

Child Safe Church at St Margaret's Eltham

Version August 2019

The following is a summary of how St Margaret's is addressing the Child Safe Standards. We have adopted the Diocesan Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct, which are available [online](#) on the Diocesan website.

Statement of Commitment

St Margaret's is committed to the safety and physical, emotional and spiritual welfare of all people, particularly within its own community. As a Christian community we are especially called to follow the example of Jesus Christ and ensure that we are a place where the care of children and young people is paramount and they are given every opportunity to flourish and grow. We want to be a safe place and to maintain high ethical standards in accordance with child safe practices and child protection legislation.

Legal requirements

Victorian organisations that provide services to children are required under the *Child Wellbeing and Child Safety Act 2005* to ensure that they comply with compulsory Child Safe Standards and other legislation to protect children from harm. The link below provides a detailed overview of these standards:

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>

In complying with the Child Safe Standards, the following principles apply 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
- promoting the safety of children who are same-sex attracted, intersex or gender diverse.

Summary

STANDARD NO. 1

Create strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, through effective leadership arrangements.

- Child Safety is seen as a priority by parish leadership.
- Child Safety is a monthly agenda item for our parish council.
- Key Child Safe documents are on display in the church foyer, including how to make a complaint and what to do if a disclosure is made.
- Pictures and details of Child Safe contact people are displayed in church foyer.
- Annual awareness training is conducted for all parishioners.
- Leaders (including the Vicar, other ministry staff, the Child Safe Officer, and wardens) and churchworkers (all those on rosters) are required to attend in depth training in child safety every three years.
- All churchworkers have Working with Children and Police Checks, and those working with children are screened according to the [Clearance for Ministry protocol](#).
- *Appropriate risk management checks are conducted before events involving children.*

STANDARD NO. 2

Create a Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety that is relevant to your organisation

- The National Anglican Church of Australia's Safe Ministry Policy Statement is endorsed by Parish Council and the Annual Meeting of the Parish and displayed in the foyer of the church. A copy of this is in Appendix 1.
- We have adopted the Diocese of Melbourne *Child Safe Policy* (2018).
- *We are developing our own St Margaret's Child Safe Policy to address specific applications of child safety in our context.*

STANDARD NO. 3

Organisations must have a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

- We have adopted the Diocese of Melbourne's [Code of Conduct](#) (2018), and all leaders are required signatories to it.
- [Faithfulness in Service](#) (2017 edition), the National Anglican Code of Conduct for church workers applies in our parish.

STANDARD NO. 4

Organisations must have screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

- St Margaret's is committed to best practice in recruiting staff and volunteers in accordance with the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne *Duty of Care: A Shared Responsibility* which is a handbook for leaders of youth and children's ministry.
- Annual awareness training is conducted for all parishioners.
- Leaders and churchworkers are required to attend in depth training in child safety every three years.
- All churchworkers have Working with Children and Police Checks, and those working with children are screened according to the [Clearance for Ministry protocol](#).
- All staff and lay leaders involved in child safe management have clear duty statements.

STANDARD NO. 5

Organisations must have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

- All licensed clergy in the Diocese must undergo Professional Standards training every three years, which includes matters of child safety.
- St Margaret's have documented a standard process for responding and reporting to suspected child abuse, summarized in the flowchart in *Appendix 2*. This flowchart is displayed in the foyer.
- Kooyoora Ltd (the Diocesan Professional Standards body) has a number of information sheets for those wishing to make a complaint and those responding to a complaint. These are available [online](#) and in the church foyer.
- Once a complaint is made, it is dealt with by Kooyoora Ltd under the [Complaints Protocol](#).
- *All parishioners have been trained in how to use this process.*

STANDARD NO. 6

Organisations must have strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of child abuse.

- *A risk assessment is conducted for each parish activity. Where child children are involved, an additional child safety risk assessment is carried out using the form in Appendix 3. No activity will be allowed to proceed without appropriate risk assessment.*
- *An annual review is conducted of risk assessment in relation to child safety at St Margaret's.*
- *Compliance with the Child Safe Standards, Policy and Code of Conduct is audited annually by the Child Safe Officer.*

STANDARD NO. 7

Organisations must have strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

- We have developed and adopted a Children's Code of Conduct (see Appendix 4). *This is displayed in the foyer of the church.*
- *Leaders of activities involving children are trained to promote participation and agency of children where appropriate.*
- For regular children's activities, leaders encourage a culture of safety where children feel safe to report any issue, and confident that it will be appropriately dealt with.
- The parish is developing a *Disability Policy* which will include the safety of children with a disability.
- The parish is *developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (Pathways)* which seeks to encourage respect for people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, including children.
- St Margaret's seeks wherever possible to engage respectfully and in a culturally appropriate manner with linguistically and culturally diverse people, including children.

Key Contacts

Child Safe Officer

Mandy Stevens

childsafestmargaretseltham.org.au

Kooyoora Ltd (Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Professional Standards Office)

1800 135 246



ChildFirst

ChildFirst 1300 369 146

Department of Health and Human Services

DHHS 1300 360 391

Police

000 if there is immediate danger (need for sirens)

131 444 if the matter is not urgent.



ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA
DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

SAFE MINISTRY POLICY STATEMENT

The Anglican Church of Australia is committed
to the physical, emotional and
spiritual welfare and safety of all people,
particularly within its own community.

The Church will:

- carefully recruit and train its clergy and church workers;
- adopt and encourage safe ministry practices by its clergy and lay church workers;
- respond promptly to each concern raised about the behaviour of its clergy and lay church workers;
- offer pastoral support to any person who has suffered abuse;
- provide pastoral support to and supervision of any person who has been accused of abuse; and
- provide pastoral support to and supervision of any person known to have abused a child or another vulnerable person.

Resolution of General Synod 2004
Endorsed and adopted by the Annual General Meeting of
St. Margaret's Anglican Church, Eltham, 25 November 2017

Keren C Terpstra, Priest in Charge