

ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH CHILD SAFETY PLAN

Standard 1 Our culture, leadership and governance are child safe

Child safety is embedded in the culture, leadership, and governance of our congregation. Our congregation prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and demonstrates this through all levels of its leadership. Our congregation has no tolerance for child abuse in any form.

Action: Photos and names of whom to contact regarding Child Safety (CS) added to governance team sign after AGM 2023.

CS information session with team leaders at the start of school term 1, 2023.

Notification in church bulletin each week who to contact if any CS concerns.

Standard 2 We value, respect and listen to children

Our congregation takes the views of children seriously. We are committed to listening to children and to providing them with opportunities to participate and be heard. We work especially hard to help children raise concerns if they need to.

Action: Implement an "I Feel Safe" session in ministry groups, in conjunction with team leaders, to be included in yearly planning.

Encourage children's participation in worship.

Standard 3 We include families

Our congregation works in partnership with families and carers to keep children safe. We are committed to keeping families informed, to listening to their concerns, and to helping them be involved in decisions that affect their children.

Action: Create an online feedback form about CS in our congregation and distribute to children's ministries and other ministry groups.

Work with team leaders to provide information and links to CS resources to parents/caregivers via newsletters.

Standard 4 We respect and welcome children with diverse needs

Our congregation recognises that children from diverse backgrounds have unique vulnerabilities and are more likely to be at risk or experience abuse and neglect. We know this is particularly true for children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, children from refugee backgrounds, children from other diverse cultural groups, children with disabilities and children who are unable to live with their families.

Action: Incorporate an "Inclusivity Day" into ministry groups and share with the congregation to specifically promote God's love for children with disabilities and children from other cultures.

Standard 5 Our people are safe, supported and informed

Our congregation ensures that our employees and volunteers with designated roles that involve working with children as well as our pastor(s) and leadership team are suitable, safe, well-informed, and supported.

Action: Clear role descriptions for leadership team and volunteers. This will include requirements to adhere to LCA policies, procedures and CS responsibilities.

Standard 6 Our complaints system is child-focused

Our congregation has a reporting and complaints process which has a clear focus on child safety, is accessible to children and is clear regarding roles and responsibilities.

Action: Improve the display and accessibility of processes for reporting abuse of a child, child at risk or grooming of a child etc. Add child-friendly posters. Information to be displayed in a designated space.

Children to be provided with a variety of ways to raise concerns or make complaints. This information to be included in the "I Feel Safe" session.

Standard 7 Our people understand child safety

Our pastors, other leaders, employees, and volunteers participate in regular training that provides them with an understanding of the fundamentals of child abuse, the importance of ethical conduct, how to respond to concerns, and how to prioritise child safety in the congregational context.

Action: CS information on display as reminders of key elements of training (see Standard 6).

Standard 8 Our risk management has a child safety focus

Our pastor(s), other leaders, employees, and volunteers have the knowledge and skills to identify and reduce risks to children in relation to physical and on-line surroundings, church activities and church-related outings.

Action: Reminder of care with on-line engagement with children. To be included in information session for team leaders and in newsletters to parents/carers.

Standard 9 We regularly review our child safety progress

Our congregation is committed to implementing these standards and to making sure that progress is regularly reviewed.

Action: Church council to oversee implementation and monitored compliance of CS plan.

Standard 10 Our policies and procedures are child safe

The church has clear policies and procedures about child safety that help our people to develop and maintain a safe environment for children.

Action: Advise congregation and community where CS LCA policies and procedures can be accessed via website links, posters, printed copies. Relevant, easily accessible information.

Encourage children/families to provide feedback re implementation of CS policies and procedures via online feedback form.