



ANGLICAN  
DIOCESE OF  
MELBOURNE

# Statement of Commitment for Child Safety

Approved by Archbishop in Council

August 2021

## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

You must sign this Statement of Commitment for Child Safety if your work in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne requires you to have a clearance for ministry or a clearance for service. In most cases someone requiring one of these clearances provides a ministry to children, that is, to people under the age of 18 years.

This Statement of Commitment should be read in conjunction with the Diocese's:

- Safe Ministry Policy<sup>1</sup>
- Code of Conduct for Child Safety, and
- Guidelines for Child Safety.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

### 1. Diocesan Commitment to Child Safety

The Diocese is committed to:

- safe ministry to and with children as an outworking of our pastoral, biblical, legal and moral responsibilities
- the safety and welfare of children through our policies and practices, which reflect a zero tolerance of child abuse
- promoting the participation and empowerment of children in all aspects of Church life to ensure it has a safe and nurturing environment where children are respected and listened to, and
- doing everything practicably possible to prevent child abuse by identifying risks early and reducing and removing these risks.

This Statement of Commitment, along with our Safe Ministry Policy, our Code of Conduct for Child Safety, our Guidelines for Child Safety, and other safe ministry resources, assists the Diocese to ensure the safety of all people who participate in its life and ministry.

### 2. We commit to implementing the Victorian Child Safe Standards

This Statement of Commitment details the behavioural commitments that you make when working with or providing ministry to and with children in the Diocese.

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<sup>1</sup> The Safe Ministry Policy was adopted by the Archbishop in Council in August 2021 and is available on the [ADOM website](#).

Achieving these commitments will help to protect children from harm, abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults and will also keep workers safe. The behavioural commitments also address the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

### **3. In all my work and ministry with children, I am:**

- Responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children under my care.
- Responsible for upholding and acting in accordance with the standards in the Code of Conduct for Child Safety, including my physical and online interactions with children.

### **4. In relation to empowering children, I will:**

- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children.
- Treat all children with equality and respect, regardless of race, cultural, linguistic or social origin, sex, sexuality, sexual identity, religion, disability, or other status.
- Involve children in making decisions about activities, policies and processes that concern them wherever possible and appropriate.

### **5. In relation to reporting concern about child safety, I will:**

- Report any reasonable belief of child abuse to Victoria Police, Child Protection<sup>2</sup> and Kooyoora according to the Diocesan reporting procedure.
- Seek advice from Kooyoora regarding my reporting obligations if I have any concerns about the safety of a child, or the risk of child abuse.
- Raise concerns with a team leader or Parish Child Safety Officer if risks to child safety are identified in any of the activities, facilities, structures, procedures or staffing in my parish or church community.
- Immediately disclose any information of charges or convictions of abuse to Kooyoora: this includes disclosing any criminal charges or convictions made against myself or others.
- Participate fully in the misconduct process relating to any breach of the Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016 (Diocese of Melbourne).

### **6. In relation to online communication, I will:**

- Obtain written consent from parents/guardians for online communication with their children.

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<sup>2</sup> "Child Protection" is the name of a unit within the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. The contact points for Child Protection are [here](#).

- Ensure there is another relevant adult included in private online conversation.
- Consider whether words and actions are appropriate.
- Record information (including times, dates, participants, topics and any proposed actions) of online communications.
- Comply with safe protocols for online communication with children.

## **7. In relation to risk management and mitigation, I will:**

- Identify and mitigate risks to children in both the physical and online environment according to the role/s I perform.
- Ensure an environment exists where children feel comfortable to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like or that make them feel unsafe.

## **8. In relation to legal, moral and pastoral obligations, I will:**

- Comply with all relevant legislation, Commonwealth, State and Church, regarding the safety of children.
- Respectfully challenge others' behaviour when this is unsafe or may be in some way in breach of the Code of Conduct.
- Respond to reasonable directions and requests from my team leader and / or supervisor, and the Diocese.
- Complete clearance checks and attend training as required by the Church.

## **9. In all ministry to children, I will NOT:**

- Engage in behaviour, in person or online, that is intended or likely to bully, shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child.
- Use offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child.
- Hit, physically assault or otherwise abuse children.
- Engage in physical discipline of children.
- Engage in any conduct that constitutes grooming for sexual conduct with a child or their family, in accordance with Commonwealth and Victorian legislation.
- Engage in reportable conduct as defined by Victorian legislation.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a child or that which may be perceived as of a sexual nature.

- Condone or encourage the use of alcohol or illegal drugs by children, except wine in the context of Holy Communion.
- Participate in behaviour with children that is illegal or unsafe.
- Use any technology to exploit, harass, sexually abuse or groom a child.
- Unless unavoidable, be alone in a motor vehicle with a child. If unavoidable, I will inform another suitable adult and give the reason.

## 10. Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I hold the following roles, offices or positions in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne:

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At the following Parish/es or organisations/Church bodies:

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I have read, understood and agree to be bound by the Diocese's:

- [Safe Ministry Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Child Safety](#)
- [Guidelines for Child Safety](#), and
- Statement of Commitment

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Witness Name: .....

Witness Signature: .....