, full name, date of birth and address, signed by the applicant and cross-checked with their identification papers;
- A list of previous work experience;
- Permission to contact in writing or in person two named referees;
- A valid, recent Police Clearance certificate;
- A signed self-declaration form from the applicant with details of any convictions saying whether they have ever faced suspicious or actual accusations.

#### **3.1.1 The employing institution or parish will then:**

- Confidentially request recommendation letters from the previous employer, or other nominated person.
- Ask referees to indicate whether the applicant is known to have been

suspected or convicted of child maltreatment of any kind. The fact that the role is to involve working with children will be stated explicitly and the referee will be asked to comment specifically on the applicant's suitability for such work. Where there have been suspicions that have not led to convictions, the employing authority must undertake an assessment of the case and come to its own conclusion about the risk of employing the individual;

- If anything in the references gives rise to even ambiguity about the applicant's suitability for such work then the referee should be contacted in person to discuss the matter further.

**3.1.2** Candidates will be interviewed by the panel that will include questions relating to Child Safeguarding (amongst others);

**3.1.3** New employees and volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, and will be asked to sign a Code of Behavior form, agreeing that they have read, understood and agreed to abide by the provisions of the Policy;

**3.1.4** All employees and volunteers of ZCBC will receive formal induction in Child Safeguarding;

**3.1.5** Organizations that have been approved by Catholic institutions to have direct centers or access shall sign a Child Safeguarding compliance contract.

## **3.2 AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **3.2.1 Policy awareness**

- All employees and volunteers of ZCBC shall read, understand and sign up to the Code of Conduct and regularly refer to the policy whenever necessary.
- Every workplace will display contact details for the Child Safeguarding Officer.

### **3.2.2 Induction for all Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference employees**

Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference and Congregation Religious Major Superiors must provide training on Child Safeguarding and integrate this training into all developmental programs. The training should encompass the following:

- Recognition of different forms of child abuse (see appendix 4).
- Basic Counselling skills
- Information about the individual's responsibilities for safeguarding children and reporting concerns to relevant authorities.
- An understanding of the Church's reporting and responding procedures in relation to concerns of child abuse.

### **3.2.3 Access to the policy**

The ZCBC's Child Safeguarding Policy will be available to members of the public. Information Education and Communication material (IEC) will be made widely available to inform community members including children on:

- Children's rights and children's responsibilities;
- Protocols to be observed if someone has any child safeguarding concerns, allegations or information regarding child abuse and safety.
- All educational institutions, youth groups and other institutions in which children are regularly received should display child-friendly posters showing children how to report child abuse concerns.

### **3.2.4 Pastoral Care**

Pastoral support counseling and care may be offered to any individual who is a victim of abuse. Psychosocial counseling may also be offered to an individual who has caused harm or is suspected of causing harm and ensure that others within the church, particularly those who may be vulnerable, are kept safe.

# PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

## 4

If any person reasonably suspects that a child may be, has been or is likely to be abused, they must take action right away. To do nothing is not an option and as an agent of ZCBC, failing to respond is against the Child Safeguarding policy.

All Catholic parishes and institutions that fall under the responsibility of ZCBC and/or religious congregations will in all matters of misconduct concerning children in their care follow the procedures and guidelines in the following protocol documents:

**4.1** *The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference & Catholic Major Religious Superiors Pastoral and Procedural Protocol for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct (2012)*, must be referred to in case against a priest or a religious person.

4.1.1 The procedures for handling misconduct laid down by the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Health & Child Care, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and Ministry of Home Affairs

### 4.2 APPOINTMENTS OF APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL

- The Bishop or Major Religious Superior will appoint a Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee and a Contact *Person* for a particular Congregation who deals with all allegations of misconduct which are reported.

- Each Catholic parish /institution will nominate a *Child Safeguarding Office* specifically needed in terms of handling Child safeguarding issues. The Child Safeguarding Officer will also work with the Diocesan Child Safeguarding committee, Congregation and relevant Government ministries or non-governmental organizations to get the required quality of services for children.
- Each Catholic institution will have a *Child Safeguarding Committee as proposed*:
  - a) The Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO)
  - b) The head of the institution or their appointed representative,
  - c) A Representative from the Local Authority.
  - d) A Person/s that may have some expertise or experience in this area.
  - e) One or two children to sit in this committee
  - f) One or two parents / guardians.

It will be the task of this committee to monitor and gather information and concerns surrounding the safeguarding of children. The Committee may engage the Diocesan Committee in seeking advice on any other matter relating to child safeguarding in its parishes, missions or institutions.

### 4.3 REPORTING

- Anyone who has concerns about the safety of a child should report the matter immediately to the Child Safeguarding Officer.
- When it is established that the allegation constitutes a violation of the national laws (especially sexual offences) it must be immediately reported to the responsible authorities for further investigations.
- An objective assessment on whether to involve other external agencies such as the local health officers, social workers should be done to ensure that the best interest of the child /children involved is prioritized.

- Confidentiality must be respected at all times during the process, in order to encourage a culture of good practice around reporting suspicions and concerns about child abuse. The accused must understand that they cannot request the identity of a person raising the concern.
- If the allegations are made against a member of the religious congregation, the matter shall be reported to his/her Superior or person in charge of the congregation.
- Accept what the child says (it is not our responsibility to judge or investigate an allegation). It is our responsibility to receive information about any suspicions / allegations raised and to bring it to the attention of Child Safeguarding officer(s).
- Always take the alleged abuse seriously. You may have some information but others may also have received information that you are unaware of. The CSO will assess the case based on all information received.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by reporting to you.
- Let them know that you need to tell someone. Do not promise total confidentiality.
- Let the child speak freely and do not press for information.
- Never ask leading questions (particularly about sexual abuse allegations).
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Record carefully what you have heard as it is still fresh in your mind, include the date and time of your conversation and any incident disclosed.

## 4.4 RECORDING CONCERNS /ALLEGATIONS

A report of a concern about the safety of a child or the behavior of any member of staff towards a child will be referred to the Child Safeguarding Officer who will make a written record of the allegation or concern. The recording of concerns or allegations should be done during, or just after receiving the concern or allegation. Notes and recording should be done and should quote the person's own words as much as possible.

## 4.5 HOW TO RECEIVE A CONCERN:

- Do not make judgmental statements about anyone involved, and do not ask leading questions.
- If the person telling you is a child, explain to them that you may need to pass the information on so that the child or children involved can be kept safe or assisted effectively. You cannot promise complete confidentiality. You can find out what worries them the most and what they fear could happen to them.
- Try to use the person's own words rather than change them to your own.
- The kinds of questions you can ask are:
  - Is there anything else you can tell me?*
  - Where and when did that happen?*
  - What happened next?*
  - Do you know who said or did that?*
- Keep the questions to a minimum, although you will need to know enough to make an immediate assessment of whether it is safe to let the child leave your presence and return to the place of the alleged abuse, which may be the child's home.

- Try to remain compassionate but neutral. Try to avoid showing shock, disbelief or disgust. Reassure them they have done the right thing by coming to you and explain what you will do next.
- If the person telling you is an adult, try to encourage them to share their concerns directly with the statutory authorities.
- The matter will then be taken to the Child Safeguarding Committee.

#### **4.6 INVESTIGATION STEPS**

A meeting with the Child Safeguarding Committee (CSC) should be called in the institution within 24 hours of the Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO) receiving a concern or allegation. Three members of the appointed committee can form a quorum. The CSO is responsible for chairing the meeting. If the allegation /concern reveals that the Code of Conduct in this policy has been infringed on then the Child Safeguarding meeting is to:

#### **4.7 ASSESS RISK**

Identify and respond to immediate child safety issues that may arise;

#### **4.8 CONSIDER SUSPENSION**

Decide whether it would be a sensible precaution to recommend to the relevant authority, for example, to suspend the member of staff or volunteer immediately to protect the complaint and the community.

- Since all investigations will be undertaken without prejudice, and the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty, it is not unreasonable to ask the person against whom an allegation has been made to take voluntary leave of absence until the inquiry is complete.
- The members of the CSC will keep confidential the reason for any

voluntary withdrawal from the institution of any member of staff. If the concern and allegation lie within the competence of the CSC it will seek advice as to the amount of information that will be given the accused at the outset of the investigation.

#### **4.9 PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION**

The child safeguarding meeting will inquire, promptly and carefully, into the facts and circumstances of the alleged abuse either by themselves or through some suitable personnel and the enquiry must be prompt. If it is believed a crime has been committed then the child safeguarding officer communicates with the Child safeguarding committee or forum in order to report the incident to the police and any other related statutory authorities.

#### **4.10 REFERRAL**

Once the Child Safeguarding Committee has made an initial assessment that an allegation is serious then the matter should be referred to:

- The relevant head of institution.
- the relevant government authority, especially in the case of a civil servant
- a local responsible authority, in case of a religious person.

#### **4.11 FULL INVESTIGATION**

If the case is a matter of a breach of this policy, the Child Safeguarding Committee will instigate a formal investigation. The purpose of a full investigation will be to assess whether the allegation is true or not.

- A written record of all the proceedings and outcomes is to be carefully drawn up and kept in confidential files.

## 4.12 ASSISTING VICTIMS

The Vatican in its circular letter of 2009:1, Pope Benedict states that:

*"...The Church, in the person of the bishop or his delegate, should be prepared to listen to the survivors and their families and to be committed to their spiritual and psychological assistance."*

As mentioned in the ZCBC & CMRS document: *'A Pastoral and Procedural Protocol for dealing with Allegations of Misconduct' (2012)*, the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe is committed to being an example of good practice with regards to child safeguarding issues. The Catholic Church, in the person of the Diocese or Religious Congregation, is committed to ensuring pastoral and spiritual support.

ZCBC understands that child abuse survivors may need a wide range of support such as:

- Safeguarding from harm arising from the complaint made such as threats, adverse publicity and rejection by family or community;
- Support to lessen the health implications of any abuse;
- Support in healing emotional and spiritual damage arising from the abuse
- Support in maintaining and deepening their relationship with the church.

## 4.13 ACTIONS AGAINST THE ACCUSED

ZCBC wishes to make it clear that anyone who commits an act of abuse against a child will be reported to the police and may be dismissed from employment. The personnel and structures put in place for this purpose will deal effectively, honestly and swiftly with all allegations of misconduct and enforcing child safeguarding policies within their parish and institutions.

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is generally understood to refer to the process through which individuals are placed or detained in an exploitative situation for economic gain. Trafficking can occur within a country or may involve movement across borders. Women, men and children are trafficked for a range of purposes, including forced and exploitative labour in factories, farms, organ harvesting and private households, sexual exploitation, drug administration, fraud, extortion and deception and forced marriage”

## **Policy on human and child trafficking:**

- Encourage children to travel in groups.
  - Provide a safe environment for children and adults.
  - Care for vulnerable children and adults with disabilities to ensure that that they are not exposed to any form of harm.
  - Raise awareness on the modes and effects of trafficking.
  - Communication is key to save all lives.
  - Conduct regular interval checks of children or adults who are gathered for different activities.
  - Have a register and records of different people who bring and collect children during school times.
- a) Ensure that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in providing trafficked children with remedies, taking into account the individual circumstances of the child, including his or her age, upbringing, ethnic, cultural and linguistic background and protection needs;
- b) Respect the child’s right to express his or her views freely in all matters affecting the child. To this end, the church should provide trafficked children with effective access to information on all matters affecting their interests, such as their situation, entitlements, services available and the family reunification and/or repatriation process;

- c) Take measures to ensure adequate and appropriate training, in particular legal and psychological training, for persons working with trafficked children on specific rights and obligations in cases involving children.

**The key elements that must be present for a situation of trafficking in persons exists are therefore:**

- Action (recruitment), Means (threat) and Purpose (exploitation).

### **Child Trafficking**

Trafficking can involve school-age youth, particularly those made vulnerable by challenging family situations, and can take a variety of forms including forced labor, domestic servitude, and commercial sexual exploitation. The children at risk are not just high school student's pimps or traffickers are known to prey on victims as young as 5 years of age. Traffickers may target minor victims through social media websites, telephone chat-lines, after-school programs, at shopping malls and bus depots, in clubs, or through friends or acquaintances who recruit students on school campuses. Trafficking of a child will exist if the child was subjected to the same act, such as recruitment or transport, the purpose of which is the exploitation of that child.

### **Identifying a Victim of Human Trafficking**

Indicators that school staff and administrators should be aware of concerning a potential victim: Has unexplained absences from school or demonstrates an inability to attend school on a regular basis. Chronically runs away from home. Makes references to frequent travel to other cities. Exhibits bruises or other signs of physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression, or fear. Lacks control over her or his schedule or identification documents. Is hungry or malnourished, in need of medical care, or inappropriately dressed.

N.B In the case of an immediate emergency, call your local police department or emergency access report a tip with information on potential human trafficking activity.

# APPENDIX I

## RECEIVING A CONCERN ABOUT CHILD SAFETY

If any person reasonably suspects that a child may be, has been or is likely to be abused, they must take action. To do nothing is not an option and as an agent of ZCBC failing to respond is against the code of conduct and will be considered a disciplinary offence.

Under no circumstances should be alleged abuser be alerted at this stage either directly or indirectly, Important evidence may be lost.

If anyone tells an agent of ZCBC any information concerning the safety of a child listen, record and refer. Recording and referring are covered in the body of this policy.

The following guidance outlines how to receive a concern:

Do not make judgmental statements about anyone involved, and do not ask leading questions. If the person telling you is a child, explain to them that you may need to pass the information on so that the child or children involved can be kept safe or assisted effectively. You can promise complete confidentiality. You can find out what worries them the most and what they fear could happen to them. Try to use the person's own words rather than change them to your own. The kinds of questions you can ask are:

- *Is there anything else you can tell me?*
- *Where and when did that happen?*
- *What happened next?*
- *Do you know who said or did that?*

Keep the questions to a minimum, although you will need to know enough to make an immediate assessment of whether it's safe to let the child leave your presence and return to their parent/guardian or not. Questions to be avoided, especially if the person reporting is a child is:

- *Did he/she touch your private parts?*
- *Did that take place at the office?*
- *Were you very scared?*

Try to remain compassionate but neutral. Try to avoid showing shock, disbelief or disgust. Reassure them they have done the right thing by coming to you and explain what you will do next. If the person telling you is any adult, try to encourage them to share their concerns directly with the statutory authorities. Agents of the church, who have vague concerns about the safety of a child, should record and refer rather than trying to gather further information first.

# APPENDIX 2

## REPORTING FORM FOR SUSPECTED CHILD

(to be completed by persons reporting abuse)

### 1. Official date of disclosure /Concern

Date of disclosure /concern	
Time of disclosure /concern	
How was the information received? e.g. Telephone, email, anonymous letter or in person.	

### 2. Details of the Person making the disclosure or raising the concern

Name
Address
Tel./Cellphone number
Email address
Relationship to the child or alleged victim

### 3. Details of Child or alleged victim

Name(s)	
Date of birth	
Sex (Male or Female)	
Physical address	

**4. Details of parent /guardian (where applicable)**

Name	
Address	
Tel./Cellphone number and email address	
Are they aware of the allegation , suspicion or complaint?(Yes or No)	
Relationship to the child or alleged victim	

**5. Details of the alleged perpetrator**

Name	
Address	
Tel./Cellphone number and email address	
Relationship to the child or victim	
Position or occupation	
Physical address at the time of alleged incident(s)	
Any additional information	

**6. Details of concern, allegation or complaint**

Date of incident
Time of incident
Location of incident
Were there any witnesses, if yes who?
And how many?
Details of the incident
Does the child/victim know the referral being made?

## 7. Action taken

Has the matter been referred to the relevant authorities ?( Yes or no )	
If yes ,date and time or referral	
If no ,explain why	
Who was it referred to? Give name and designation of person. Address , tel /cellphone number and email of person	

## 8. Next steps

What actions were agreed upon and by whom when the matter was referred to the relevant authorities?	
Are there any immediate Child Safeguarding concerns? If so, please record what they are and actions being taken and by whom.	
Tel./Cellphone number Email address Relationship to the child or alleged victim	

## 9. Details of the Child Safeguarding officer working on the case

Name	
Address	
Tel./Cellphone number	
Email address	
Position in the organization	
Time of form completion	
Signature	

# APPENDIX 3

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING SELF DECLARATION FORM

**(CONFIDENTIAL)**

If you have any queries regarding the completion of this form please contact the Child Safeguarding Advisors or Child Safeguarding Officer in your Arch / diocese. If you have a disability that may make the completion of this form difficult, the form can be completed by someone on your behalf however we still require you to sign the form.

**Parish / Religious Order:** .....

**Role(s) Applied for:** .....

**Status of Role:** .....Employed /Post Holder  
/Voluntary

**Title:** Mr. /Mrs. /Miss /Ms. /Other (Please specify)

**Date of Birth:** ..... **Male /Female**

### Question 1

**Did you have any convictions or cautions (including any "spent Convictions )? Yes /No**

### Question 2

**Have you ever been accused of any inappropriate conduct within an employed or voluntary capacity? Yes /No**

### Question 3

**Are you or have you ever been the subject of any investigation into a concern about any child in your care or investigated under adult protection safeguarding procedures? Yes /No**

If yes please provide a summary of details.

Declaration (Please read and, sign & place a date)

In the spirit of the Church’s commitment to safeguard the vulnerable in our communities, I understand that to knowingly provide inaccurate information or omit information will be considered a breach of trust and may result in me being asked to step down from the post. If I am subsequently convicted of any relevant criminal offence or become subject to investigation regarding safeguarding concerns or conduct issues, I will immediately declare this to my employer or safeguarding Office.

I understand that this Form and any enquiries made in response to the contents of this form will be retained for 75 years and in the event that I am not appointed /selected due to the contents of this form, a record of the non - appointment will be retained.

By signing this Declaration form I provide consent to the Catholic Church of Zimbabwe to check details on this form with the relevant authorities.

I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and true to the best of my knowledge.

**Signed:** .....**Dated:** .....

# APPENDIX 4

## REFERRAL FORM

To be completed in duplicate .One copy kept by referring organization, one by the organization receiving the referral.

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: M / F \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent / guardian:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of the Case or need:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Referral:

\_\_\_\_\_

Referred by (Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral sent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Referring Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 5

## RECORD OF INCIDENTS /CONCERNS REGARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Information received at: (insert time) ..... (Insert date):.....  
 By (insert name):..... Role:.....  
 Telephone number:..... Email:.....  
 Information received: by telephone /by letter / in person / by email  
 Alleged Survivor / Victim, Child / young person  
 Name:.....  
 Age / date of birth:..... Gender: Male /female  
 (delete as necessary)

Address:.....  
 .....  
 Telephone Number.....  
 Name of Parent / Guardian:.....  
 Telephone Number:.....

Information received from:  
 Name:.....  
 Role:.....  
 Address:.....  
 .....

Telephone Number:.....Email:.....

Alleged person responsible for the incident / concern:  
 Name:.....  
 Role:.....  
 Age /Date of Birth:.....  
 Address:.....  
 .....  
 Telephone Number:.....

**Action and further information**

Record all actions taken and information received with times, location, dates and identities of person's present. All entries to be signed.  
All relevant documents should be retained securely and forwarded to the Safeguarding Officer with this form as soon as possible.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>

# APPENDIX 6

## CHILD ABUSE CASE RECORDING FORM

### Report notification

Case Name:.....

Address :.....

### Survivor details

Name of child:.....

Sex:.....Age:.....

### Address:

School:.....Class:.....

Disability noted:.....

Type of abuse:.....

Relationship to Suspect:.....

### Involved parties

Name(s) of parents/guardians.....

If in Foster Care (state name of institution):

Suspect name.....Sex.....

Age: .....

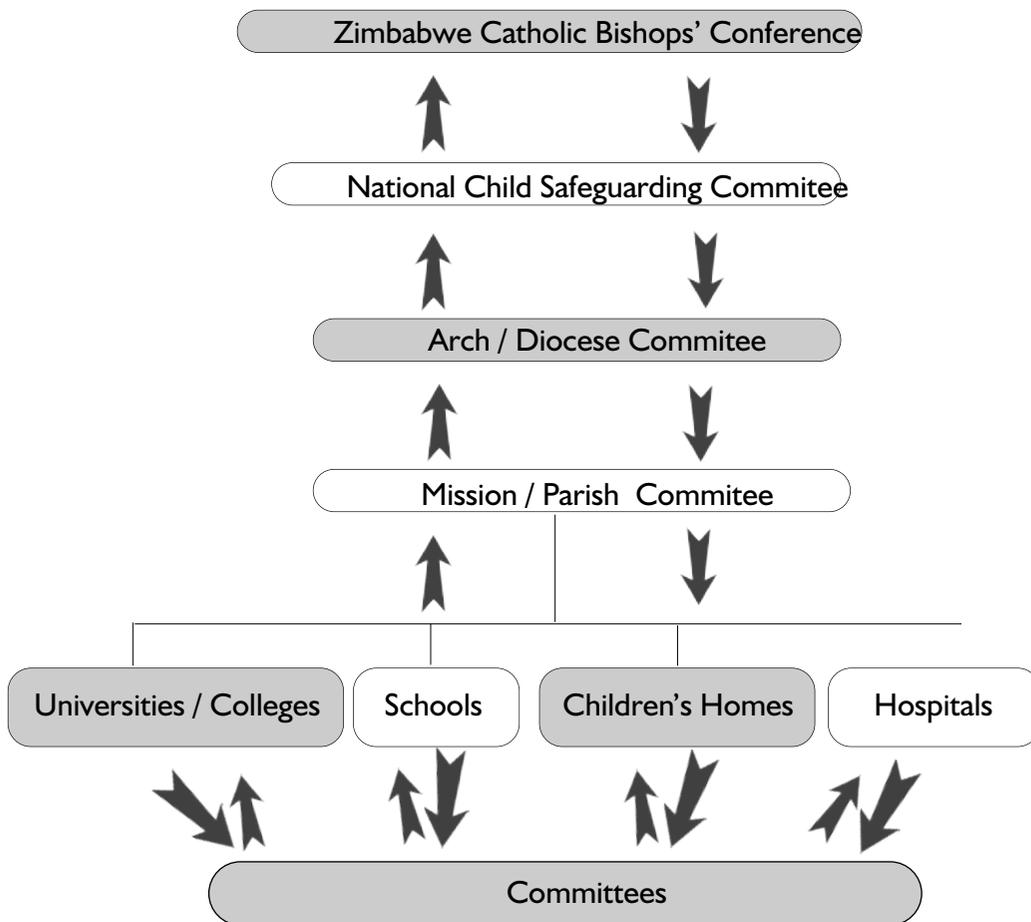
Address and contact details.....

### Other relevant information:

Incident narrative description .....

Referral suggestion:.....

## STRUCTURE ON CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN ZIMBABWE



## **ZIMBABWE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE**

- + Michael Dixon Bhasera, Bishop of Masvingo and Apostolic Administrator of Gweru (*ZCBC President*)
- + Robert C. Ndlovu, Archbishop of Harare and Administrator of Chinhoyi (*ZCBC Vice President*)
- + Alex Thomas Kaliyanil, Archbishop of Bulawayo (*ZCBC Secretary & Treasurer*)
- + Albert Serrano-Bishop of Hwange
- + Xavier Munyongani – Bishop of Gweru
- + Paul Horan- Bishop of Mutare
- + Rudolf Nyandoro- Bishop of Gokwe