



SHAPING A HEALTHY FUTURE

For five years Anglican Church Newcastle has been engaged with the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We have faced our past failures and the profound impact on people across this region.

Each year around 300 people from the parishes, schools and agencies gather at a meeting with the Anglican Bishop in an event called Synod to deliberate on Anglican Church life. The Bishop and Synod have expressed their sincere apology to survivors of abuse. They have committed the Anglican Church Newcastle to do all that is necessary to provide redress and support to survivors.

Since we began paying redress, 38 people have applied, or are highly likely to apply, for redress. These applications relate to 19 perpetrators. Our current estimated total for redress (excluding ongoing counselling costs) is \$10,982,000 of which \$7,807,000 has been paid. Anglican Church Newcastle is

committed to meeting the ongoing counselling expenses of survivors. It is waiting on the Government and the Anglican Church nationally so that it can join the National Redress Scheme.

The Diocese looks forward to the NSW Government making the changes that would allow Anglican Church Newcastle to be a designated agency for the purposes of child protection under the NSW Ombudsman Act

Building on the legacy of Bishop Greg Thompson, Anglican Church Newcastle is shaping a healthy future in which people can flourish by the grace of God and the grace of the communities the Church is called to serve.

Bishop Peter Stuart became the Anglican Bishop on 2 February 2018. On 10 May 2018 he will be joined in this work by two Assistant Bishops, Sonia Roulston, who will be the first woman bishop serving this region, and Charlie Murry.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND SURVIVOR SUPPORT

Anglican Church Newcastle has had a Professional Standards Section since 2005. This Section is responsible for responding to allegations of child abuse, adult sexual abuse and serious misconduct by clergy and lay church workers. Our staff are experienced and have specialist training in responding to and investigating child protection and sex crimes. They are skilled at working with and ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people within our community. These staff have extensive backgrounds in the area of law enforcement and they are working in full cooperation with New South Wales Police.

In September 2017, Anglican Church Newcastle launched the Survivor Support Service. Staffed by independent contractors, Survivor Support connects survivors with counsellors and

other supports. It assists survivors to make contact with NSW Police and when they wish to formally bring their concerns to the Church.

Anglican Church Newcastle runs a Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme which is modelled on the Redress Model promoted by the Royal Commission. The Survivor Support Service can help a survivor prepare their application.

Anglican Church Newcastle responds to any civil litigation claim as a model litigant and in a trauma-informed manner. People engaging in civil litigation can also access the Survivor Support Service. Anglican Church Newcastle does not raise defences relating to the length of time in bringing in a claim or the defence commonly known as the Ellis Defences.

Contacting NSW Police: Call Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000

Contacting Professional Standards: Call 1800 774 945 or Email dps@newcastleanglican.org.au

Contacting Survivor Support: Call 4907 5730 or Email survivorsupport@newcastleanglican.org.au

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1: Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture

- Anglican Church Newcastle has publicly committed to child safety. It will explore ways to champion a child safe culture.
- Child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels of Anglican Church Newcastle.
- Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children.
- We have a code of conduct for clergy and lay church workers (paid and voluntary) called Faithfulness in Service which sets clear behavioural standards towards children.
- Introductory training on obligations on information sharing and record-keeping has been in place since 2009. Training to be strengthened in the second half of 2018.

Standard 2: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

- Clergy and church workers (paid and voluntary) receive basic training on signs of harm in children.
- Anglican Schools affirm friendships, have strong processes of enabling children to express their views, participate in decisions affecting them, and have access to sexual abuse prevention information.
- Anglican parishes have tended to rely on the education of children in the wider community. Consideration has begun on programs for children in parishes.

Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved

- Anglican Schools have established means of communication with families and the community.
- Information about Diocesan governance is available on the Diocesan Website which is subject to regular review.
- Preliminary consideration has been given to forms of stakeholder engagement using electronic surveys.

Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account

- The Diocese anticipates the diverse circumstance of parishioners, clients and students in its various bodies.

Standard 5: People working with children are suitable and supported

- All clergy and all relevant church workers have Working with Children Checks.
- All clergy and church workers are required to undertake Safe Ministry Training on appointment and then every three years.
- Screening focuses on ensuring people are safe to work with children and vulnerable people.

Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused

- Anglican Church Newcastle has a well-developed complaint and information handling system that is understood by clergy and church workers (paid and voluntary). There is scope to enhance its understanding and accessibility by children and families.
- The complaint and information handling policy and procedures for Anglican Church Newcastle clearly outline various roles and responsibilities including obligations to act and report. There is scope for improving clarity on non-child abuse and non-sexual abuse complaints and information.
- All complaints of child abuse and sexual abuse are taken seriously and are responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- There is a clear commitment by the Diocese to observe employment and privacy obligations.

Standard 7: Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training

- Clergy and church workers (paid and voluntary) receive basic training on child abuse and the expectations of Anglican Church Newcastle about reporting.
- Additional training planned for the second half of 2018.

Standard 8: Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur

- Anglican Schools provide for the online safety of students.
- Parishes have little or no online activities for children. Online safety through parishes requires policy development.

Standard 9: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved

- Anglican Church Newcastle regularly reviews and improves child safe practices through its Professional Standards System.
- Audit process will be implemented in 2018-2019 in partnership with other Australian Anglican Dioceses.

Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe

- Leaders champion and model compliance with Anglican Church Newcastle Professional Standards policies and procedures
- Clergy and church workers (paid and voluntary) understand and implement policies and procedures. Failures are promptly followed up.
- There is scope to ensure all policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- There is scope to improve accessibility and ease of understanding of policies and procedures.
- There is scope for improvement in stakeholder consultation on policy development.
- Anglican Church Newcastle is well advanced in implementing best practice models proposed by the Anglican Church of Australia.