

All Saints Anglican Church, Greensborough

Child Safe Policy, 2016

Purpose

The aim of our Children's and Youth Ministries here at All Saints is to serve in partnership with parents and our church community to create a safe place where Christian growth can be encouraged by everyone. We are to be proactive in the welcoming, spiritual nurture, protection, safety and care of the young children, teenagers and adults in our care whilst respecting the responsibility that parents and/or guardians have given to the leaders and volunteers. Scripture gives examples of how to care for children in Deuteronomy 6:4-7 and Matthew 18:1-6

Policy Guidelines

We will be an organization that embeds a culture of child safety not only through our leaders and volunteers but also as a church community. By implementing the Child safety standards listed below, we will have a zero tolerance to any form of abuse of children and necessarily comply with reporting procedures. We recognise that annual risk assessments and evaluations of our standards will need to be addressed.

The Victorian Government has introduced minimum Child Safe Standards to create and maintain child safe organizations. As one of these organizations, we are bound by law to adhere to the standards under the Child Safety and Well Being Act and to implement these by January 1, 2017. This belief is also reinforced through the Diocesan Professional Standards Legislation and provision of resources such as the Duty of Care Handbook for Leaders of Youth and Children's Ministry, The Faithfulness in Service Code of Good Practice Summary

The child safe standards are as follows:

In complying with the child safe standards, an entity to which the standards apply must include the following principles as part of each standard:

- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children.
- Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Promoting the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
2. A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
3. A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

4. Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
5. Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Procedures

- A number of strategies will be undertaken to ensure the safety of children
- Appropriate leaders/volunteers will be appointed and screened through a referee process
- Leaders /volunteers over 18 years of age will be required to have a working with childrens card and police check.
- Leaders under 18 years of age will undertake an apprenticeship role and be required to undertake training with parental supervision.
- All leaders/volunteers will be expected to sign a code of conduct which outlines expected behaviour and actions according to the values of the church community, society and above all as followers of Jesus. They must understand processes that will be undertaken if an expectation is breached.
- Leaders under 18 years of age will have a parent co-sign this document.
- All new leaders will be required to undergo an induction process outlining expectations in their adopted ministry area.
- For all activities with children/youth we will comply with the Anglican Diocese recommendations in relation to safe ratios of supervision, occupational health and safety standards and parental or guardian permission and confidentiality of records kept. A risk assessment model will be adopted for off- site events and any major events we host at the church. Approval for major events must be approved by Parish Council.
- Staff/volunteer training will be undertaken each year in relation to child safety standards
- An annual child safety risk review will be conducted
- The appointed Child Safety Officer (Children and Families Minister) will report any concerns to the Risk Governance Group (Vicar and 3 Parish Council Wardens)
- Parents/carers and members of the church community will be given an update on our Child Safety Review through the AGM report.
- Members of the church community will be regularly updated with any identified risks or information in relation to child safety via e-mail, correspondence, our website, display boards, church service announcements and information evenings as required.
- Children will be encouraged and empowered to participate in all aspects of child safety through open communication with leaders/volunteers where expectations are outlined at the start of each year or program.
- We will have clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse. Criminal offences in relation to grooming, failure to protect, and failure to disclose will also be explained in training sessions online and in person.
- The community will be informed of these procedures via the webpage, display boards, literature on our welcome desk ,community forums and training forums through online and face to face engagement.

Relevant websites for further information:

<http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/youthchildrenfamily/childrenfamily/Pages/Duty-of-Care.aspx>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>

<http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/index.htm>

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/betrayal+of+trust+implementation>

Child Protection Safety Officer

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Risk Governance Group Supervisor

Dave Fuller (Vicar)
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