



CHILD SAFE CHURCH

Making St Margaret's Eltham a safe space for all people

Last updated: Thursday, 28 May 2020

Today's purpose

- Familiarise ourselves with what it means to be a Child Safe Church.
- Familiarise ourselves with the current reporting requirements in relation to child safety and how they affect us.
- Exploring how we can make a culture of safety for all people here at St Margaret's.



Why is the church committed to
keeping children safe?

What do you think?

Why is the church committed to keeping children safe?

- The biblical injunction to love others
- We want the church to grow – and it needs to be a safe space for children
- Ethical, legal, practical obligations:
 - the expression of love for God, for others, for ourselves;
 - accountability to survivors of abuse;
 - national Anglican Church and Diocesan canons/Acts;
 - State and Federal laws;
 - outcomes of the Royal Commission.
- Walking the talk



Self Care

Talking about child sex abuse can be a trigger for some people for their own experiences. If this is you:

- Take a break, go for a glass of water/walk outside.
- Talk to the facilitator, the vicar, Lifeline, Kooyoora Ltd (Diocesan Office of Professional Standards), counsellor, or Mandy Stevens, our Child Safety Officer.

Reflect

How well do you understand Child Safety at St Margaret's?

(NB, this slide will be repeated at the end!)



What we're going to cover

- The Child Safe Policy
- The Code of Conduct
- What is child abuse?
- How to recognise signs of abuse
- How to report suspected abuse
- The various checks volunteers need: WWC, Police Check, National Register Check, Safe Ministry Check

Resources

- Your Participants' booklet.
- St Margaret's policy page on the website, which includes the Diocesan policies.
- Child Safe Officer: Mandy Stevens:
childsafestmargaretstham.org.au 0422370932
- Kooyoora:

Director of Professional Standards

Kooyoora Ltd

PO Box 329

Canterbury VIC 3126

1800 135 246

Child Safe Church

- *Betrayal of Trust (2012)* led to new legislation.
- Three new criminal offences:
 - Grooming
 - Failure to disclose
 - Failure to protect

Child Safe Standards

The seven Standards are as follows:

- 1.Embedding a culture of child safety through effective leadership.
- 2.Making a commitment to child safety with a policy or statement.
- 3.Having a clear code of conduct that establishes appropriate behaviour with children.
- 4.Screening, supervision and training for staff, to reduce the risk of child abuse.

Child Safe Standards cont.

5. Clear processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
6. Identifying child abuse risks and ways to reduce them.
7. Empowering children to share their feedback and experiences about feeling safe.



Diversity

The Child Safe Standards recognise the vulnerability of children from diverse backgrounds, such as:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse
- Disability
- Same-sex attraction, intersex or gender diverse



The Child Safe Policy

To whom does this Child Safe material apply?

- Everyone
- Leaders, especially



What is child abuse?

Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to:

- *Physical abuse*
- *Emotional and psychological abuse*
- *Family violence*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Grooming*
- *Neglect*
- *Racial, Cultural, or Religious abuse*
- *Spiritual abuse*



Reflect

Look at the definitions of the various kinds of child abuse in your booklet.

What surprises you?

How would you define each of these types of abuse?



Indicators of harm

Learn to recognise the signs



Indicators of harm cont.

Three indicators of harm:

- verbal disclosures
- physical signs, and
- behavioural indicators.

Being aware

Refer to the list in the booklet

- What have you done in the past you might not do now?
- What would have been seen as appropriate in the past not appropriate now?
- Is there anything here you don't understand why it's inappropriate?
- What is likely to happen here? Is there anything here which has happened in the past?
- If this is part of your behaviour, whose need is it meeting?

What should I report?

There are 5 types of 'reportable conduct':

- sexual offences committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child



What do I do...

...if someone discloses abuse? Or you notice a child exhibiting behaviours that may indicate child abuse, or if you observe someone engaged in inappropriate behaviour with a child?

What to do...

How to respond appropriately to a disclosure:

When a person tells you of harm which has been done to them –

- Don't panic! Take a deep breath.
- stay calm
- listen carefully
- allow the person to continue at his/her own pace
- reassure the person that he/she has done the right thing
- tell them they are not to blame for the abuse
- tell them that you will do what you can to help report the abuse.

What not to do...

Do not –

- dismiss the concerns
- panic
- ask for more information
- promise not to tell anyone or keep it a secret
- make negative comments about the accused person
- make assumptions or speculate
- disclose details to anyone except the person to whom you report the matter
- under any circumstances inform the person to whom the allegations refer.

How do I make a report?

If a child is in immediate danger call 000

- 1. Who can report neglect and abuse of a child under the age of 18?** Children, Parents, Staff and Volunteers
- 2. What sort of things must be reported? Any child safety concerns should be reported, including:**
 - Disclosure of abuse of harm
 - Allegations, suspicions or observations
 - Environmental safety issues
 - Breaches of the Code of Conduct

- 3. Any suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to:**

Professional Standards

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne takes all complaints of misconduct very seriously.

If you want to make a complaint please telephone

Kooyoora Ltd.

1800 135 246

Parish – Reporting Child Safe Concerns at St Margaret's

If a child discloses to you

- Listen without interrupting or giving opinions.
- Tell the child that you believe them and that the abuse is not their fault.
- Let the child know that you will need to contact other people to help keep them safe.

If you witness an incident

- Do not engage directly with the alleged perpetrator.
- If the child is in immediate danger call 000.
- Remove the child to a safe place.
- If possible consult with the Priest, Child Safe Officer or Warden.

- Decide if you have formed a reasonable belief that the child is in danger through what you have seen or heard. This might involve not only what the child has said but other reports from another child or church member.
- Obtain child's name and if possible address, age and parent's names.

- In a private space, ask the child an open ended question to gain more information (eg. I'm worried about what just happened then - are you OK?).
- Listen without interrupting or giving opinions.
- Let the child know that you will take steps to keep them safe.
- Obtain the child's name and if possible address, age and parent's names.

- Consult with Priest or Child Safe Officer first (unless the disclosure/incident involves them, or the child is in immediate danger in which case call 000).
- Priest/Child Safe Officer will support you to call Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or Kooyoora (Diocesan Office of Professional standards) or Police, will contact the child's parents and will arrange support for the child as appropriate.

- If the CSO is the subject of the complaint, consult with the Priest.
- If the Priest is the subject of the complaint, consult with the CSO who will assist you to ring Kooyoora 1800 135 246 or ChildFirst 1300 369 146.
- If neither the Priest nor the CSO are available, call Kooyoora immediately.

- Priest or Child Safe Officer will record incident with your assistance.

If someone makes a complaint to you, or if you witness an incident, follow the reporting flowchart. A copy is on the wall in the foyer and leaders should have access to it.

Scenario - Activity

- In small groups, read the scenario and discuss how you would respond to this situation.
- Use the Reporting Flow Chart to assist you.

Scenario

You are leaving the church after an early evening function and near the garden beds in front of the church you see a young adult man kissing a girl passionately. The girl appears to be around the age of 12 or 13.

What do you do? What offence/abuse is being committed?



Scenario

You are a regular helper at Messy Church. You notice over several months that one child who was outgoing becomes increasingly withdrawn and the state of their personal grooming deteriorates. At the end of one session the child is picked up by their mother who grabs them by the arm and screams at the child on the way to the car.

What do you do? What offence/abuse is being committed?

What happens if a complaint is made against me?

- You will be asked to step down from all positions and roles until the matter is resolved.
- Kooyoora will keep you informed of process and outcome.
- A fact sheet for respondents is available on the Kooyoora website: <https://www.kooyoora.org.au/client-institutions/anglican-diocese-of-melbourne/complaints/respondents/>



The Code of Conduct

- Diocesan Code which covers all Churchworkers.
- Handout Code of Conduct to look over and sign Statement of Commitment.



Volunteer Checks

- Working With Children Check
- Police Check (CrimCheck)
- National Register Check
- Safe Ministry Check



Volunteer Checks cont.

CHURCHWORKER

Who is a Churchworker?

- Everyone on a roster is a churchworker.



WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

Online/post office
Free for volunteers



POLICE CHECK

Online – CrimCheck

Takes about 15 min to do

Parish pays for it



NATIONAL REGISTER CHECK

At this stage applies to clergy and licensed lay workers. It will extend to other office holders... eventually.

SAFE MINISTRY CHECK

Completed by Kooyoora.

Applies to clergy and licensed lay workers.

It will eventually apply to all those who work with children, and to officeholders.



10 steps to a Child Safe Church

1. Prepare – leaders read the policies and be familiar with them
2. Statement of commitment to child safety
3. Appoint Child Safety Officer
4. Code of Conduct in place
5. Everyone has WWC and Police checks
6. Support and training offered for church members, including churchworkers
7. Respond appropriately to complaints
8. Carefully select and screen new churchworkers
9. Good planning for events involving children and young people
10. Encouraging the participation of children and families in decisions relating to them.

Reflect

How well do you understand issues of Child Safety at St Margaret's?





Questions?