



ZIMBABWE CATHOLIC
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

Child Friendly Policy Document

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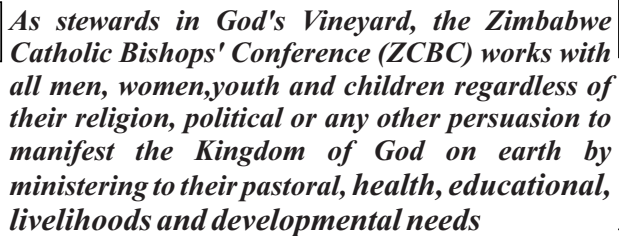


• MIND • BODY • SOUL •



**ZIMBABWE CATHOLIC
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ZCBC CHILD FRIENDLY POLICY

Two large, stylized arrows are positioned on either side of the central text. Each arrow is a thick, grey-outlined shape that curves from the top towards the bottom, pointing towards the center of the page.

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 persuasion to manifest the Kingdom of God on earth by ministering to their pastoral, health, educational, livelihoods and developmental needs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
Acknowledgments	iii
Functional Areas	iv
Acronyms	v
Introduction	1
Vision	1
Mission	1
Values	2
Scope of the Policy	2
ZCBC Principles	2
Purpose	3
Basis of the Child Safeguarding	4
Definitions under Child Safeguarding Policy	4
Fundamental Principles	5
Children's Rights	6
Children's Responsibilities	7
Child Safety	8
Reporting Procedures	8
Children and the Media	9
Expected Outcome	10
Child Safeguarding Committees	11
Stakeholders on Child Formation	12

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, do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these”, (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 in the holistic development of children. 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 promote 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 emphasised 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 for the good of the society. May God bless us in our work.



Bishop Rudolf Nyandoro
Bishop Chairman
ZCBC Education Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the teamwork and invaluable contributions which went into the reviewing of the ZCBC Child safeguarding Policy. Child Safeguarding Policy 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 recognised 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.

Our gratitude also goes to all the Arch\diocesan Education Secretaries for their constant support: Sr. C. Gowu LCBL (Arcdhiocese of Harare), Mrs. Kasese (Archdiocese of Bulawayo), Sr. P. Rubaya SJI (Gweru Diocese), Fr. S. Cheste (Mutare Diocese), Sr. R. Mowoyosvi LCBL (Chinhoyi Diocese), Mr S.G. Muchimwe (Gokwe Diocese) and the representatives of CMRS, Fr. J. Arimoso SJ and Sr. A. Rodrigues OLS.

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

The success of developing and reviewing this policy would not have 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 you all



Sr. Dr. Theresa Nyadombo HLMC
ZCBC National Education Coordinator

Functional Area: Related Policy:	Child Safeguarding Policy Code of Conduct
Procedure:	Reporting and responding to Child Safeguarding issues according to ZCBC Child Safeguarding Policy
Fundamental Principles:	Best interests of the child Non-discriminatory Life, Survival and Development Participation
Action:	Prevent Protect Policy Prayer Prosecute Participate Partnership



CRONYMS

- ACRWC - African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
- CLCPC - Child Led Child Protection 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 Policy
- CSP - Child Safeguarding Policy
- DCWPS - Department of Child Welfare and Protection
- REV - Reverend
- UNCRC - United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children
- ZCBC - Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference holds that the Safeguarding of children is based upon the belief that each person is made in the image and likeness of God and that the inherent dignity of all should be recognized and fostered. We seek to make all our church activities and facilities (Parishes, Schools, Children's homes, Hospitals) safe for children.

An embedded culturally driven approach to child safeguarding and safety in all schools means that protecting children from abuse is evident in everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers.

Catholic Institutions are entrusted in partnership with parents, guardians and Care Givers who are the primary educators of their children with the total education of the child. Catholic institutions staff members, therefore have a duty to care for students during school operating hours and at other times when a staff and student relationship exists.

The staff members fulfill this duty by taking reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which they can reasonably foresee would likely result in harm or injury to the student.

I.1 VISION

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

I.2 MISSION

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

I.3 VALUES

Commitment	Team work	Love
Peace	Dignity	Transparency
Honesty	Trusty	Compassion
Fairness	Prayer	Tolerance
Ubuntu	Integrity	Accountability
Respect	Option for the poor	Selflessness

I.4 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) recognises 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; on-discrimination, the best interest of the child, participation and survival and development.

I.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:

a. Impartiality

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

b. Safety

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

c. Speed

Effort will be to conclude investigations in a timely manner.

d. 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 paramount to safeguard the interest 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.
- ❖ It is important that the investigators should consider the safety of the perpetrator while at the same time making way for the legal process to take its full course.

2.0 PURPOSE

ZCBC is committed to safeguarding of all children in Catholic institutions in Zimbabwe. Its purpose is to offer the children a safe and welcoming environment with fun activities where the children can live, learn, grow and glow into the world with the fear of the Lord and respect for fellow human beings.

This document is to provide a blue print on and procedures to maximize the safety and protection of children under the age of 18 in Catholic institutions within Zimbabwe.

The policy sets out the procedures to be followed to ensure that prompt, professional; sensitive and appropriate action is taken by staff in Catholic institutions in accordance with the expectations of the ZCBC.

This policy applies to all staff working in Catholic institutions in Zimbabwe including priests, religious and the laity, paid staff, volunteers, casual workers, agency staff or all students on internship.

3.0 BASIS OF THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING

3.1 The International Human Rights Instruments

3.2 The Regional Human Rights Instruments

3.3 Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013 Provisions.

3.4 Children's Act (Chapter: 5:06)

3.5 Education Act 2006 (Amended)

3.6 The Canon Law

3.7 ZCBC Child Safeguarding Policy Document

4.0 DEFINITIONS UNDER THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY.

4.1 Child - In this policy a child is defined as a person below the age of 18 years in line with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Children and Section 81 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe (No. 20) Act 2013.

4.2 Child abuse - is defined as ill-treatment or exploitation of children's rights which fall under the following categories: physical abuse, emotional and psychological.

4.3 Physical abuse - is defined as the actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, for example an adult or a child. It may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning or burning.

4.4 Sexual abuse - is defined as forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, such as rape, pornography and some sexual related messages on social media. This may also include any sexual activity in exchange for money gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol for purposes of sexual manipulation.

4.5 Emotional abuse -is defined as persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying and threatening.

4.6 Commercial exploitation- is defined as exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of the other and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes but is not limited to child labour.

4.7 Neglect and negligent treatment - is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development.

4.8 Child Safeguarding - is to afford children protection in everything keeping them safe and looking after them very well.

5.0 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

In the best interests of the child, the child protection strategies and procedures to be followed are based on the following principles:

5.1 Every child has a right to life.

5.2 Take into account the diversity of all children, including the needs of children from culturally, religiously, geographically or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

5.3 The institutions are expected to be safe, supportive, inclusive and empowering.

5.4 All staff members in Catholic institutions have a responsibility to care for children and to promote their safety, protection and well-being.

5.5 All children have the right to a holistic and systematic education in all aspects of life.

5.6 In any dealings regarding safety, the dignity, protection and well-being of children involved shall be maintained and respected.

5.7 Those in charge of the institutions are required to ensure that all staff members adhere to legislation and policies with respect to child safeguarding policies.

5.8 Children should be allowed to express themselves freely and responsibly.

5.9 To assist the children in integrating into the community.

5.10 Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed either legally or pastorally.

5.11 The child's welfare should be considered paramount in all Catholic institutions. All Catholic institutions should make this clear by publicly displaying their commitment to child safeguarding through mission statements.

6.0 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Right to Life
Right to a Name
Right to a Family
Right to Religion
Right to Education
Right to Shelter
Right to Health Care
Right to Food
Right to Development
Right to Participation
Right to Protection
Right to a Safe Environment
Right to Work

6.1 CHILDREN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Children's rights go hand in hand with their responsibilities. Rights would be empty without responsibilities.

The following are the responsibilities for children:

- ❖ To respect and care for each other.
- ❖ To be involved in decision making in issues that affects them and their needs.
- ❖ To be honest and to do what is asked of them.
- ❖ To appreciate the good things that adults do for children.
- ❖ To help at home, look after the elderly when they are ill, and care for their siblings.
- ❖ To be open and engage with their parents.
- ❖ Have good communication with their parents and elders.
- ❖ To share problems with their parents.
- ❖ To report abuse cases immediately to their parents or care givers.
- ❖ To learn how to be responsible adults in the future through acquiring the required life skills and education.

Children also have the following responsibilities to other children;

- ❖ To avoid bullying and report any cases of bullying to the responsible authorities.
- ❖ To respect other children's rights.
- ❖ To be generous, truthful, helpful and polite.
- ❖ To make sure that fellow children are cared for and that they are not abused by their parents, relatives, teachers, neighbors, strangers or other children.
- ❖ To counsel fellow peers if they have problems and share food and other basic needs with them.
- ❖ To play with other children without discrimination or hatred and to encourage each other to study.
- ❖ To avoid laughing, mocking other disadvantaged children or making them feel unacceptable.
- ❖ To discourage that which is negative in life and encourage each other to be optimistic (hopeful) about life.
- ❖ To share ideas and discuss problems together, giving each other turns to talk.
- ❖ To engage adults for assistance when there are problems that needs to be solved.
- ❖ To pray for parents/guardians, peers, friends, relatives and all those who offer them services.
- ❖ To foster communication with peers, parents and teachers.

7.0 CHILD SAFETY

7.1 Ensure that the environment where children are engaged is safe e.g. no broken furniture, glass or litter which may cause harm to children.

7.2 Make sure that all staff and assistants know:

Where the emergency phone is and how it is operated.

Where the first aid kit is and how it is administered.

Who is responsible for first aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book.

What to do in the event of a fire or any other emergency.

Take children through disaster drills in case of emergency

7.3 Do not let children go home with strangers unless there have been prior arrangements with the parents or guardians.

7.4 If private cars are used for an outing, the drivers must be approved by the management / committee, be properly insured, have rested before driving and should have a clean driver's license.

There should always be at least one other responsible person (18 years and above) in each vehicle. All vehicles should be fitted with seatbelts. Essentially, all vehicles used should meet the traffic safety regulations.

8.0 REPORTING PROCEDURES

8.1 All Catholic institutions in Zimbabwe will use the Child Safe Standards to establish an adult Child Safeguarding Committee and a Child-led Committee which sets out in detail the internal policies, procedures and workplace systems it has adopted.

8.2 All Catholic Institutions staff members who identify concerns regarding the sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect of a child must respond according to mandatory reporting and grooming. Failure to disclose and failure to obey legislation and policies may come with repercussions.

8.3 When an allegation is directed against an employee (teachers, administrative staff, nurses, cooks, matrons, caregivers, grounds staff or any other staff member) staff members are to inform the Child Safeguarding Officer will handle the issue according to the laid down procedures.

8.5 The Heads of institutions shall ensure that staff members receive induction and on-going professional learning in relation to the child safety and protection policies and procedures, inclusive of mandatory reporting on an annual and on-going basis.

8.6 The Heads of institutions shall ensure the institutional pastoral care structures reflect all child safety and protection policies and procedures.

8.7 All Catholic institutions in Zimbabwe will create a Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers.

8.8 All Catholic institutions, staff members and volunteers will be required to follow guidelines in the Code of Conduct.

9.0 CHILDREN AND THE MEDIA

Maintaining respect and dignity of children and their families is the overriding principle in the use of information and visual images, both photographic and motion pictures, in our portrayal of children, families and communities. Any attempts to do so shall observe the following:

9.1 Obtain assent from the child and informed consent from the parents or guardians of the child before photographing or filming the child.

9.2 Explain how the video or photographs will be used.

9.3 That the photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner.

9.4 That images are honest representatives of the context and the facts.

9.5 Non -portrayal of children as helpless victims.

9.6 Photos and stories must not use real names of children or real location when communicating sensitive information, e.g. sexual abuse or violence.

9.7 Watching of television should be regulated by the parents/guardians and other caregivers in charge of children (games and stories that affect the mind and behavior negatively should be avoided)

9.8 Social media use must be monitored as it exposes children to abusive material like pornography, drug abuse and violence.

10.0 EXPECTED OUTCOME

10.1 Every Catholic institution in Zimbabwe should follow this blueprint, regarding child safety and protection.

10.2 All the members of the church (the faithful) will work respectfully and collaboratively with children, families and communities

10.3 Catholic employees are informed of child safety and protection and are expected to be self-aware and adhere to their professional obligations and responsibilities.

10.4 All allegations will receive a prompt response and be clearly documented.

10.5 Continuous spiritual support and counseling shall be availed to all those in need.

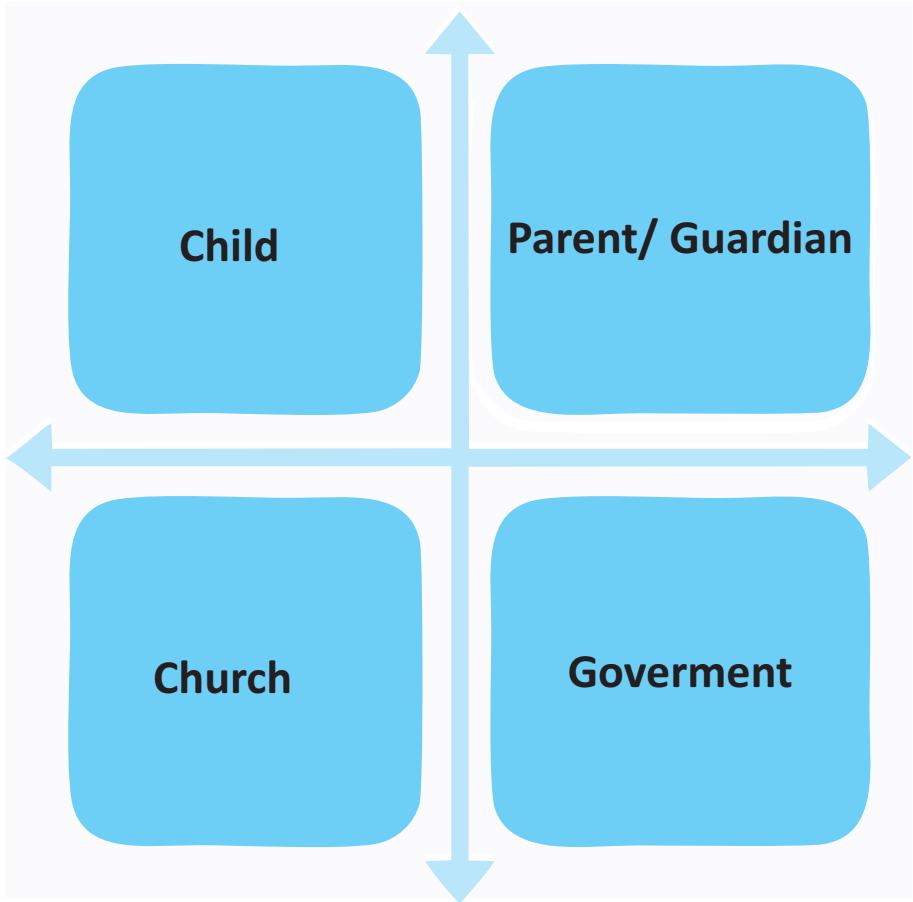
All children have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety in partnership with their parents, guardians or caregivers.

II Child Safeguarding Committees

II.1 Child-Led Committees

- ❖ Members to be trained,
- ❖ Be aware of the causes and signs of abuse or neglect
- ❖ The steps to take to protect children
- ❖ Be aware of the legal responsibilities under civil law,
- ❖ Understand the Church's procedures in relation to notification of child abuse or neglect
- ❖ On- going formation (acquire and search for new knowledge)
- ❖ Be able to work with other children
- ❖ Be able to work with Child Safeguarding Adult Committee(s)
- ❖ Use language that is respectful
- ❖ Exercise discretion in the giving and receiving of gifts
- ❖ Promote an awareness of human rights in relation to self and others.

Stakeholders on Child Formation



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

+ Paul Horan- Bishop of Mutare

+ Rudolf Nyandoro- Bishop of Gokwe