

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to:
- ensure children and young people are safe from harm in their interactions with Churches of Christ in Queensland (CofCQ), including all subsidiary entities and Affiliated Churches;
 - inform all workforce members of their obligations in relation to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all workforce members in all environments, communities and subsidiary entities of CofCQ, including all Affiliated Churches in Queensland and services in Victoria.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All			
<input type="checkbox"/> Children Youth and Families	<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors Living	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Communities
<input type="checkbox"/> Centenary Development Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/> Church and Community Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Council of Churches

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 CofCQ is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation to ensure children are safe from harm in their interactions with CofC. This commitment includes our promotion of a Child Safe culture and a continuous improvement approach to embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles). Our Child Safe culture ensures we:
- create environments where children's safety and wellbeing are the centre of thought, values and actions;
 - emphasise genuine engagement with and value of children and young people;
 - create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people;
 - create conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm to children and young people;
 - respond, in the best interests of the child, to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.
- 3.2 In alignment with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, CofCQ will take actions to ensure:
- the safety of any child will be prioritised above the interests of any individual or entity connected with CofCQ;
 - children we interact with are aware of their rights, and provided opportunities to tell us how we can improve;
 - children we interact with know how to tell us if they are unsafe, are taken seriously when they do, and are offered a range of ways to report concerns to us
 - we maintain a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are respected and valued;

- our workforce understands the organisational and legislative expectations of their individual and collective behaviours and actions to keep children safe;
- compliance with all relevant legislation in Queensland (or Victoria where appropriate) including reporting suspected child abuse and taking actions to protect children from abuse;
- completion of appropriate risk assessments across business areas annually to identify the level of risk or harm or abuse to children;
- implementation of appropriate risk management strategies to manage the risk identified through the above-mentioned risk assessment;
- we impose the same child safety obligations for our workforce, on any contractors;
- our workforce members are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training. Compliance with ongoing training will be maintained on a register to ensure all relevant workforce members are aware of and comply with:
 - the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
 - the organisation's policies and procedures that are related to this policy
 - all relevant legislation relating to this policy and related procedures including any legislation relating to mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect;
- we maintain a Working with Children Check Register which covers all workforce who interact with children or have access to their data;
- we maintain a culture that acknowledges the strengths and individual characteristics of children and young people, and welcomes all children and young people regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, sexual identity or orientation, social, economic or cultural background;
- we provide clear and accessible information to our audiences about our child safe approach, commitments and expectations;
- risk management is required to be undertaken for any program or activity which involves or impacts children. In accordance with the CofCQ Risk Management Framework, each business area is expected to identify, assess, escalate and report on their management and mitigation of child related risks;
- we are child focussed, accessible and robust processes are maintained to respond to concerns of risk or harm.

Risk Rating: HIGH

- 3.3 The implementation of this policy will be coordinated across all CofCQ environments by the CofCQ Child Safe Practice Lead in conjunction with appointed roles within CofCQ i.e. Child Nominee, Safe Church Facilitator, or any other role that is responsible for the safeguarding of children within our environments.

4. PRINCIPLES

Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed (RACI)

- 4.1 This policy is supported by roles and responsibilities in adherence to the following:

Policy Risk Rating	Accountable	Responsible	Consulted	Informed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board/Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CEO	Via Quality Compliance Coordinator (This includes General Manager and Subject Matter Experts (SME))	All workforce

Accountable Person

- is the owner and is accountable for the controlled document; and
- other than minor formatting and editing (known as admin changes), must approve all changes.

Responsible Person

- encourages a culture of good governance through the purpose or intent of a controlled document towards the culture of this organisation;
- ensures effective processes, reporting and management strategies are in place across Churches of Christ in Queensland;
- ensure risk-rated reviews are conducted in accordance with this Document Management Policy and the Policy Writing Information Sheet;
- ensures robust processes are in place to monitor compliance legislative requirements and obligations; and
- identifies risks and opportunities that can support continuous improvement opportunities.

Consulted Person/s

- identify areas within the organisation that policies and other controlled documents should be developed or reviewed for presentation to those accountable and responsible;

- evaluate and review Governing Principles and Benchmarks, providing suggestion where necessary, to the consultation process for improvements;
- provide peer support and facilitate communication between Senior Managers;
- ensure quality practice is applied through regular review;
- inform the Executive Group of any issues, within the context of the Document Management Policy, which may impact on the organisation;
- review the actions taken or proposed for significant systems improvements made by the consultation team; and
- identifies risks and opportunities that can support continuous improvement opportunities.

Informed Persons

- are identified by the term Workforce and include: Employees, Volunteers, Contractors, Students and Consultants; and
- are expected to remain informed and knowledgeable of all policies related to their own areas of work within the organisation.

Compliance, Monitoring and Review

- 4.2 This policy is mandatory and binding upon
- the Board of Churches of Christ in Queensland;
 - CEO;
 - Executive, Senior Leadership and all other Managers; and
 - Workforce.

Breaches to this policy may result in investigation, disciplinary action and reporting to the Executive/Board and external authorities where necessary.

Reporting and Records Management

- 4.3 No additional reporting is required.
- 4.4 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in a recognised Churches of Christ in Queensland record keeping system and in accordance with any relevant legislation.

5. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Term	Definition
Abuse and harm	Is defined as any action, or lack of action, that significantly harms a child's physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Abuse is the intentional harm done to a child through mistreatment or ill-treatment, or failing to prevent harm. Types of abuse include, physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, abandonment and image-based abuse. Child abuse can be a single incident or several incidents that take place over time (Child Protection Act 1999, n.d.).
Accountable	The person who has ultimate ownership of a policy. Ownership cannot be transferred.
Children and young people	Legally, a 'child' is generally defined as a person who is under the age of 18 years. Although, unofficially, the language used to describe a child is any person aged under 12 and a person aged 13 and above would be considered a young person. Young people are those in the life stage from adolescence to eighteen years of age.
Child Safe Practice Lead	The Child Safe Practice Lead is responsible for developing and supporting the implementation and ongoing management of the organisations approach to embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
Consulted	The people who contribute valuable subject matter expertise to the development/review of the policy.
Informed	The people expected to remain informed and knowledgeable of the policy.
Institution	Means Churches of Christ in Queensland group of entities as defined by the term Organisation as well as any affiliated member churches.
Nominee	The <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> and the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> state that an appointed <i>nominee</i> is responsible for ensuring that anyone engaged by the service does not pose a risk to the safety of children and young people.
Organisation	Means Churches of Christ in Queensland Group of Entities including Churches of Christ in Queensland, Churches of Christ Housing Services Limited and all Churches of Christ subsidiary entities.
RACI	A matrix describing the participation by various roles in completing tasks or deliverables in support of business processes.
Responsible	The person who is implements the process and monitors compliance.

Risk Rating: HIGH

Safe Church Facilitator	The Safe Church Facilitator is responsible for working collaboratively with the Church and Community Engagement Team, the Safeguarding Response Group, Governance and leadership of affiliated churches across Queensland to strengthen the culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
Subject Matter Expert	The person/s with definitive sources of knowledge who contribute their expertise to enhance organisational efficiency.
Workforce	Paid staff, volunteers, contractors/consultants, ministering persons, students

6. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Category	Related Reference Document(s)
Related Churches of Christ in Queensland Policies	<p>Code of Conduct Policy</p> <p>Person of Concern Policy</p> <p>Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Policy</p> <p>Minimum Governance Standards for Affiliated Churches Policy (Church and Community Engagement only)</p> <p>Safe Church Policy – Affiliated Churches (Church and Community Engagement only)</p> <p>Privacy Policy</p> <p>National Redress Scheme Policy</p> <p>Harm, Neglect and Abuse Policy</p> <p>Personal History Checks Policy</p> <p>Volunteer Management Policy</p> <p>Insurance Management Policy</p> <p>Procurement Policy</p>
Related Legislation, Industry Standards and Care Standards	<p>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (endorsed by Coalition of Australian Governments 2019)</p> <p>Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy (CofCQ)</p> <p>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</p> <p>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020</p> <p>Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) - Part 2 - Division 2 Civil</p> <p>Criminal Code Act 1899 (Queensland)</p> <p>s 229BB Failure to protect child from child sexual offence</p> <p>s 229BC Failure to report belief of child sexual offence committed in relation to child</p> <p>Crimes Act 1958 (Victoria)</p> <p>s 49O Failure by a person in authority to protect a child</p> <p>s 327 Failure to disclose sexual offence committed against child under the age of 16 years</p> <p>Civil Liability Act 2003 (Qld) s33D – places a duty of care on institutions to take all reasonable steps to prevent the abuse of a child by a person associated with the institution whilst the child is under the care, supervision, control or authority of the institution.</p>
Related Churches of Christ in Queensland Procedures, Supporting Documents and references	<p>Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers</p> <p>Code of Conduct for Ministering Persons</p> <p>CofCQ Risk Management Framework</p> <p>Governance Principles</p>

7. FEEDBACK

- 7.1 Churches of Christ in Queensland workforce and consumers may provide feedback about this document by one of the following mechanisms:
- internal workforce is invited to open a Quality Support Ticket by selecting 'Enquiry' from the available options; and
 - consumers are invited to provide Feedback via the Churches of Christ in Queensland website

8. APPENDIX A

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations were built using the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Principles were endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2019. They are designed to provide a national approach to embedding a child safe culture across all sectors of Australian society in which children are involved.

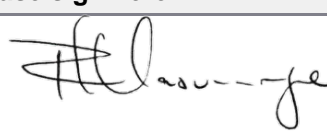
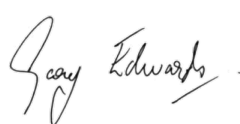
Underpinned by a child-rights approach, the National Principles are designed to build capacity and deliver child safety and wellbeing in organisations, families and communities and prevent future harm.

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Risk Rating: HIGH

9. REVIEW AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details		
Policy Author and Position	Samantha Patterson, Child Safe Practice Lead, Governance		
Accountability (endorsed)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board/Council		
Responsibility (approved)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CEO		
Consulted	No.	Name	Date
	1	Rue Masunungure, Director, Governance	20/10/2022
	2	Darryn Hammond, General Manager, Risk and Assurance	20/10/22
	3	Justine Cadena, Safe Church Facilitator, Church and Community Engagement	18/10/2022
	4	Samantha Patterson, Child Safe Practice Lead, Governance	21/10/2022
Informed	The workforce of the organisation known as Churches of Christ in Queensland.		
Date Endorsed	12 December 2022		
Next Review Date (calculate from the date endorsed and risk category)	12 December 2023		

Signatories	Please sign here
Accountable Owner/Endorser	
Name: Rue Masunungure	
Responsible Approver	
Name: Gary Edwards	

Revision History	Details
Previous Endorsed Date	NA
Amendment History	New Policy
Notes (if any)	NA