

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

As a Christian community, meeting together to worship God, we affirm our commitment to ensuring the safety of each child who interacts with our community. God's word is very clear in telling us that all people are created equal and every single person is a child of God who can receive the full inheritance of heaven. We look to the Bible to learn how to love and serve everyone no matter what their age, colour, ethnicity, gender or nationality. As part of this worldview, we specifically seek to promote the cultural safety of children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and all those children who come to us from a culturally or linguistically diverse background. We also seek to ensure the safety of any child with a disability.

The church should be a place where young people can come to know and experience the love of God through those who care for and work with them. In order to ensure that we meet the highest standards of child safety for each child who comes into our community, we have the following policies in place:

- Our organisational culture is one of child safety where, through effective leadership and clear lines of accountability, we ensure that all those in positions of power or influence with children are properly screened, supervised and trained.
- Our code of conduct is the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne "Duty of Care" handbook. A copy of the handbook is provided to all those, in paid or voluntary positions, who have contact with children. The handbook is available at our Parish Centre and can also be found online at:
<http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/youthchildrenfamily/childrenfamily/Pages/Duty-of-Care.aspx>
- All those working with children in the parish are required to have current Working with Children Cards and in most instances police checks. We will also conduct reference checks on those who move into our parish and ask to be part of leadership teams.
- The process of responding to and reporting suspected child abuse is set out by the diocese. Failure to Disclose obligations apply to all adults in Victoria. You can talk to the ministry team, including the vicar, and they will discuss with you what further action should be taken. You can also take any complaint directly to the Diocese.
- You also have the option of making a complaint to the police if you feel that a child's safety has been compromised by the actions or words of someone operating within our programs.
- A booklet entitled "Information for people thinking about making a complaint" published by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne is available at our Parish Centre. The information is also available online from www.melbourne.anglican.com.au



St Mary's is a community: Loving God, Following Jesus, Sharing God's love with all

How to make a complaint

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne takes all complaints of misconduct very seriously. This information is intended to help if you wish to make a complaint, have been or are being abused or harassed by clergy or Church officers, including Regional Bishops, in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

The Director of Professional Standards responds to all complaints of misconduct including sexual, physical, spiritual or emotional abuse by clergy or Church officers. The Director is as independent as possible from the Diocese but is paid by the Diocese.

The first step in making a complaint is to call the recorded information line at any time on **1800 135 246**. All information provided to this service is strictly confidential. The person taking a message on this number will ask you to give a name and your phone number or address so that the Director can contact you as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can write to the Director:

**Director of Professional Standards
Anglican Diocese of Melbourne
PO Box 329
Canterbury VIC 3126**

Mark your envelope "Confidential"

The aim is to solve complaints as quickly as possible. There are different ways of dealing with complaints - informally, formally or by referring the matter to another Church professional standards body or to a child protection authority or to the police.

If the formal process as outlined in the Professional Standards Act is used, the Director advises the Professional Standards Committee who investigates the matter. A Protocol, Power & Trust in the Church, guides the process.