

CONDELL PARK BIBLE CHURCH

CHILD PROTECTION

POLICY & PROCEDURES

2023

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(17th Edition)



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PROCEDURES – 2023**

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CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2023

1.0 Policy Statement

The Church is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for children and adults to hear the Gospel, to mature in their faith and for Leaders to exercise their ministries.

The Church acknowledges that it has a high duty of care to various groups of people, especially to children in its care.

This policy aims to reduce the risk of child abuse or significant harm, and to ensure that a caring and appropriate response is taken should abuse occur.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All ministries authorised by or under the control of the Church, including those ministries undertaken at, or away from, the Church's premises.
- All Leaders and Helpers within the Church or engaged by the Church.

3.0 Definitions

Abuse/Harm: Activity or deliberate or careless inactivity which causes significant harm, that is to say, any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

Child: Any person under the age of 16.

Child Abuse: Child abuse may consist of one or more of the following abuses:

- a) Emotional abuse – The chronic attitude or behaviour of a person, which is directed at a child in his or her care, or, the creation of an emotional environment, which is detrimental to that child's development.
 - Behaviours include insulting, bullying, corrupting, terrorising or other extreme acts in the child's presence.

- Neglect – Ignoring, rejecting, or any serious act or omission, which impairs or jeopardizes a child's development.
- b) Physical abuse – Any non-accidental physical injury
- c) Sexual abuse – Any sexual act, or threat to perform such an act, upon another person. It occurs when a person uses his or her power and authority to take advantage of a child's trust to involve him or her in sexual activity. It does not necessarily involve intimate contact, but is any act, which erodes the sexual boundary between the person and the child. Any apparent 'consent' of the child is always negated because of the age or maturity of the child.
- Sexual offence – this includes sexual assault, the involvement of children in sexual acts or acts of indecency and any sexual threat imposed on a child.
 - Sexual misconduct – includes 'grooming behaviour' which involves:-
 - Persuading a child that a "special" relationship exists, spending inappropriate special time with the child, inappropriately giving gifts or showing favours;
 - Testing of boundaries – undressing in front of a child, allowing a child to sit on the lap, talking about sexual matters, or the 'accidental' touching of intimate parts of the body;
 - Inappropriate personal correspondence, including electronic communication that explores sexual feelings or intimate personal feelings;
 - Inappropriate literature; (e.g. explicit material used with children);
 - Inappropriate and/or suggestive conversation, gestures, coarse language, or jokes of a sexual nature;
 - Inappropriate touching;
 - Inappropriate photographing and videoing of children.

- d) **Witnessing Domestic Violence** - Any abusive behaviour used by one partner or family member in a domestic relationship to gain and maintain control over another's life.

Abuse does not cover the following activities:

- Touching a non-intimate part of a child's body to gain a child's attention, or to comfort a child;
- A Leader raising his or her voice to attract attention or to restore order;
- Accidental contact;
- Providing appropriate medical care to a child who is injured;
- Guiding a child by the shoulders, arms or hands;
- Not providing supervision where this was for a good reason, and for a short period of time, where the risk of harm was low;
- Appropriate physical contact during sport, music lessons, teaching demonstrations or other such activities having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the child.

Child Protection Officer: A person appointed to that office by the Church, whose duties will include (but not be limited to) implementation and review of the Church Child Protection Policy, ensuring that all child-related workers have passed a Working with Children Check, and maintaining records of this, and keeping the Senior Pastor informed of the WWC status of each child-related worker.

Church: Condell Park Bible Church located at 29 Lancelot St Condell Park NSW.

Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ): The NSW Government agency previously known as the Department of Family and Community services.

Diaconate: The group of elected Deacons including the pastoral staff and those serving ex-officio on the Diaconate.

Disclosure: When a young person or child tells that someone is harming them.

Head of Agency: The Senior Pastor of Condell Park Bible Church.

Helper: Any unpaid person, who may be between the ages of 14 and 18 years, invited to assist an appointed Leader in any child ministry and is under the supervision of that Leader.

Leader: Any person (paid or unpaid) over the age of 18 who is responsible for, or assists in, the control and safety of any child placed in his or her care whilst holding a ministry position in this local church. A Leader includes but is not limited to:

- Pastors
- Elders
- Deacons
- Child Protection Officer
- School teachers
- Sunday School staff
- Youth Ministry Leaders
- Counsellors
- Scripture teachers
- Sports coaches and organisers
- Creche/Nursery Staff

Ministry: An organised activity that relates to a specific age range, theme or audience and is authorised by the Church.

Ministry Leader: The person authorised by the Church as head of a ministry.

Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG): An independent statutory authority in the NSW government to promote and regulate child safe organisations, services, and people.

Mandatory Reporter: An individual required under Section 27 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 to report to the Child Protection Helpline when he/she has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child, or a class of children, is at risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect, and those grounds arise during the course of or from the person's work. They are defined as those who deliver the following services wholly or partly to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- Health care – doctors, nurses, dentists and other health workers
- Welfare - psychologists, social workers and youth workers
- Education - teachers
- Children's services - child care workers, family day carers and home based carers
- Residential services - refuge workers, community housing providers
- Law enforcement – police

- Disability services- disability support workers and personal care workers.
- A person in religious ministry or a person providing religion based activities to children (e.g. minister of religion, priest, deacon, pastor, rabbi, Salvation Army officer, church elder, religious brother or sister)
- Registered psychologists- providing a professional service as a psychologist to adults.

Mandatory Reporting: The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

Pastoral Staff: Any Pastor(s) appointed to that office by the Church.

Prohibited Person: A person convicted of committing a serious sex offence.

Reasonable Suspicion: Fair and practical reason to believe an incident involving abuse has occurred based on either verbal communication, hearsay, rumour or observation of behaviour.

Reportable Conduct: Under the Children's Guardian Act, Reportable Conduct is defined as:

- a sexual offence – an offence of a sexual nature under a law of the State, another State, a Territory, or the Commonwealth, committed against, with, or in the presence of a Child/Young Person. Examples of sexual offences include:
 - sexual touching of a Child/Young Person,
 - a child-grooming offence,
 - the production, dissemination or possession of Child Abuse material.
- sexual misconduct – conduct with, towards or in the presence of a Child/Young Person that is sexual in nature, but is not a sexual offence. Examples of sexual misconduct include:
 - descriptions of sexual acts without a legitimate reason to provide the descriptions,
 - sexual comments, conversations or communications,
 - comments to a Child/Young Person that express a desire to act in a sexual manner towards the Child/Young Person or another person.

- ill-treatment of a Child/Young Person – conduct towards a Child/Young Person that is unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel. Examples of ill-treatment include:
 - making excessive or degrading demands of a Child/Young Person,
 - a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour towards a Child/Young Person,
 - using inappropriate forms of behaviour management towards a Child/Young Person.
- neglect of a Child/Young Person – a significant failure to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the Child/Young Person, that causes or is likely to cause harm to a Child/Young Person, by a person with parental responsibility for the Child/Young Person, or an authorised carer of the Child/Young Person, or an employee if the Child/Young Person is in the employee's care. Examples of neglect include:
 - failing to protect a Child/Young Person from abuse,
 - exposing a Child/Young Person to a harmful environment, for example, an environment where there is illicit drug manufacturing.
- an assault against a Child/Young Person – the intentional or reckless application of physical force without lawful justification or excuse, or any act which intentionally or recklessly causes another to apprehend immediate and unlawful violence. Examples of assault include:
 - hitting, striking, kicking, punching or dragging a Child/Young Person,
 - threatening to physically harm a Child/Young Person.
- an offence under section 43B (failure to protect) or section 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900 (see Section 6.13); and
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a Child/Young Person – conduct that is intentional or reckless (without reasonable excuse), clearly unreasonable and which results in significant emotional harm and/or trauma to a child. Examples of indicators of significant emotional or psychological harm include:
 - displaying behavioural patterns that are out of character,
 - regressive behaviour,
 - anxiety or self-harm.

Reportable Conduct does not extend to:

- conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of Children/Young People, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the Children/Young People and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards, or
- the use of physical force that, in all of the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, and in circumstances which have been investigated, with the result of the investigation recorded in accordance with appropriate procedures; or
- conduct of a class or kind exempted from being Reportable Conduct by the Children's Guardian Act under section 30.

School: Condell Park Christian School is located at 29 Lancelot St Condell Park NSW, and functions as a ministry of the Church.

Significant Harm: A child or young person is at risk of significant harm if the circumstances that are causing concern for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person are present to a significant extent.

Young Person: Any person aged 16 or 17.

4.0 Implementation Guidelines

4.1 Obligations

4.1.1 Spiritual

The clear teachings of the Scriptures require the Church to treat all people with love and dignity and to care for those who are less powerful and in need of nurture and protection.

4.1.2 Legal

The Church is subject to Federal and State legislation, and principles established through common law.

4.1.3 Ethical

Some actions which may not be regarded as abuse, are still considered unacceptable behaviour (e.g. Overly aggressive actions by a Leader, Helper, Worker or Volunteer in the course of a sporting or other activity; or photographing or recording/filming without prior consent; in addition, uploading on social media without prior consent).

The age of individuals is recognised as one of the determinants in deciding what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is. Ministry Leaders will ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained at all times.

4.2 Selection and Screening

To reduce the risk of an offender entering a position of trust, Leaders/Helpers involved in children's ministry must be carefully selected and screened. Except in unusual circumstances all ministry positions will be filled by Church members or by those who are in the process of becoming Church members. (Please refer to Child Protection Procedures Section.)

4.3 Information and Training

All Leaders/Helpers who are involved with children are issued with a copy of this policy and will receive training in its content and application.

4.4 Principles to Promote a Safe & Supportive Environment

- No person who has been convicted of serious sex offences in accordance with current legislation will be eligible to participate in child ministries.
- When ministries are well supervised the risk of child abuse is greatly reduced. Incidents of abuse are unlikely to occur in front of another adult for fear of being reported. In addition, the presence of a witness can assist in clarifying questionable allegations. For these reasons it is ideal that two Leaders be present when working with or supervising children.

4.5 External Policies

The Church acknowledges that some child related ministries of the Church might have external affiliation with other organisations. These organisations will possibly have policies governing the issues of child safety and abuse. This policy is not intended to replace or conflict with the other policies, but instead to operate in conjunction with them if their policies and practices are Biblically sound.

4.6 Disciplining Children

It is not the responsibility of the Church or its Leaders to physically discipline a child. If a child does not abide by the rules set down by the Leader, or is an obstruction to the care of other children or may cause harm to other children, the child will be removed and referred back to his or her parents or guardian.

Nothing in this clause prevents minor correctional actions or rebukes or, if reasonably necessary to prevent harm to a child or adult, physical intervention by a Leader.

4.7 Mandatory Reporting

It is recognised that all Pastoral staff, Ministry Leaders and all other Leaders have mandatory legal reporting obligations if there are *reasonable grounds* to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (please refer to Procedures Section).

The *NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide* has been developed to help both mandatory and non-mandatory reporters discern whether a concern meets the statutory threshold for reporting risk of significant harm.

Reasonable grounds for reporting:

- A child speaks about being abused - about what has been happening, what they feel or fear.
- Someone close to a child (e.g. sibling, relative, close friend) discloses that the child has possibly been abused.
- A child tells a Leader or Helper they know someone who has been abused or is at risk of significant harm.
- A Leader or Helper observes a child's appearance or behaviour which leads to suspicion of abuse.

4.8 Reportable Conduct

The Children's Guardian Act 2019 requires that a designated agency must notify the Office of the Children's Guardian of any allegation of reportable conduct or conviction against an employee.

In addition to notifying the Office of the Children's Guardian, the Church must also investigate the allegation or conviction and report the findings of such an investigation to the Office of the Children's Guardian.

4.9 Alcohol and Drugs

The consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on Church grounds or during an activity is not permitted. Any child found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is to be counselled and the parents or guardians contacted so the child can be returned home as soon as possible.

Any alcohol, or illegal drugs found on the Church grounds are to be removed and the location of such alcohol or illegal drugs reported to a Pastor or Ministry Leader. Any child required to take prescription medication should provide a letter from his or her parents/guardians to the Ministry Leader.

5.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Diaconate or by a committee appointed by the Diaconate.

6.0 References and Related Documents

Church Child Protection Procedures
Child Protection Risk Assessment Form
Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide
Children's Guardian Act 2019
Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 No 51
Child Protection Helpline (24 hour/7 days a week) Telephone Number:
132111
The Crimes Act 1990
Child Safe Standards
Child Protection – Reporting Procedure Quick Reference Guide
Child Protection Risk Management Form
Child Abuse/Reportable Conduct Record Form
Child Protection- Reporting a Concern/Allegation

1.0 Implementation Guidelines

1.1 Screening Procedures

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 No 51 requires that persons engaged in child-related work must obtain a Working With Children Check (WWC) and submit the WWC number to the Child Protection Officer and ministry leader.

As of June 2018, updates to the Working with Children Legislation¹, includes:

- a requirement for people to keep their personal details up to date or risk a penalty
- employers must verify child-related workers or risk a fine
- WWC is required for all parent volunteers attending overnight kids camps, with their own child.

Condell Park Bible Church must verify a Worker's or Volunteer's clearance number. The Worker's or Volunteer's name, date of birth and WWC number will be required for verification. This function is to be the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer.

Where a person's WWC has resulted in a bar, not a clearance, the Church will not allow the prohibited person to work or volunteer under any Church ministry engaging child-related involvement. (Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998)

Condell Park Bible Church must keep a record of each Worker's or Volunteer's full name, date of birth, WWC number, its verification and expiry dates. Although the church must monitor the expiry of that clearance, workers are responsible to renew their clearance.

¹ <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/our-legislation/legislative-changes>

Each Leader/Helper is to sign a declaration that states he/she has read the Condell Park Bible Church Child Protection booklet and agrees to abide by the policy and procedures described therein.

1.2 Appointment of Leaders

Prior to Leaders commencing the following procedures will be followed:

- Leaders will have faithfully attended the Church for a period of at least six months before being eligible to apply, or to be invited to serve in Child Ministries. An exception to this requirement is where the prospective Leader has previously served in Child Ministries in a local Church of like faith, practice, and conviction, whose Biblical stand is known to be consistent with the Church.
- In relation to the above exception, the prospective Leader must provide a written reference from the Pastor or leadership of that Church which addresses his or her suitability for child ministries, and his or her proven good conduct.
- All prospective Leaders must be approved by the Senior Pastor for an appointment to a ministry.
- All Leaders are to apply for Church membership, unless the Leader is temporarily residing in Sydney, then membership should be maintained with his or her home Church.
- All aspiring and existing Leaders are legally obligated to inform the Church of any past or current convictions for serious sex offences as described by current legislation. Further, it is a criminal offence for any person to apply for, undertake, or remain in children's ministries if he or she has committed such offences.

1.3 Appointment of Helpers

- All prospective Helpers must be approved by the Senior Pastor.
- Helpers are expected to have an understanding of the guidelines contained in the Church Child Protection Policy and Procedures and be prepared to work with them.

- Any Helper who provides assistance in a children's ministry must be supervised by a Leader at all times and will be accountable to that Leader.
- Leaders who accept the assistance of a Helper must be satisfied with the Helper's maturity and his/her suitability for children's ministry.

1.4 Information and Training

A Ministry Launch Day for dissemination of information and training in Child Protection will be scheduled in the first two months of each year for all Leaders/Helpers. This is to be organised by the Child Protection Officer in conjunction with the Senior Church Pastor.

Leaders/Helpers will be informed of the following:

- Legal and moral responsibilities related to child protection, mandatory reporting, Biblical principles and other relevant standards of behaviour as detailed in the Child Protection booklet.
- Obligations under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 No 51 which prohibits persons with convictions for serious sexual offences from working in positions of child-related employment that primarily involves direct contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised.
- Obligations related to Mandatory Reporting and process set in place if action is required.
- Requirement to notify and investigate allegations of reportable conduct in compliance with the Children's Guardian Act.
- Welfare issue obligations outlined in the Church Code of Conduct summary document.

2.0 Procedures to Promote a Safe and Supportive Environment

- All personal counselling is to be carried out within sight of another Leader/Helper or parent or guardian of the child.
- Leaders will respect a child's feelings and privacy when engaging in physical contact of any kind.
- Adults and children are expected to respect each other's privacy during activities that require undressing, dressing or changing clothes. Leaders will set an example by protecting their own privacy in similar situations. No Leader will be alone in a room with a child while either is changing.
- All aspects of every program related to children will be open to observation by family, friends or guardians.
- Leaders should be alert for strangers.
- Leaders have the right to ask people who do not have a valid reason to be present at child-related activities to leave. Police may be contacted if such persons refuse to comply with any reasonable request to leave.
- All children are to be supervised during ministry time.
- In choosing games, activities/sports, Leaders must consider the levels of safety, physical contact and intimacy required and exercise caution.
- Leaders should be careful of children who actively seek physical attention.
- Leaders should obtain permission slips for special outings, and also general permission for Leaders and Helpers to provide transport.
 - As far as is practically possible, two Leaders will always be present when working with or supervising children.
- Leaders and Helpers will not visit children in their homes unless a parent or guardian is present or another Leader/Helper accompanies them, and then only with parental consent, and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Ministry Director.

- When transporting children, Leaders should not be alone with a child in a car or bus.
- Only approved drivers are to transport children. For children under 14 years old, written permission and an emergency contact number should be obtained from the parents/guardians before transporting them.
- Primary age children are to visit the toilet on their own. Younger ones are to be accompanied by a female Leader.
- Male Leaders/Helpers are to be especially careful of their behaviour. Children should not sit on male Leader's/Helper's laps.
- When counselling - female Leaders should counsel with girls and male Leaders should counsel with boys.
- Parents are to be given ministry details including: Names and phone number of Ministry Leader, and time and scope of the ministry.
- It is not appropriate for any person in a leadership position to develop intimate relationships with any child or young person under their care.
- The Senior Pastor will become the liaison person with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and the Police.
- Any child or young person, parent/carer, staff member/volunteer or external party can make a complaint or raise a concern to the Pastor via:
 - Face to face meeting
 - Phone
 - Post to 29 Lancelot St Condell Park NSW 2200
 - Concern/Allegation Form

3.0 **Mandatory Reporting**

Should there be *reasonable grounds* or reasonable suspicion to suspect risk of significant harm, whether on the Church grounds or outside of the Church's property, the Senior Pastor (Head of Agency) **must** be promptly notified and he in turn follows the procedures in the *Mandatory Reporting Guide*.

The Mandatory Reporter Guide is an interactive online tool developed to assist Mandatory Reporters to determine if a report to the Child Protection Helpline is needed for concerns about possible abuse or neglect of a Child or Young Person. The Mandatory Reporter Guide is available on the Child Story website – <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/>.

Should there be Reasonable Grounds to suspect that a Child has been abused or is suffering abuse on Church property or during a Church activity, the OCG, the DCJ, the NSW Police, and the Church's insurer must be notified by the Senior Pastor without any undue delay.

4.0 Reportable Conduct

Where there has been an occurrence of reportable conduct as defined under The Children's Guardian Act 2019, the Act requires that systems be in place for recording and responding to allegations of a child protection nature.

A reportable allegation means an allegation of reportable conduct against a person or an allegation of misconduct that may involve reportable conduct.

The Senior Pastor is required to notify the Office of the Children's Guardian in writing, within 7 working days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction.

He must then prepare a report for the Office of the Children's Guardian within 30 days.

4.1 Response to Allegations

Condell Park Bible Church actively encourages the reporting of all abuse including sexual abuse. The Church is committed to building an environment where either a child or Leader/Helper feels able to report such abuse.

Leaders and Helpers must report reasonable suspicions of abuse to the Senior Pastor. If the allegation is against the Senior Pastor, then the report must be made to the Associate Pastor or Child Protection Officer, who will fulfil all the duties and responsibilities of the Senior Pastor as per Clauses 2.0, 4.0, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5. The details of those reporting abuse will be kept private and confidential.

If there is reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is suffering abuse, the Police and the Insurance Company will be contacted immediately.

When an allegation is disclosed a Child Abuse/Reportable Conduct Record Form needs to be filled out. This form can be found at www.cpbcr.org.au or can be attained from the Senior Pastor or Child Protection Officer.

4.2 Reporting Crimes to Police

From 31 August 2018, amendments to the [Crimes Act 1900](#) commenced to introduce new offences of concealing a child abuse offence (section 316A) and failing to remove the risk that a worker will commit a child abuse offence (section 43B).

New offence of concealing a child abuse offence (failure to report)

All adults in NSW are required to report information to Police if they:

- know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child (under 18 years) has been abused, or
- know, believe, or reasonably ought to know that they have information that might materially assist in securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of the offender.

This offence covers sexual abuse, serious physical abuse and extreme neglect of a child (under 18 years). It has a maximum penalty of imprisonment for two years.

A person will not be guilty of the offence, if they have a reasonable excuse for not reporting the information to Police. Reasonable excuses include knowing or reasonably believing that:

- the information has already been reported under mandatory reporting obligations, such as to the Child Protection Helpline or to the OCG under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, or the person believes on reasonable grounds that another person has reported it
- the information is already known to Police
- the alleged victim is an adult at the time of providing the information and doesn't want it reported to the Police, or
- there are grounds to fear for their safety or another person's safety if they report to Police.

- In addition, the person has a reasonable excuse for failing to notify the Police if they were under 18 years of age when they obtained the information.

New offence of failing to remove the risk that a worker will commit a child abuse offence

An adult working in an organisation that engages workers in child-related work commits an offence if:

- they know that an adult worker engaged by the organisation in child related work poses a serious risk of abusing a child (under 18 years), and
- they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, and
- they negligently fail to reduce or remove that risk.

The offence covers failures to protect against sexual or serious physical abuse and is punishable by up to two years imprisonment.

Bankstown Police Station Ph: 02 9738 2199

4.3 Initial Disclosure of Allegation

The person to whom the original disclosure is made will maintain appropriate care of the one making the disclosure.

This will include:

- Treating each allegation seriously and not attempting to deny the allegation or minimise its impact on the alleged victim.
- Not coercing the child to disclose details of the alleged abuse or attempting to investigate the allegation while Police or other investigations are taking place.
- Assuring the child that he or she is understood; that the disclosure is being taken seriously; that what has happened is not the child's fault; and that the child is correct in disclosing the incident.
- Not making contact (about the issue) with the alleged perpetrator but referring to the Senior Pastor. If the Leader or Helper is already providing counsel to the alleged perpetrator, another person should assume responsibility for the duration of any investigation.

- If the alleged abuse has taken place recently, clothing worn by the child should be retained and handed to the police for forensic examination. No attempt should be made by a Leader, or any other person, to remove or wash clothing. Relevant garments not presently being worn should be retained for police examination.
- Maintaining confidentiality. The Leader will only speak about an allegation of abuse to the Senior Pastor or relevant Ministry Leader, the parents or guardian (unless he or she is the alleged perpetrator), the OCG, the DCJ and the Police.

4.4 Risk Assessment

If a complaint or allegation is made against any person, a risk assessment will be required to determine if the person should immediately stand down from his or her ministry, until the proper investigations have been made and the Senior Pastor has determined the appropriate action to take. Refer to Child Protection Risk Management Form.

4.5 Investigation of Allegations

The Senior Pastor or his delegate will manage the investigation of reportable allegations. Such investigations should be carried out in fairness in relation to all persons concerned. The investigations should take place in consultation with the relevant authorities.

The Office of the Children's Guardian may also oversee and monitor the investigation and the response of the Church to allegations of reportable conduct. In the event of disciplinary proceedings, the OCG must be notified of the outcome.

Any disclosures or complaints made by a child or by others, and all details of the subsequent investigations will be documented promptly and the documents will be held in a secure location where a breach of privacy cannot occur.

If the matter has already been referred to the Senior Pastor, the person to whom the disclosure was made should avoid making contact with the alleged perpetrator.

The Senior Pastor will ensure that the child is treated with respect and dignity and offered pastoral support and counselling, if circumstances warrant it, even if any allegation is not yet proved or disproved.

4.6 Post-Investigation Outcomes

After the investigation has been concluded and a finding made, the following procedural outcomes are possible:

- Dismiss the allegation
- Refer to an external agency (e.g. Police/ DCJ) for further investigation, prosecution or other appropriate action
- Discipline or other management action which may involve penalty or dismissal with completed relevant disciplinary proceedings being reported to the OCG
- Develop or review of relevant policies and procedures
- The Church reserves the right to carry out disciplinary procedures in accordance with its constitution

4.7 Information Sharing and Record Keeping Procedure

All child protection documentation is highly confidential. Unless they are the accused person, the Pastor is to be the liaison person. If an allegation is against them, liaise with another pastor/child protection officer. The following policies/procedures will be followed:

- Child Protection information will be submitted to the Child Protection Coordinator for filing
- Child Protection information will be securely stored indefinitely
- Child Protection information requests must be directed to the Pastor and will only be released in accordance with privacy laws, Chapter 16 A and Division 11 of the Children's Guardian Act 2019.

The Church will retain copies of the following child protection related documents:

- Working With Children Check Verification Summaries
- Child Protection Training records including training material and attendance records

- **Child Protection Risk Management Forms:** A form used to identify, manage, and monitor risks that relate to child protection matters
- **Child Abuse/Reportable Conduct Record Forms:** A form used when any person suspects child protection concerns including a child or young person at risk of significant harm and reportable conduct by an employee or volunteer. This should also include attached copies of the Mandatory Reporter Guide Decision Report and Reference Numbers from consultations with the authorities (e.g. Children's Guardian, NSW Police)
- **Reporting a Concern/Allegation Form:** A form that is available for any child, young person, parent/guardian, leader/helper, to report an incident or to raise a concern about child protection.
- **Child Protection Investigation records:** Documentation including correspondence with relevant authorities and parties subject to an internal and or external investigation
- Other records that are deemed relevant to child protection

5.0 Procedure Review Statement

The Procedures for Child Protection are to be reviewed annually.

6.0 References and Related Documents

Church Child Protection Procedures
 Child Protection Risk Assessment Form
 Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
 NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide
 Children's Guardian Act 2019
 Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 No 51
 Child Protection Helpline (24 hour/7 days a week) Telephone Number: 132111
 The Crimes Act 1990
 Child Safe Standards
 Child Protection – Reporting Procedure Quick Reference Guide
 Child Protection Risk Management Form
 Child Abuse/Reportable Conduct Record Form
 Child Protection- Reporting a Concern/Allegation

Complete the online form to endorse and agree to the contents of the
Condell Park Bible Church Child Protection booklet.

You can access this form through the following address:
<https://condellpark.breezechms.com/form/childprotect2023>

Alternatively, complete and sign the forms below and
return the second form to Condell Park Bible Church.

ENDORSEMENT AND AGREEMENT FORM

I have read the Condell Park Bible Church Child Protection booklet
and agree to abide by the Policy and Procedures described therein.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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