

SAFE CHURCH POLICY

We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and have their views and options valued at all times. We live in a country that legislates for people's safety and God calls his body to minister to vulnerable people. God identifies classes of vulnerable people who are to be protected and given special care and treatment in a society because of their powerlessness including the foreigner, widows and orphans (Ex 22:21-22, Deut 10:17-19, Jer 22:2-4, James 1:27).

Our policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under Australian legislation.

OUR POLICY AIMS TO

1. Minimise the risk of abuse ministry misconduct, and the misuse of positional power.
2. Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled with thoroughness and integrity.
3. Ensure that leaders, Ministry Programs and Ministry Events are safe.
4. Ensure that all people are respected and valued, including children, youth, young people and adults.

OUR POLICY APPLIES TO

1. All leaders, paid and voluntary, who have direct or regular involvement with children and young people (0 to 18 years) that are under our care. A leader is anyone who works for or on behalf of the church.
2. All senior leaders, paid and voluntary, including; parish councillors, wardens, ministers and anyone who is responsible to approve and/or oversee ministry leaders and events/programs

WE COMMIT TO

1. Safe recruitment of leaders
 - a) We will screen all prospective volunteer leaders, at all levels, in our ministries before they are appointed. Our screening process includes; identification, checking referees, a working with children check and more depending on the specific role.
 - b) We will screen and appoint all prospective paid leaders as per the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle's Safe Ministry procedures (<http://newcastleanglican.org.au/mission-ministries/safe-ministry/>).

Safe Church Policy

Adapted from the SMR Handbook - <http://www.smr.org.au>

For Review January 2019 - Last updated 15/11/2017

- c) All prospective volunteer leaders are required to have attended our church (or an affiliated organisation) regularly for a minimum of 3 months before they can apply to be leaders.
2. Adequate training of leaders
 - a) We require that all leaders involved with ministry to children, youth or vulnerable people, attend an approved Safe Church Training workshop within the first 6 months of their leadership commencing, and attend a refresher workshop every 3 years.
 - b) We require all leaders to attend additional ministry-specific training as required by their Team Leaders.
 - c) We commit to providing ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for leaders.
 3. Responding to allegations of child abuse or risk of harm (abuse or neglect)
 - a) All leaders will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, or risk of harm according to our **“Reporting Suspected Harm Procedure”**.
 4. Responding to allegations of ministry misconduct
 - a) Where a leader has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them we will respond according to our **“Alleged Misconduct Procedure”**.
 - b) We will provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators and seek appropriate diocesan help for a just and fair resolution.
 5. Safe environments in our ministry programs
 - a) We will serve participants as servants of Christ, commit to the Good News of Jesus and lead in spiritually non-abusive ways.
 - b) We will afford all participants the opportunity to contribute to the Ministry Programs and Ministry Events in which they participate, by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation.
 - c) We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children’s health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
 - d) We require that all leaders use the designated forms, checklists and templates for the establishment and maintenance of safe environments in our church.
 - e) We require a written ministry approval process for all Ministry Programs and as needed before each Ministry Event, utilising designated forms.