



## CHILD SAFE POLICY & CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

**From 1 January 2017 all relevant organisations including Churches are required to implement the Victorian Government’s mandatory Child Safe Standards (Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015, Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Oversight and Enforcement of Child Safe Standards) Act 2016).**

This was a key recommendation arising out of the Victorian Parliament’s “Betrayal of Trust” report and the Royal Commission finds and reports to date. It is understood that the Office of the Commission for Children and Young People who regulate this area have already commenced auditing schools in relation to their implementation and compliance with the seven Child Safe Standards.

One of the key goals of the Victorian Child Safe Standards is to give the Church (and other organisations) a framework to:

- (a) build a culture of increased awareness and commitment to child safety;
- (b) enable members of the Church to perceive, understand and deal with child safety issues; and

- (c) enhance a culture of accountability by reporting abuse and standards breaches.

A critical component to effect this cultural change is to ensure that all members of the Church but particularly those involved in child related activities are very clear about the behaviour and boundaries expected of them when dealing with children.

### **Child Safe Policy**

The attached Child Safe Policy has been approved by Archbishop in Council as a Policy for the diocese as a whole including its parishes, congregations and the Cathedral.

***Each parish is asked to adopt the policy and nominate in the document the relevant Child Safe Officer appointed by the parish for that purpose.***

### **Training and Supervision**

We, the Church are committed to regularly training and educating our office holders, staff and volunteers on child safety issues. They must all agree to abide by our Code of Conduct for Child Safety,

which specifies the standards of conduct and guidelines required when working with children.

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in the Church understands that child safety is everyone’s responsibility.

Training will be conducted primarily through Professional Standards workshops and other forums, such as Occupational Health and Safety seminars, meetings and online information. The Church aims for all its office holders, staff and volunteers, parents and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We aim to provide information to assist our office holders, staff and volunteers identify and minimise risks of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

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# Child Safe Policy & Child Safety Code of Conduct



## Child Safety Code of Conduct

Child Safe Standard No 3 requires organisations to have “A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with Children.” The aim of a Child Safe Code of Conduct is:

- (a) to set standards about the way in which church members are expected to behave with and or in front of children;
- (b) to minimise the possibility of abuse occurring, that is, to be able to identify and report grooming behaviour or boundary violations prior to abuse occurring.

The attached Code also assists to avoid actions or behaviour that are or could be construed as potentially abusive or poor practice to protect adults serving children from misunderstandings and avoid allegations of abuse being made so that individual reputations are not tarnished as a result of unclear, out dated or ill-informed practices.

Following this code will help to protect children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standards of behaviour expected of them. A code of conduct that everyone adheres to also serves to protect the organisation from instances of child abuse because opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

This Code of Conduct applies to all “Church workers”, as defined in schedule 1 of the *Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016*. Broadly that expression means-

- (a) each member of the clergy and each lay minister; and
- (b) each lay person, remunerated or voluntary, holding a role office or position in a congregation or parish or in the Cathedral or in the Diocesan Offices or in the Cursillo movement or otherwise in the Church in the Diocese. This is a wide class that includes a rostered reader, intercessor, welcomer, choir member, musician, pastoral care visitor or catering volunteer.

The Code of Conduct for child Safety is intended to be read with and supplemental to the National Code of Conduct of the Church – Faithfulness in Service. A Church worker is expected to meet the standards and follow the guidelines in both Faithfulness in Service and this Code of Conduct for Child Safety.

All Church workers are required to read the Child Safety Code of Conduct and sign the “Statement of Commitment” at the back of the document.

***“Faithfulness in Service” as a Child Safe Code of Conduct for the purposes of the Victorian Child Safe Standards***

The National Church’s “Faithfulness and Service” insofar as it relates to child safety has been mandated by the 2017 General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia for use in all dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia. General Synod has expressly contemplated a diocese adopting a further code of conduct which promotes child safety and which is consistent with the standards in Faithfulness in Service.

As paragraph 1 of the proposed Code states –

This Code of Conduct for Child Safety is intended to be read with and supplemental to the National Code of Conduct of the Church – Faithfulness in Service. A Church worker is expected to meet the standards and follow the guidelines in both Faithfulness in Service and this Code of Conduct for Child Safety.

The supplemental code of conduct is more prescriptive and focused at a local level in relation to child safety. It specifically states acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relation to children generally and in particular situations such as camps, choirs, music groups, kids clubs, playgroups and youth ministry. It applies to clergy, church workers and volunteers who are involved in child related work and, by contractual agreement, contractors. It identifies particular standards for those in authority.

This information and supporting links can be found on the Parish Portal under Governance -

<https://parishportal.melbourneanglican.org.au/governance/Child-safe-standards/Pages/Child-safe-standards.aspx>

Please contact Helpdesk for access or queries regarding Parish Portal – [helpdesk@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:helpdesk@melbourneanglican.org.au)

Should you have any queries or require further information please contact:

### Clearances

Tel: (03) 9653 4220

[clearances@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:clearances@melbourneanglican.org.au)

### Registrar

Tel: (03) 9653 4220

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# Prescription by Archbishop in Council

by resolution passed 22 June 2017

RESOLVED that the roles offices and positions for lay people for service in the Church (other than for authorised lay ministry), as set out in the table marked "A" settled at the meeting and annexed to these minutes be prescribed pursuant to s59(2) of the Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016 (Melbourne).

TABLE "A"

	Class	WWC	Police Check	National Register to be performed by Kooyoora	Training
	<b>Class A clearance – Governance role office or position</b>				
1	Member of Diocesan Council	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
2	Director of Diocesan Corporation	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
3	General Synod representative	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
4	Synod representative	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
5	Cathedral Chapter member	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
6	Churchwarden	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
7	Parish Council Member	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
	<b>Class B clearance – Child-related or community role office or position</b>				
8	Verger	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
9	Children's group leader / coordinator or worker	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
10	Crèche leader / coordinator or worker	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
11	Director or coordinator of the choir or music group that includes children	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
12	Adult member or organist or pianist or other musical accompanist of a choir or music or dance or acting group that includes children	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
13	Home pastoral care visit leader / coordinator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
14	Home pastoral care visitor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
15	Aged Care facility pastoral care leader or coordinator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
16	Aged Care facility pastoral care visitor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
17	A salaried or otherwise remunerated paid lay person, who engages in 'child-related work'	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
18	Superintendent or person in charge of a Sunday School or other educational program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
19	Sunday School or other educational program teacher	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
20	Welcomer engaged in 'child-related work'	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
21	Youth or Children's group leader or coordinator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
22	Youth or Children's group worker	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
23	Bus driver – children or elderly	Yes	Yes	Yes	
24	Op Shop coordinator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards & OHS
25	Op Shop helper or assistant	Yes	Yes	Yes	
26	Community meals coordinator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Food Safety Training & Professional Standards
27	Community meals helper or assistant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Food Safety Training
28	Candidate for Selection conference for Holy Orders	Yes	Yes	Yes	
29	Theological exiting student intending to seek ordination	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
30	Small group <sup>1</sup> leader where children who are not accompanied by their parent are present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
31	Liturgical master of ceremonies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
32	Crucifer, Server, Acolyte, where the serving team includes children	Yes	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
	<b>Class C clearance – Adult related role office or position</b>				
33	Director or coordinator or organist or pianist or other musical accompanist of an adult choir or music or dance or acting group	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards
34	Any salaried or otherwise remunerated paid lay person who does not engage in 'child-related work'	No	Yes	Yes	Professional Standards

<sup>1</sup> Small group includes bible group, prayer group, fellowship group.

## Explanatory Notes:

1. The provisions of the *Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016* (Melb) relating to clearance for service will commence operation on a date yet to be fixed by the Archbishop in Council which is expected to be later in 2017.
2. Under those provisions, a Church worker appointed or elected to any prescribed role office or position must apply to the Office of Professional

Standards for a clearance for service:

- (a) no later than 30 days following their appointment or election, as the case may be; or
- (b) if the role office or position is prescribed after the appointment of the Church worker, no later than 30 days following written notice from the Director to the person of that prescription.

*Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016* (Melb), s60(2)

3. The Office of Professional Standards will publish details of what checks for each particular role office or position will be made. The references to the checks in the Table merely reflect the discussions at the Archbishop in Council. A WWC needs to disclose the Diocese and Kooyoora Ltd for the purposes of notification. A Victorian Institute of Teaching WWC will not suffice.
4. A “**prescribed role office or position**” means any role office or position for service in the Church other than for ministry that:
  - (a) falls within a class from time to time prescribed by the Diocesan Bishop-in-Council; or
  - (b) involves in substance the duties inherent in the description of that class.

*Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016* (Melb), s59(2)
5. **General rider:** Where no clearance is required for a particular role office or position but the Church authority becomes aware that the role office or position will involve ‘child-related work’, the Church authority is expected to exercise the authority conferred under the Act to require that the person obtain a clearance in that case. Likewise if for some other reason, the Church authority has real concerns about the fitness of the person for the particular role office or position.
6. Section 60(3) of the *Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016* (Melb) provides:
  - (3) Nothing in this section precludes a Church authority in his or her or its discretion from requiring in writing as a condition of any appointment that a person whose role office or position does not otherwise fall within a class referred to above in subsection (2) of the preceding section apply for and obtain a clearance for service.
7. Under the *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic), the relevant Church authority or the Diocesan Corporation may commit an offence under that State law if they engage or continue to engage the person in child-related work, knowing that it is child-related work when the person does not have a current assessment notice: s35.

8. ‘**Child-related work**’: Section 9 of the *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic) specifies the kinds of work that are child-related work as follows:

- (1) For the purposes of this Act, child-related work is **work**:
  - (a) at or for a service, body or place, or that involves an activity, specified in subsection (3); and
  - (b) **that usually involves direct contact with a child and that contact is not directly supervised by another person** .
- (1A) For the purposes of this Act, **work is not child-related work by reason only of occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work**.
- (2) For the purposes of this Act, direct supervision of a person’s contact with a child requires **immediate and personal supervision but does not require constant physical presence**.
- (3) The services, bodies, places or activities referred to in subsection (1)(a) are:
  - (i) religious organisations;
- (4) Subject to subsection (5) but despite any other provision of this section, for the purposes of this Act, work engaged in as a minister of religion is child-related work unless any direct contact with children during the work engaged in as a minister of religion is only occasional direct contact that is incidental to that work.
- (5) **Despite any other provision of this section, if a minister of religion is the appointed leader of a local religious congregation in an organised religious institution and the congregation contains any children, work engaged in as a minister of religion is child-related work**.
- (6) repealed
- (7) .....
- (8) For the purposes of this Act, a person is not engaged in child-related work merely because he or she:
  - (a) is participating in an activity with a child on the same basis as the child;
  - (b) is supervising a child undertaking practical training as part of an arrangement or agreement under Part 5.4 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 .