

Policy – Risk management strategy for child and youth ministries in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane

Applies To:

☐ Episcopate & Leadership

☐ Financial Services Commission

☐ Diocesan Services Commission

☐ Parishes & Other Mission Agencies Commission

☐ Ministry Education Commission

Related Documents:

☐ Procedure

☐ Form

☐ Strategy contained in Schedule A

Application

1. This policy replaces the *Diocesan Risk Management Plan to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people*, amended on 26 November 2015 and *Child Protection Risk Management Plan Policy Statement* dated 15 December 2005.
2. Subject to clause 3 below, this policy applies to:
 - (a) all commissions and ministries of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane (the 'Diocese') that provide services or conduct activities primarily directed towards children and young people ('the child and youth Ministries'), including parish ministries of the Parish and Other Mission Agencies Commission (PMC) and the Youth, Children and Families ministry of the Ministry Education Commission (MEC), and
 - (b) all people involved in the child and youth Ministries, including:
 - (i) clergy
 - (ii) lay persons holding licences
 - (iii) Church workers and volunteers
 - (iv) parishioners
 - (v) parish councillors and members of the Professional Standards Board and Professional Standards Committee
 - (vi) children and young people
 - (vii) parents and carers, and
 - (viii) visitors.
3. Anglican schools and Anglicare are expressly excluded from the scope of this policy.¹

¹ Separate child and youth risk management strategies have been implemented in relation to the operations of Anglican schools and Anglicare, namely the *Blue Card System Policy and Procedures in Anglican Schools* and the *Anglicare Child and Youth Risk Management Framework*, respectively.

Definitions

ACSQ	the Anglican Church Southern Queensland
the Act	the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i>
Child	a person under 18 years of age, and includes a youth or young person.
Child and youth Ministry	a ministry of the ACSQ which provides services or conducts activities primarily directed towards children and young people in the Brisbane Diocese
Church worker	means a person who is or who at any relevant time was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a member of the clergy; or b) a person employed by a Church body; or c) a person holding a position or performing a function with the actual or apparent authority of a Church authority or Church body; but excludes a bishop subject to the jurisdiction of the Special Tribunal of the Church
Church body	includes a parish, school, any body corporate, organisation or association that exercises ministry within, or on behalf of, the Church
Clergy	Clergy licensed in the Diocese.
Diocese	the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.
Director	the Director of Professional Standards in the Diocese
General Manager	the General Manager of the Diocese
Harm	(as defined in section 9 <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Harm to a child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. (2) It is immaterial how the harm is caused. (3) Harm can be caused by – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a single act, omission or circumstance; or (b) a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
Ministry leader	the person or persons with overall responsibility in a child or youth ministry. In the case of a parish this is the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, and in the case of ministries within the Ministry Education Commission (MEC), this is the Executive Director of the MEC.
Parish	a parish in the Diocese.
the Procedures	<i>Procedures for audit and review of risk management strategy – child and youth ministries.</i>

the Regulation	<i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011</i>
the Strategy	<i>Risk management strategy for child and youth ministries in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, contained in Schedule A to this policy</i>

Purpose Statement

The Diocese, through its commissions and ministries, including parishes and the Youth, Children and Families ministry, undertakes child and youth ministries which together make the Diocese a regulated business within the meaning of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* ('the Act').

As required by the Act, the Diocese has developed the *Risk management strategy for child and youth ministries in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane* ('the Strategy') contained in Schedule A to this policy, comprising the diocesan policies and procedures referred to in the Schedule.

The Policy:

- (a) identifies risks of harm associated with services provided and activities conducted in child and youth ministries in the diocese
- (b) develops and implements strategies to minimise those risks
- (c) provides a clear and consistent framework to guide and support all those who work or volunteer in child and youth ministries, and the children and young people who benefit from them, and
- (d) includes the eight minimum requirements set out in the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011* ('the Regulation'), which:
 - (i) address the Diocese's commitment to create a safe and supportive environment for children and young people involved in child and youth ministries;
 - (ii) strengthen the Diocese's capability to provide that environment;
 - (iii) manage concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who engage in child and youth ministries, and
 - (iv) promote consistency in the approach to:
 - managing compliance with the Blue Card System established by the Act
 - communicating the Strategy throughout the Diocese's child and youth ministries, and
 - providing support to people involved in those ministries.

This policy sets out the responsibilities of relevant office holders and all those involved in the child and youth ministries in relation to the implementation, monitoring and annual review of the Strategy and compliance with the relevant diocesan policies and procedures referred to in Schedule A.

Statement of Commitment

The Statement of Commitment of the Archbishop is contained in Schedule B to this policy.

Policy Statement

1. Responsibilities

- (a) All people involved in child and youth Ministries must comply with this policy and with the policies and procedures contained in the Strategy.
- (b) All Ministry leaders are accountable for managing risks of harm to children and young people within their particular areas of ministry, and must:
 - (i) implement the Strategy and monitor compliance by all people involved in the relevant child and youth Ministry
 - (ii) ensure that the Strategy is effectively communicated (in accordance with clause 2 below) to those people, and
 - (iii) provide an annual compliance statement to the Director, in accordance with the *Procedures for audit and review of risk management strategy – child and youth ministries*.
- (c) The Director is responsible to:
 - (i) manage implementation of the Strategy
 - (ii) monitor compliance by the child and youth Ministries with the Strategy and the requirements of the Act
 - (iii) provide appropriate assistance to those Ministries, as necessary
 - (iv) implement and oversee appropriate training in understanding and complying with the policies and procedures contained in the Strategy for clergy and other people who work or volunteer in the child and youth Ministries
 - (v) conduct a review of this Policy and the Strategy, at least annually, in accordance with the *Procedures for audit and review of risk management strategy – child and youth ministries*, to ensure that the Policy and the Strategy continue to be effective in identifying and minimising risks of harm to children and young people
 - (vi) implement audits every three years of all child and youth ministries within the PMC and MEC in accordance with the *Procedures – audit and review of the risk management strategy for child and youth ministries*, to provide assurance on effective compliance with relevant legislation (including the Act), diocesan policies and procedures (including the *Policies and procedures for the protection of children – parishes*), and identify opportunities for improvement
 - (vii) report to the Diocesan Council annually on the outcome of the respective audits, and provide regular progress reports on the implementation and review of the Strategy.

2. Communication and support

This Policy and the Strategy must be made readily available to all those involved in child and youth Ministries, including clergy, people who work with children in a paid or unpaid capacity, children and young people, and their parents and carers by:

- (a) providing written information to those people that includes details of the Policy and Strategy, and where they can be accessed;
- (b) retaining a copy of the Strategy at an accessible location on the premises where child and youth Ministries are conducted; and
- (c) maintaining a current version of the Strategy on the websites of both the Diocese and relevant child and youth ministry or, if the Ministry does not maintain a website, on that of an associated Commission or parish.

3. Reporting and managing breaches and other concerns

- (a) Any person who is concerned about:
 - (i) any failure to implement or review the Strategy as required under this policy
 - (ii) any breach of this policy or of any policy or procedure contained in the Strategy, or
 - (iii) any breach of the Act,
 may, subject to sub-clause (b) below, report the concern as provided in the *Procedure - Reporting and managing breaches of risk management strategy - child and youth ministries*.
- (b) If the concern relates to the breach of a policy or procedure which already contains a process for reporting and managing breaches of that policy or procedure, that process must be followed.
- (c) A breach, for the purpose of sub-clause (a), includes any action or inaction by any person, including a child or young person, that fails to comply with this policy or any of the policies or procedures contained in the Strategy. This includes any breach in relation to the:
 - (i) statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and their protection from harm
 - (ii) code of conduct for interacting with children and young people
 - (iii) procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing paid employees and volunteers
 - (iv) policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
 - (v) policies and procedures for implementing and reviewing the child and youth risk management strategy and maintaining an employee register
 - (vi) risk management plans for high risk activities and special events, and
 - (vii) strategies for communication and support.
- (d) All breaches will be managed in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner.

Schedule A

Risk Management Strategy for child and youth ministries in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane

Incorporating the minimum mandatory requirements pursuant to the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011*

Mandatory requirement	Description of document
Regulation 3 (1) (a) A statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Policy - Risk management strategy for child and youth ministries in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane</i> Statement of commitment (Schedule B) <i>Information for parents and carers</i> <i>Anglican Church of Australia Safe Ministry Policy Statement</i> <i>(Resolution of General Synod 2004; Resolution of Archbishop-in-Council 2005; amended by Brisbane Synod 2007)</i>
Regulation 3 (1) (b) A code of conduct for interacting with children and young people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Faithfulness in Service: A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers</i> <i>A Code of Conduct for holders of key lay offices in the Diocese of Brisbane</i> <i>Policy and procedures for the protection of children – parishes</i>
Regulation 3 (1) (c) Written procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff and volunteers pre and post appointment processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Safe Ministry Check Manual and Questionnaire</i> <i>Blue Card policy</i> <i>Policy Professional Standards Checks for Persons to be licensed or appointed to positions in the Diocese</i> <i>Procedures – Professional Standards Checks – Candidates for</i>

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	<p><i>Ordination Training and Ordination</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. <i>Procedures for completing Professional Standards Checks for clergy and church workers</i> 6. <i>National Register Canon (and Protocols 1 – 4)</i> 7. <i>Procedure – Permission to Officiate on a single occasion or short term for which a blue card cannot be obtained</i> 8. <i>Procedure – Verifying currency of Blue Cards held by all licensed clergy</i> 9. <i>Information for new clergy regarding appointments in the diocese of Brisbane</i> 10. <i>Diocesan Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures</i> 11. <i>Diocesan Recruitment and Selection 'How to' Procedures</i> 12. <i>Diocesan Position Descriptions Policy and Procedures</i> <p><i>Training</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. <i>Policy – Professional Ethics Training for Ordinands and Clergy and Certain Lay Church Workers</i>
<p>Regulation 3 (1) (d)</p> <p>Policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Professional Standards Canon</i> 2. <i>Protocol for Dealing with Complaints of Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault or Sexually Inappropriate Behaviour</i> 3. <i>Clergy Complaints and Performance Protocol</i> 4. <i>Policy – Reporting Criminal Matters to Police</i> 5. <i>Policy for Suspension of a Church Worker Against Whom a Complaint has been made and the Identification of the Worker</i> 6. <i>Procedures for Suspension of a Church Worker Against Whom a complaint has been made and the</i>

	<p><i>identification of the worker</i></p> <p>7. <i>Policy – Protecting Children and Vulnerable People in a Parish where an offender or a person of concern worships</i></p> <p>8. <i>Procedures Protecting Children and Vulnerable People in Parish where an offender or a person of concern worships</i></p>
<p>Regulation 3 (1) (e)</p> <p>A plan for managing breaches of the risk management strategy</p>	<p>1. <i>Policy - child and youth risk management strategy for child and youth ministries (clause 3)</i></p> <p>2. <i>Procedure - Reporting and managing breaches of the risk management strategy for child and youth ministries</i></p>
<p>Regulation 3 (1) (f)</p> <p>Policies and procedures for managing compliance with the blue card system</p>	<p>1. <i>Blue Card policy</i></p> <p>2. <i>Procedure – audit and review of risk management strategy for child and youth ministries</i></p>
<p>Regulation 3 (1) (g)</p> <p>Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events</p>	<p>1. <i>Procedures of developing risk management plans for high risk activities and special events in parishes and agencies</i></p> <p>2. <i>AYCF/ Ichthus Camp Leaders' Code of Conduct</i></p>
<p>Regulation 3 (1) (h)</p> <p>Strategies for communication and support</p>	<p><i>Policy - child and youth risk management strategy for parishes and agencies (clause 4)</i></p>

Additional policies, procedures and other documents	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diocesan Sunsmart Policy and Procedures 2. Guidelines for the use of social media and online communications in youth and children's ministries in parishes (website)

Schedule B

Statement of Commitment

Statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm

Church workers are entrusted with the privilege of being servants and leaders in the ministry of the Church. This privilege carries significant responsibility to ensure that children and young people in the Church are provided with a safe environment and protected from harm.

Our calling by God to share in Christian ministry obliges the Church to take great care in the selection of all workers who are to be entrusted with the care of children and young people. The wider community also rightly expects this.

Our ongoing commitment to the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people is reflected in the *Policy - Risk Management Strategy for Child and Youth Ministries*.

The Policy is the foundation for a framework designed to ensure that everyone involved in child and youth ministries in the Diocese is aware of the potential risks of harm to our children and young people, and takes action to minimize those risks.

Measures introduced in the new policy will strengthen our capacity to provide a safe environment for our children and young people.

I commend the Policy to you, and ask that you do your utmost to ensure that our Church is, and is seen to be, a safe place for all.

Signed:  Archbishop of Brisbane

Dated this 16 day of December 2016

Related documents

- *Procedures for reporting breaches of the risk management strategy for child and youth ministries*
- *Procedures – audit and review of the risk management strategy for child and youth ministries*
- *Procedures – managing high risk activities and special events in child and youth ministries*
- *Anglicare Child and Youth Risk Management Framework*

Legislation / References

Legislation	References
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 Qld</i> • <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011</i> 	See Schedule A

Document History

Details	Version	Document Owner	Approved by	Date
Policy – Risk management strategy for child and youth ministries in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane	1.0	Director of Professional Standards	Diocesan Council	15.12.2016