



		Safe Ministry Policy v1.3	
Body adopting policy:	Diocesan Council	Date of adoption or last review:	9 th March 2022 (DC22/45)
Related Documents:		Review schedule:	Every 5 years

1. BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE

This policy outlines the underlying principles that direct our approach to safeguarding vulnerable people involved with the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide.

It applies to all people in the Diocese who participate in our programs, including all clergy, paid employees, and lay volunteers.

2. COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD VULNERABLE PEOPLE

2.1. We are responsible and accountable for fulfilling our obligations under State and Federal law to protect children and vulnerable people. We require everyone in the Diocese who participates in our programs to report their reasonably formed concern that a person has suffered or is likely to suffer harm, to any of the following:

2.1.1. the Department of Child Protection (as relevant);

2.1.2. SA Police;

2.1.3. The Professional Standards Director; and

2.1.4. Senior Minister or Archbishop;

and to assist the aforementioned authorities with investigations into reported incidents of abuse in the Diocese.

2.2. We will:

2.2.1. offer Redress and support to any person who has suffered abuse in our programs or on our sites; and

2.2.2. take all reasonable and legal steps to prevent any person known to have abused children or other vulnerable persons from gaining access to children or vulnerable persons in our programs or on our sites.

3. EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND CHILDREN

3.1. We encourage and respect the views of children and young people. We involve children and young people in decision making and listen and act upon any feedback or complaints that children, young people or their families/carers raise with us.

3.2. We recognise the diverse needs of vulnerable people should be taken into account and that their concerns be taken seriously. We will respond to those concerns as appropriate and communicate with them with sensitivity to age, ability and culture. We are committed to embedding this care into all levels of our leadership and culture.

- 3.3. We ensure that children, young people, vulnerable people and their families/carers know their rights and how to access services, advice and the complaints processes available to them.

4. COMMITMENT TO SCREENING AND TRAINING LEADERS

- 4.1. We are committed to ensuring all clergy, and church workers who are doing 'child related work' or who 'work with children' are screened, appropriately supported and trained.
- 4.2. To ensure compliance with both the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* and the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 the following list of roles are required to obtain a safe ministry clearance from the Diocese on the basis that they are doing 'child related work' or 'work with children':
 - 4.2.1. All clergy and lay persons holding an Authority from the Archbishop.
 - 4.2.2. All candidates for ordination.
 - 4.2.3. All lay church workers in paid employment involving ministry to children.
 - 4.2.4. All lay volunteers who work with children.
 - 4.2.5. All members of Diocesan Council.
 - 4.2.6. Members of Councils, Boards and committees which have the power to manage aspects of Synod's affairs involving ministry to children.
 - 4.2.7. Members of Parish Councils only where the Parish concerned has lay paid staff or volunteers who work with children.
- 4.3. We require all who hold these roles in the Diocese to:
 - 4.3.1. abide by '*Faithfulness in Service: A National Code for Personal Behaviour and the Practice of Pastoral Ministry by Clergy and Church Workers*' (Code of Conduct 'Faithfulness in Service') and behave as followers of Jesus and be willing to be held accountable for their behaviour;
 - 4.3.2. to obtain a safe ministry clearance from the Diocese which involves:
 - 4.3.2.1. completing an online application for undertaking ministry to children (referred to as the Blue, Orange or Green forms)
 - 4.3.2.2. having their "Working With Children Check" (**WWCC**) verified;
 - 4.3.2.3. undergoing a check against the National Register;
 - 4.3.2.4. providing referees who can confirm whether they are suitable to work with vulnerable people and that there is no reason they should not be appointed in such a role; and completing an approved Safe Ministry Training Course or other appropriate training which outlines appropriate behaviour including how to minimise the chances of harm and abuse, as well as training in how to identify and report cases of abuse, every three years
- 4.4. Where someone is coming from overseas, from another diocese or from another religious denomination, we may ask that they also provide referees from their last place of employment or engagement.
- 4.5. Candidates for ordination, given the important stage they are in on their ministry journey, are required to undergo additional screening steps, including undergoing a psychological assessment and medical assessment. This is conducted separately to the safe ministry clearance process.
- 4.6. Members of advisory committees or committees which carry out a narrow specific area of the Synod's business (e.g. AFSA, PFRC, St Barnabas College Council) **but do not** have responsibility for carrying on the Synod's business as a whole would **not** be required to undertake a WWCC (assuming that those individuals are not otherwise required to obtain a WWCC).
- 4.7. A person will not be held to be performing 'child-related work' if contact with children occurs incidentally or would not reasonably be expected to occur in relation to their role.

- 4.8. A person is able to engage in ministry to children on an ad hoc basis, for example if there is an emergency or last minute assistance is required without requiring a WWCC, as long as this work does not occur on more than seven days in a calendar year. If a person is going to be involved regularly in child-related work then they should apply for a safe ministry clearance with the Diocese and obtain a WWCC.
- 4.9. We are also committed to ensuring all church workers who are ‘working with vulnerable people’ are screened, appropriately supported and trained.
- 4.10. We require all who are working with vulnerable people in the Diocese to:
- 4.10.1. abide by ‘*Faithfulness in Service: A National Code for Personal Behaviour and the Practice of Pastoral Ministry by Clergy and Church Workers*’ (Code of Conduct ‘Faithfulness in Service’) and behave as followers of Jesus and be willing to be held accountable for their behaviour;
 - 4.10.2. have their State “vulnerable person-related employment check” verified;
 - 4.10.3. provide referees who can confirm they are suitable to work with vulnerable people and that there is no reason they should not be appointed in such a role;
 - 4.10.4. complete an approved Safe Ministry Training Course or other appropriate training which outlines appropriate behaviour including how to minimise the chances of harm and abuse, as well as training in how to identify and report cases of abuse, every three years

5. COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS

We are committed to ensuring that our programs and events are safe and appropriate for those attending. Careful consideration must be given to the activities chosen, the venue, safe ratios of supervision, appropriate toileting practices, transportation, work health and safety, parental or guardian permission and confidentiality of records kept.

6. COMMITMENT TO APPROPRIATELY RESPOND TO CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

We are committed to creating a culture where people feel safe to speak out about inappropriate behaviour without fear of being rejected or ridiculed. We are committed to listening and responding appropriately to concerns and complaints about behaviour and safety. We are committed to protecting the confidentiality, dignity, health and well-being of all individuals involved.

7. IDENTIFY, REPORT AND RESPOND TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- 7.1. We will ensure that all leaders and church workers who are working with children or doing child related work:
- 7.1.1. are able to identify, report and respond to children and young people at risk of harm; and
 - 7.1.2. understand their obligations to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 immediately if they have a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child and young person has or is being abused or neglected.
- 7.2. Ministers of religion and employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation formed for a religious or spiritual purpose are mandatory reporters under the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* and have access to the following relevant information resources:
- Mandated notifiers and their role:
<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/mandated-notifiers-and-their-role>
https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/107099/mandatory-reporting-guide.pdf
- Department for Child Protection reporting child abuse website:
<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/report-child-abuse-or-neglect>

- 7.3. We recognise that support may be required for the child or young person when a notification is made and will identify appropriate services for the child, young person and/or their family.
- 7.4. Failure by mandatory reporters to report a reasonable suspicion that a child has or is being abused or neglected may result in disciplinary action being initiated against the worker. Failure by mandated notifiers to report is also an offence under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and carries a maximum penalty of a \$10,000 fine.

8. PROFESSIONAL PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR CHURCH WORKERS

- 8.1. Protection under the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*
Reporters of abuse or neglect will not be held legally liable for the report or any investigation of the report if a report is made in good faith and does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics. Mandated notifiers are also protected from threats, intimidation, damage, loss or disadvantage because they have reported or propose to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child or young person.
- 8.2. Disclosure of the name or any identifying information in relation to a person who has made a report to the Child Abuse Report Line will not be made unless:
 - 8.2.1. the reporter chooses to inform the child, young person or family;
 - 8.2.2. the reporter consents, in writing that their identity can be disclosed;
 - 8.2.3. the case proceeds to court. In these circumstances the source of the information may be provided in evidence to the court; or
 - 8.2.4. the identity of the reporter may be provided to a service if there is significant concern for the wellbeing of the child; however, the other service will not disclose the reporter's identity to others.

9. COMMUNICATION

We will ensure that this policy is publicly available on the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide's website and that all parishioners, leaders and carers/families are informed of the policy and how to access it.

10. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 10.1. All church workers will comply with all elements of the policy in their own spheres of responsibility. In addition, the following individuals and groups will fulfil these specific responsibilities:

10.2. The Bishop

The Bishop holds responsibility for safety in the Diocese, which will be promoted by:

- 10.2.1. leading compliance with this policy in all the governance bodies the Archbishop chairs, including Synod, Diocesan Council and committees (and in the Bishop's Office);
- 10.2.2. recruiting, inducting and supporting all licenced clergy and church workers according to Diocesan procedures; and
- 10.2.3. assisting others with their responsibilities as appropriate (see below).

10.3. Diocesan Council

Diocesan Council will assist the Bishop fulfil responsibility for safety by:

- 10.3.1. ensuring a robust safe ministry compliance program is implemented and managed effectively;
- 10.3.2. approving Safe Ministry regulations (including this policy);
- 10.3.3. ensuring church workers complete appropriate Safe Ministry training programs; and

- 10.3.4. requiring Parish Vestries to appoint a Safe Ministry Coordinator at the Annual Vestry Meeting.

10.4. The Secretary of Synod

The Secretary of Synod will help the Bishop fulfil responsibility for safety by:

- 10.4.1. making all documentation related to this policy available to clergy, church workers and the public;
- 10.4.2. communicating targeted, relevant, specific information about this policy across the Diocese;
- 10.4.3. maintaining records relevant to this policy according to the Privacy Policy;
- 10.4.4. conducting a review of this policy and compliance with it every three years;
- 10.4.5. monitoring compliance with this policy in Parishes via monthly returns and incidental queries; and
- 10.4.6. reporting on compliance with this policy to the Bishop, Diocesan Council and Synod.

10.5. Senior Ministers (Parish Priest, Priest in Charge, Rector)

Under the Archbishop, the Senior Minister holds responsibility for safety in their Parishes, which they will promote by:

- 10.5.1. obtaining a safe ministry clearance, including participating in Safe Ministry training for ministry leaders as approved by Diocesan Council;
- 10.5.2. ensuring the Parish Vestry appoints a Safe Ministry Coordinator to aid compliance with this policy in the Parish at its Annual Vestry Meeting;
- 10.5.3. ensuring that church workers aged under 18 years undertake ministry to children under the direct supervision of at least one church worker who is aged 18 years or over;
- 10.5.4. reporting on Safe Ministry to the Archbishop, Secretary of Synod and Safety Ministry Coordinator via periodic returns; and
- 10.5.5. maintaining appropriate records for their parish.

10.6. Parish Vestries

The Parish Vestry will appoint a Safe Ministry Coordinator at its Annual Vestry Meeting.

10.7. Parish Councils

The Parish Council will help the Parish Priest fulfil their responsibilities for safety by:

- 10.7.1. reviewing ministry programs and events, considering duty of care and foreseeable risks;
- 10.7.2. ensuring that Diocesan-approved Safe Ministry signage is posted in the Parish;
- 10.7.3. receive periodic reports on Safe Ministry;
- 10.7.4. ensuring a Safe Ministry Coordinator is appointed and supported to aid compliance with this policy in the Parish.

10.8. Safe Ministry Coordinator

The Safe Ministry Coordinator will help the Parish Priest fulfil responsibility for safety by:

- 10.8.1. assisting the Parish Priest with their responsibilities in this policy as appropriate (see above);
- 10.8.2. assisting parish volunteers in working out whether they are required to undergo a WWCC;
- 10.8.3. keeping records of who is working with children in the church setting and the date they commence working;
- 10.8.4. keeping local records of who has WWCC (will be updated regularly by Synod Office);
- 10.8.5. ensuring no one 'works with children' unless they have obtained a safe ministry clearance;
- 10.8.6. recording who supervised any ministry to children undertaken by church workers aged under 18 years (the supervisor must be licensed clergy or a church worker aged 18 or over); and

10.8.7. forward regular compliance reports to the safe ministry authority (Diocesan Council via the Secretary of Synod)

10.9. Licensed clergy, and authorised, licensed, paid or volunteer church workers

Clergy and church workers will help the Parish Priest or other relevant leader fulfil their responsibilities for safety by:

- 10.9.1. obtaining a safe ministry clearance as required, including participating in Safe Ministry training approved by Diocesan Council as often as required;
- 10.9.2. when leading any program involving children or other vulnerable persons, providing a safety briefing, drawing attention to signage related to Safe Ministry;
- 10.9.3. when leading or helping with any program involving children or other vulnerable persons, promoting open communication with participants, parents and other caregivers on safety matters; and
- 10.9.4. refrain from taking and/or distributing photographs of children or other vulnerable persons in ministry programs without the permission of the program leader and the relevant parent(s) or caregiver(s).

11. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND ORGANISATIONAL DOCUMENTATION

11.1. Legislation

- Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (South Australia)
- Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (South Australia)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

11.2. Related **Policies and Procedures**

- 'Faithfulness in Service: A National Code for Personal Behaviour and the Practice of Pastoral Ministry by Clergy and Church Workers'

11.3. **List of key contacts**

Dept of Child Protection - CARL:	13 14 78
SAPOL:	131 444 (life threatening emergency only 000)
Professional Standards Director:	(08) 8366 6589; 0412 256 244
	psd@adam.com.au
Archbishop:	(08) 8305 9353

11.4. References **(to other key documents, internal or external)**

- Child Safe Environments – Principles of Good Practice (issued by the Chief Executive of the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development).

12. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed at least every five years.

Schedule

Safe Ministry Policy v1.0 approved by Diocesan Council by resolution on 8 July 2020

Safe Ministry Policy v1.1 approved by Diocesan Council by resolution on 12 May 2021(DC21/62)

Safe Ministry Policy v1.2 approved by Diocesan Council by resolution on 9 February 2022 (DC22/11)

Safe Ministry Policy v1.3 approved by Diocesan Council by resolution on 9 March 2022 (DC22/45)