

ChildSafe

Creating a Child Safe Environment

Sample Policy & Procedures Manual

A documentation resource prepared for consideration  
and use within BMi Churches in Australia

The church’s commitment to establishing a child safe environment rests on the effective implementation of its policy and procedures. Whereas policy expresses the church’s intent or goals in the area of child safety, procedures define the administrative framework and the processes which shape behaviour which reflect those goals.

This sample manual offers various policy, procedures and forms for possible use by BMi churches in the setup and implementation of systems which reinforce child safety.

Index

Purpose

This index acts as the summary document for all policies and procedures pertaining to the church’s commitment to establishing and maintaining a child safe environment. The Index is updated each time a new policy or procedure is added or when an existing policy or procedure is revised. Signature of this Index renders authorization to all procedures at their revision status as indicated here.

Policy

Child-Safe Environment Policy

Procedures

PRO 01 Recruitment & Induction

PRO 02 Reporting Abuse

PRO 03 Training

PRO 04 Audit & Review

PRO 05 Records

These procedures at their current issue status are hereby authorized

Signature

Child Safe Environment Policy

We acknowledge that children are a gift from God to the parents of our church and to society. Whilst it is the parent who is answerable before God for the faith, worldview and safekeeping of their offspring; the church has a role in a child’s development and should minister in such a way as to ensure that children in its care are safe, preserved in their naiveté and free from abuse.

We are earnestly aware of the trust exercised by parents and guardians when they place their children in the care of the church. For this reason and because of scripture’s clear indication that children are precious to the Lord (Matt 18:6 & 10-11), we believe that children are entitled to a safe environment free from abuse. The church’s policies and practices in regard to the protection of children apply to all children, regardless of race, age, gender or ethnic background.

To achieve this safe environment we have implemented procedures across a number of areas for the purpose of ensuring such safety for children in our care. These procedures are based on principles of:

***A child safe environment*** being an environment which is not merely free from abuse but one in which children themselves are able to make known their concerns as to personal comfort and are free to disclose any conduct on the part of workers, volunteers or other children which they find invasive, belittling or harmful.

***Harm minimization*** as ensures that all persons, especially those who are involved in working with children, are committed to preventing harm of, or abuse of children. Such harm minimization is best achieved when:

• all church members are informed and actively committed to maintaining a culture of care, protection and incident reporting for our children

• recruitment, selection and appointment processes provide that those involved are known to the church, have passed suitable character checks and provided with specific training

• workers and volunteers commit to a code of behaviour before acting as helpers or leaders within a children’s ministry event

• ministry activities are subject to review to assess and minimize opportunity for inappropriate behaviours or the development of inappropriate relationship

• there is supervision of visitors (including contractors) who are involved in or are in the proximity of children’s activities.

***Commitment to reporting*** as ensures that all reports and allegations of abuse are reported to those authorities as required by State legislation, not only for matters alleged to have occurred while a child is in our care but where there is objective evidence of abuse as may be occurring outside the church’s environs.

A child safe environment comprises more than the elimination of negative effects. Even so, our procedures and training in aid of child protection recognize that abuse, as the misuse of power by an abuser, means that whilst children are particularly susceptible to abuse by those in authority, such as parent, teacher, caregiver or leaders, there can also be abuse of one child by another. Hence we understand that abuse may take the form of physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect as well as that of sexual abuse (wherein the victim becomes the object of, or means for, sexual gratification by the abuser).

Recognizing that continuing relevance of policies and procedures are impacted by changes in legislative requirements, changes in community expectation, changes in church activities and changes in personnel or ministry arrangements, our policies and procedures are subject to a process of audit and review.

Senior Pastor

Recruitment & Induction

Purpose

This procedure, and in particular the *Agreement for Assessment* checksheet which accompanies it, seeks to ensure that workers who are to be involved in the regular supervision and care of children are verified as possessing the background and commitment consistent with the church’s objective of establishing and maintaining a child safe environment. The verifications defined by this procedure are to occur prior to a person proceeding to induction or training.

Definitions

***child*** — a person who is under the age 18 years

***assessment authority*** — the person authorized to decide whether a candidate’s request to work with children should proceed (most probably this will be the pastor but need not be so)

***volunteer assistant*** — a person who is providing once off or intermittent assistance of an incidental nature and who has agreed to remain within the sight and supervision of an authorized children’s worker

***children’s worker*** — a person who in providing frequent, ongoing care of children and/or regular supervision of children as part of a church activity, is subject to the assessment process of this procedure and who has thereafter been approved to work with children

Process

1.0 Children’s Workers

The following steps apply where there is need to appoint a person to the role of worker in activities or programs for children:

1.1 Ascertain the candidate’s preparedness to be assessed for suitability  
for children’s work

Dep’t Leader Prior to an application for assessment being prepared:

• Advise the potential worker that they must have been a regular attendee at the church for at least six months and that there are checks required before commencing work with children.

• Take the potential worker through the Children’s Workers’ Code of Behaviour and the content of the application for assessment.

1.2 Prepare application for assessment

Candidate Prior to completing the application

• Read the Children’s Workers’ Code of Behaviour and decide whether to proceed with the process of assessment as children’s worker,

• IF SO, prepare the *Agreement for Assessment* and hand it to the relevant department leader.

1.3 Decide whether further checks, induction and training of the candidate should proceed

Assessment

Authority Upon receipt of the *Agreement for Assessment* and prior to the candidate assuming responsibilities

• Review the application for assessment to ensure that necessary declarations have been made.

• WHERE the candidate is themselves less than 18 years of age, ensure that the candidate’s parent or guardian approves of the assessment and possible appointment and that the parent or guardian has sighted and agreed to the Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour.

• Contact nominated referees to establish applicant’s suitability for children’s work.

In this regard: Where the person has been at the church for more than 6 months but less than two years, comments from at least two referees must be undertaken by telephone or in person. Accepting letters of reference is not advised. Referees should include a children’s worker supervisor (from the candidate’s most recent place of fellowship or applicable children’s employer), and should be a person who has directly observed the candidate’s work with children or has observed their conduct around children.

• WHERE appropriate, discuss the assessment outcome with others who may be able to meaningfully contribute to the assessment of the candidate’s suitability.

• IF suitable sign the *Agreement for Assessment* form as authorization that candidate induction may commence.

• Advise the Department Leader and retain the *Agreement for Assessment* form in the Child Safe Environment folder.

• IF NOT suitable, advise the candidate of the outcome and the reasons for the decision.

1.4 Commence candidate induction and training

Dep’t Leader Upon advice that candidate assessment may continue:

• Advise the candidate that approval to proceed has been given but that final acceptance is dependent on a satisfactory Working With Children’s Check.

• In this regard: *(In most States)* Parents helping as a volunteer assistant in an activity where their child is involved and persons under the age of 18 years do not require a Working With Children’s Check.

• Explain (again) to the candidate the Children’s Workers’ Code of Behaviour

• Have the candidate sign and date two copies of the Children’s Workers’ Code of Behaviour and witness both copies. (One copy is for their retention and one copy is for church records).

• Ask the candidate to obtain a Working With Children’s Check, the result of which is to be forwarded to the Assessment Authority.

• Prepare an *Induction & Training Log* for the candidate and use the log to record:

– the date on which the Children’s Workers’ Code of Behaviour was explained

– that the Child Safe Environment Policy was explained

– any specific procedures which constitute part of the person’s responsibilities

1.5 Approve the candidate for duty as a children’s worker

Assessment

Authority Upon receipt of a satisfactory Working With Children’s Check:

• Note on the candidate’s *Agreement for Assessment* form that they are approved for duty as a children’s worker.

• Advise the Department Leader that the person may now provide assistance.

• Retain the Working With Children’s Check in the Child Safe Environment folder.

Persons who have convictions relating to violent or sexually related offences are not suitable to working with children.

2.0 Volunteer Assistant

Although volunteer assistants provide only minimal and irregular participation in the conduct of, or supervision of, a children’s activity, it is appropriate that they be aware of their obligations in regard to their role.

2.1 Induction of a Volunteer Assistant

Children’s Worker When being assisted by a volunteer assistant, prior to them providing assistance, advise the volunteer assistant that:

• They are not to be alone with a child except where that child is a family member or close relative.

• They are to remain within the sight and supervision of an authorized children’s worker.

**Agreement for Assessment**

*This form acts as record of the candidate assessment process. In the first instance it is to be filled out by the candidate. It is then to be   
completed by the Assessment Authority as each stage of candidate assessment is completed.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidate Details** | | |
| Name |  | Date of Birth |
| Address |  | Phone/Mobile |
| E-mail |  | At this church since |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Referee 1** | **Referee 2** |
| Name | Name |
| Phone | Phone |
| Mobile | Mobile |
| Address | Address |
| Nature of relationship | Nature of relationship |
| Period: to | Period: to |
| Type of work | Type of work |

|  |
| --- |
| **Parental or Guardian Endorsement** |
| Parental or guardian endorsement is required if the applicant is less than 18 years old:   * I have read and accept the terms of the Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour. * I understand that working with children will require my child to participate in training and at times also require refresher or further training. * I accept the applicability of this Code as a suitable and necessary instruction for my child’s behaviour whilst acting in a leadership role with the church. * I approve their participation as a youth/children’s worker within the church’s leadership structure.  Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: |

|  |
| --- |
| **Applicant Declaration** |
| * I understand that the assessment of my suitability for work with children will require me to obtain a working with children police check. * I understand that working with children will require my participation in induction training as to my responsibilities and will also require refresher or further training. * I have read and accept the Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour  Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidate Approval** | | | |
| Declaration(s) signed | Referee Checks satisfactory | Candidate advised | Induction Approved |
| Working With Children OK | Signed Code of Behaviour noted | Candidate Approved / Not Approved  / / | |
| **Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour**  *In conformance with the church’s policy goal of a child safe environment, this code sets down those behaviours to which workers and volunteers are bound so as to preserve the safekeeping of children in the church’s care. Moreover adherence to these behaviours will serve workers and volunteers by protecting them from accusation of inappropriate conduct.*  As a worker or volunteer-assistant with this church I acknowledge that I am not permitted   * to be alone with a child at any time, * to visit, pray with or counsel children without there being another adult present, * to make contact with a child which would in any way be construed or interpreted as having sexual overtones, * to associate with a child in any way which fosters favouritism or constitutes seeming exclusivity or privilege in relationship, * to provide gifts or inappropriate attention to a child as may create an impression of favouritism or as may render the child susceptible to a sense of inordinate gratitude or obligation toward me, * to have contact with children outside of the church’s programs, * to use language or behaviour towards children that is coarse, inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate, * to engage with children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, * to invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger, * to use computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media inappropriately, and never for the purpose of exploiting or harassing a child, * to use physical punishment on children, * to initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as assisting in toileting or ablution tasks, * to hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.   As a worker or volunteer-assistant with this church I acknowledge that I share the church’s commitment to the reporting of abuse, not only for matters alleged to have occurred while a child is in our direct care but where there is reasonable suspicion of abuse as may be occurring outside the church. As such I will:   * immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse, * immediately report observed breaches of this code or any non-compliance with documented procedures, * immediately disclose all charges, convictions or other offences which may relate to child exploitation or abuse, whether those matters have occurred before or during my association with the church, and * seek to ensure that there is supervision as facilitates conduct consistent with this code, of visitors (including contractors) who are involved in, or are in the proximity of, children’s activities.   I acknowledge that this code applies to my engagement with all children regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability or other status.  Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  (please print)  Witnessed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  (please print) | | | |

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| --- |
| **Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour — Camps, Activities & Excursions**  *Recognizing that a child-safe environment pertains both to the prevention of abuse and to the safe conduct of activities, this code sets down those behaviours to which workers and volunteers are bound so as to preserve the safekeeping of children whilst involved in camps, excursions or activities.*  **Regarding accommodation & ablutions**  As a worker or volunteer-assistant who is engaged in, or who is supervising, church activities where excursions or overnight camps are involved, I acknowledge that in regard to accommodation and ablution arrangements, I am not permitted:   * to share accommodation or ablution facilities with any child unless I am the parent or legal guardian of that child, * to sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must ensure that there is another adult is present if possible, * to allow children other children’s workers or leaders to share a bed with another person (child or adult) unless the persons seeking to share a bed are a married couple, * to allow persons to shower together at any time, * to allow a child to enter a public toilet unattended, * to consume alcohol or illegal drugs nor allow alcohol or illegal drugs to be consumed, and if taking prescription drugs which may impair my ability to perform my role effectively, to advise a senior leader prior to becoming engaged in the activity.   **Regarding the safety of activities undertaken**  As a worker or volunteer-assistant who is engaged in, or who is supervising children engaged in, church activities, I acknowledge that I must:   * ensure that activities involving a degree of risk such as; boating, abseiling, rock climbing or aquatic activities (including sailing, scuba diving or canoeing), are under the direct supervision of qualified persons, * ensure that activities involving physical contact such as; games or sports are conducted in a manner that workers and children respect a child’s feelings and privacy, * where activities require the use of change rooms, undressing, dressing or the changing of clothes (e.g. change rooms at a swimming pool or backstage activities as part of drama presentations), ensure that adults and children respect each other’s privacy, * ensure that no staff member is alone in a room with a child while either person is changing, and * if an activity is running overtime, ensure that parents are contacted to advise them of the delay and, where possible, of a new completion time.   **Regarding the transport of children**  When transporting children I will endeavour, wherever possible, never to be alone with a child in a car and if this is not practical, to take the child/children directly to and from arranged venues, and not spontaneously detour or make additional arrangements.  I acknowledge that this code is additional to those undertakings which I have made in Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour.  Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  (please print)  Witnessed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  (please print) |

Reporting Abuse

Purpose

This procedure provides guidance on the requirements for reporting abuse. The procedure presents requirements for voluntary reporting and mandatory reporting.

Definitions

***abuse*** — the misuse of power by an abuser, since children are particularly susceptible to abuse by those in authority, such as parent, teacher, caregiver or leaders

***child*** — a person who is under the age 18 years or as defined by state legislation

***child protective services*** — the nominated government authority responsible for the investigation of abuse allegation and for implementation of remedy for the child’s welfare

***grooming*** — the establishment of a friendship with a potential victim as predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with the child

***sexual abuse*** — abuse where a child becomes the object of or means for sexual gratification by the abuser

Process

1.0 Observation of, or a Victim’s Report that, abuse has occurred

Indication of abuse may occur either because a victim has disclosed information which indicates that abuse has occurred or because a person has observed an incident of abuse. Abuse may be of one or both of two kinds:

• abuse as relates to the misuse of power or influence in a way which causes a child to experience emotional or physical trauma, or

• sexual abuse as relates to child becoming the object of sexual gratification by another person, whether an authority figure or another child.

All States require that all incidences of sexual abuse be reported.

Person Reporting Where there has been observation of or a report of sexual abuse, the person observing or being advised of the abuse must make note of:

• the date and time that the observation or advice of abuse was observed or received,

• if pertaining to a report of abuse, the date and time that the abuse is said to have occurred,

• the child’s name,

• the child’s present age,

• the name of the person observed to be, or thought to be, responsible for the abuse,

• the relationship of the alleged abuser to the victim and if a church member the office or role which they hold/held at the time of the abuse,

• indication of what was said to have occurred or observed to have occurred,

• the means by which the disclosure of the abuse came about,

• the date and time on which the account of abuse has been prepared.

If the report is based on a victim’s disclosure of what is said to have occurred, it is important not to press the victim for any more details than those which have arisen in the course of their initial disclosure. It is also essential to record as accurately as possible the facts as relayed, without any tendency to amplify or expand upon what was said.

Where possible the record of abuse should be noted on an *Abuse Incident Report* and if recording the matter on an *Abuse Incident Report* indicate, in addition to those matters specified above:

• whether or not child protective services have been notified,

• the name of the person to whom the report was tendered,

• the date the *Abuse Incident Report* was handed over.

2.0 Mandatory reporting

Where the reported or observed matter involves sexual abuse it must be reported to the police or child protective services. Other forms of abuse, such as emotional abuse, physical abuse or neglect, ought to be reported only in cases of significant abuse. The duty to report does not apply to any and all abuse or neglect, but only to cases which are of sufficiently significant harm to the child’s health or wellbeing to warrant intervention. Notwithstanding child welfare agencies may be contacted when lesser forms of abuse or neglect are reported or observed.

In some states grooming (predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child) is a criminal offence and therefore should also be reported.

3.0 Dealing with a report of abuse

The procedure which follows a report of abuse varies according to whether a) the alleged abuser is a church member, or b) a person external to the church.

a. Where the abuse involves accusation against a church member:

• where the matter involves sexual abuse, ensure that the police or child protective services have been informed,

• take action to ensure that the accused person is prevented from further contact with children until the report is investigated,

• if the accused is a pastor, elder, senior leader, church worker or volunteer,

– take action to ensure that the accused person is stood down from ministry until the report is investigated,

– advise a member of the BMi National Leadership Team,

• obtain further guidance from professional agencies experienced in matters of reported abuse, in particular the church insurer should be contacted as soon as possible,

• refrain from input to the victim or the accused in the form of pastoral care or counselling until the reported matter has been assessed by competent authorities and indication given that contact of such a nature is acceptable.

B. Where the abuse involves accusation against a person other than a church member:

• where the matter involves sexual abuse, ensure that the police or child protective services have been informed,

• where the matter is of a serious nature but is not an emergency, contact child protection,

• obtain further guidance from professional agencies experienced in matters of reported abuse, in particular the church insurer should be contacted as soon as possible,

• refrain from input to the victim or the accused in the form of pastoral care or counselling until the reported matter has been assessed by competent authorities and indication given that contact of such a nature is acceptable.

Notwithstanding the disclosures required as part of these procedural requirements, both the child and the alleged abuser have rights and the need of protection during due process. Therefore the privacy of an alleged offender will be maintained during the investigation process.

A pastor, elder, senior leader or church members found guilty of abuse will be disciplined in a manner set down in the church’s constitution.

4.0 Making a report for Child Services

A report to Child Services should be considered if, after taking into account all of the available information, the child is in need of protection because:

• there is harm or risk of harm which is of a serious impact to the child’s immediate safety and/or stability

• the harm or risk of harm is persistent and entrenched

• the child’s parents or guardians are known to be unwilling to protect the child or young person from harm.

If making a report to Child Services the following information is likely to be sought:

• Details — the child’s name, age and address

• Indicators of harm — the reason for believing that the child’s injury or behaviour is the result of abuse

• Safety Assessment — an assessment of the extent of immediate danger to the child (which may mean a request for information as to the whereabouts of the alleged abuser)

• Description — a description of the injury or behaviour observed

• Child’s Whereabouts — the current whereabouts of the child or young person

• Other Services — knowledge, if any, of other community services involved with the family

• Cultural Characteristics — any specific cultural or other details which will be useful in providing help to the child such as ethnicity or need for an interpreter.

**Child Abuse Report**

*All incidents of child abuse or suspected child abuse (as defined by legislation of within the church’s procedures) or suspected child abuse, including those   
which involve helpers, leaders, church members or eldership, are to be recorded and communicated to the Ministry Leader who will relay the information   
to the pastor and eldership as soon as possible. This form is to be completed by the person who is reporting the matter.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Record of Report** | | |
| Name of Person providing the report**:** |  | |
| Name of Person receiving the report**:** |  | |
| Date Report made: |  | |
| **Details of Alleged Incident** | | |
| Child’s Name: |  | |
| Date & Time of alleged abuse: |  | |
| Age of Child at time of alleged abuse: |  | |
| Location where alleged abuse occurred, or is said to have occurred: |  | |
| Name of person alleged to have performed the abuse: |  | |
| Church position held by the person involved in the alleged abuse: |  | |
| **Record of What Happened or Is Said to Have Happened** | | |
| Record what has been observed or what information has been received by whom, when, where and who else may have been  involved or effected. | | |
| How did the person making the report become aware of the matter? | | |
| **Declarations** | | |
| I, the person making this report, declare that to the best of my knowledge the details as reported are correct and true. | | I, the person receiving this report, declare that in receiving this report, I have:   * Advised Protective Services Yes / No * On / / referred the report to an appropriate pastor/elder being:   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| / / | | / / |
| Other comments: | | |

**Details to Supply to Child Protection Services**

*The Child Protection worker will ask the Notifier for certain information. This will most probably include the following.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Notes** |
| **Child’s Details:** | Name |
| Age |
| Address |
| **Indicators of harm:**  *(The reason for believing that a child’s injury or behaviour is the result of abuse or neglect)* |  |
| **Description:**  *(Description of the injury or behaviour observed)* |  |
| **Reason for Reporting:**  *(The reason that the call is being made at this time)* |  |
| **Safety Assessment:**  *(An assessment of the extent of immediate danger to the child. This may also involve indicating the where-abouts of the alleged abuser.)* |  |
| **The Child’s current whereabouts:**  *(The known present location of the child or young person)* |  |
| **Family information:**  *(Any other information about the family)* |  |
| **Other services:**  *(Indication of what other community services or government assistance the family may be receiving)* |  |
| **Cultural characteristics:**  *(Any specific cultural or ethnic details which may be of assistance to the child. e.g. disability needs, Aboriginality, the likelihood of benefit in having an interpreter present)* |  |

Training

Purpose

A child safe environment is the consequence of an appropriate culture and effective systems. Accordingly training, and ongoing training, are important processes for establishing and maintaining attitudes, knowledge and skills suited to such an environment. This procedure, and in particular the *Induction & Training Log* to which it refers, seek to ensure that training for workers and volunteers who are to be involved in the supervision of children is planned, conducted and evidenced as having been undertaken.

Definitions

***trainer*** — the person or organisation who conducts the training

***training authority*** — the person authorized to identify training needs, plan for how training needs will be met and to maintain records which indicate that planned training has been undertaken

***training element*** — the policy, procedure, activity, attitude or skill which is to be the focus for training

In this procedure, for some training elements, the training authority and the trainer may be the same person.

Process

There are four steps relevant to the provision of effective training. These are:

1. define the training need,

2. plan for the form and content of the training which will meet that need,

3. conduct the training, and

4. evaluate the training outcome to determine whether the training has been effective.

The steps presented in this procedure invite the Training Authority and trainers to address all four steps but do not stipulate records for each step. The only record which is strictly specified by this procedure is that of the *Induction & Training Log*.

1.0 Define the training need

Training Authority Prior to conducting the training and at least once every 12 months:

• Look at the policy, procedures, forms and equipment applicable to the training element where training is to occur and establish what (if anything) has changed since the last time training was conducted.

• Obtain performance feedback from Department Leaders, from internal audits (if there are any) or from relevant records to identify any attitudes, skills or knowledge which have been lacking.

• Consult rosters or Department Leaders to identify the persons who are currently associated with the training element under consideration.

In this regard: Particular attention should be paid to new workers whose knowledge of the training element may have been achieved by in-situ training. It should also be noted that persons other than those directly involved in children’s work may require training. For example all leaders, regardless of department should most probably receive training (or refresher training) in the training elements of child-safe policy and reporting.

• On the basis of findings determine the necessary training content and method of training delivery for the training element.

2.0 Prepare a training plan

Training Authority Prepare or update the *Induction & Training Log* for each person found to be requiring training for that training element and in particular:

• Include the training element on the person’s *Induction & Training Log* and record, as month and year, the planned date (Date Due:) for the training.

• WHERE the *Induction & Training Log* includes a person who has left the church or has ceased to be an ongoing participant in children’s work, indicate on the *Induction & Training Log*:

– that the person is no longer involved in children’s work,

– the reason for them being deemed no longer involved in children’s work,

– sign and date the record, and

– archive the person’s Induction & Training Log

NOTE: This record is subject to retention should there be a complaint made against the person or the church in later years.

• Decide on a suitable method of training delivery, which can mean in-house training but in some instances may mean the use of external providers or authorities.

3.0 Deliver the requisite training

Trainer At the time specified in the *Induction & Training Log*:

• Having regard to the Training Authority’s guidance as to training content, provide the training to trainee(s) as required.

• Use the Induction & Training Log to:

– record the date that the training was conducted (Date Done:),

– initial/sign, as trainer that the training was done (Trainer:),

– have the trainee initial/sign that they have received the training (Trainee:).

4.0 Schedule future training

Training Authority Upon advice that training has been conducted:

• Review the *Induction & Training Log* to ensure that the record of training is complete and correct.

• Update the *Induction & Training Log* to indicate a suitable due date (Date Due:) for retraining.

• Locate the *Induction & Training Log* in the Child Safe Environment folder.

**Induction & Training Log**

**Name:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training Element** | **Suggested Frequency** | **Date Done & Initials** | **Date Done & Initials** | **Date Done & Initials** | **Date Done & Initials** |
| Working With Children Check | Each 3 years | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
| Child Safe Environment Policy | Each 12 months | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
| Code of Behaviour | Each 12 months | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
| Incident Reporting Process | Each 12 months | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
| Food Handling |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
| How to give Epipen |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
|  |  | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |

**Induction & Training Log**

**Name:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training Element** | **Suggested Frequency** | **Date Done & Initials** | **Date Done & Initials** | **Date Done & Initials** | **Date Done & Initials** |
|  |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
|  |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
|  |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
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|  |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
|  |  | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date Due: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |
|  |  | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: | Date: Done:  Trainer:  Trainee: |

Audit and Review

Purpose

These policies, procedures and records represent the planned arrangements for ensuring that the church’s culture and activities constitute a child safe environment. Whilst it is good to set down what makes for the planned arrangements, it is also necessary to periodically verify that the planned arrangements and actual performance are the same thing. This procedure, and in particular the *Audit Checklist(s)* to which it refers seeks to ensure that a) what is planned to happen is happening and b) the planned arrangements are effective.

Definitions

***audit*** — a systematic and independent examination to determine whether activities comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively

***auditor*** — the person who conducts the audit and who is independent of the function or process being audited

***auditee*** — the person in the area where the audit is being conducted

***corrective action*** — action taken to remedy the root causes of conditions or outcomes adverse to intended policy goals or procedural objectives

***non-conformance*** — the non-fulfilment of a policy goal or procedure requirement

***objective evidence*** — qualitative or quantitative information, records or statement of facts pertaining to the implementation of policies or procedures which is based on observation and which can be verified

Process

In broad the audit process goes through four phases. These are:

1. schedule those activities or procedures which are to be audited,

2. conduct the audit on or near the scheduled date, being sure to record that objective evidence:

– which indicates that the required process ***is*** in place, or

– which indicates that the required process ***is not*** in place,

3. identify any non-conformances or opportunities for improvement,

4. update the schedule to indicate that the audit has been done and plan when the activity or process will next be audited.

1.0 Audit

1.1 Pre-audit

System Authority Prior to allocating an auditor to the task of auditing:

• Identify the activities or procedures which need to be audited as will give assurance that the church’s commitment to a child safe environment is in place.

NOTE: Such activities will include this audit procedure, which itself also needs to be audited.

• Using the *Audit Schedule* form, schedule these activities for audit and with a frequency which ensures that all activities are audited at least once each 12 months.

• At a suitable time prior to the scheduled audit date, choose a person, who is not directly involved in the function procedure or activity being audited, to conduct the audit.

Auditor As preparation for the audit:

• Read any documentation or procedures which indicate what are the planned arrangements for the activity being audited, so as to know what to expect when you conduct the audit. If necessary visit the area being audited prior to conducting the audit so that you have a clear understanding as to what happens.

• Access any previous audits concerning the area to be audited so as to find out what matters were a problem (if any) in the last audit or what aspects of the process may or may not have been covered fully in the last audit.

• Find out what corrective actions were taken (if any) as a result of the last audit so that you can establish whether the corrective action taken was or continues to be effective.

• Let the people involved in the process to be assessed know that you will be visiting them for that purpose. Set a mutually acceptable time for the audit. (Audits are not meant as a secret raid or an occasion to spy on things.)

1.2 Conducting the audit

Auditor At the agreed time:

• Visit the area and people where the nominated activity or procedure is taking place.

• Gather information and/or make observation which indicates that activities and/or behaviours are consistent with the requirements of the planned arrangements. Clarify any seeming or apparent discrepancies with the people from the area being audited.

• Where there are records which indicate that the planned arrangements have been adhered to, locate and review those records.

• Record or note on the *Audit Checklist* what you found as indicates:

– that the required process ***is*** in place, or

– that the required process ***is not*** in place.

• Record any opportunities for improvement (i.e. ideas or suggestions which might make the achievement of a child safe environment more robust or the implementation of planned arrangements more efficient).

• Thank the auditee for their assistance and co-operation.

1.3 After the audit

System Authority Once the audit has been conducted:

• Go over the *Audit Checklist* with auditor, noting any adverse findings.

• IF required, initiate corrective action, including the revision of documentation or forms, as will resolve any deficiencies.

• Update the *Audit Schedule* to indicate when the audit was done and to indicate when the next audit should be done.

• File and retain the *Audit Checklist*.

2.0 Review

Audits are beneficial in that they reflect whether the existing arrangements are being implemented as planned, however there are times when the maintenance of a child safe environment should be subject to assessment at a higher level than that of activity. For this reason it is necessary to review the church’s overall position (i.e. ministry context) and policy in respect of those factors which may have changed to the extent that a revision to policy or procedures is required. As such inputs to review will include:

1. changes to the activities, programmes or ministry focus of the church

2. changes in the demographic or ethnic composition of the church

3. changes in the community’s expectations as to ‘best practice’ in regard to the implementation and maintenance of a child safe environment

4. changes in State or Federal government legislation

5. the results of internal audits

6. the outcomes of corrective actions.

Reviews should be undertaken by those who have overall leadership responsibility for the governance, direction and spiritual health of the church. Thus reviews are to be a part of eldership or board meetings.

**Audit Checksheet**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Matter for Verification** | **Assessment & Related Evidence** |
| *Have the matters identified in the previous audit been addressed?* | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
| General comment:  Auditor’s Name: Signature: Date of Audit: | |

**Audit Checksheet — Physical Environment**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Matter for Verification** | **Assessment & Related Evidence** |
| *Have the matters identified in the previous audit been addressed?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there opportunity for a child to be isolated within the programme/premises or activity?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there likelihood of unsupervised contact with another adult, such as when the children’s activity is finished or when adults access other parts of the building?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Are custodial arrangements clearly defined and adhered to? Are children picked up by persons known to be approved for that responsibility?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there likelihood of unsupervised access to multi-media, social media or computer facilities?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Do children’s workers need to be wearing clothing or insignia which identify them as such?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Does the physical environment pose risks in terms of too many access points, unsafe facilities or hazards?* | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
| General comment:  Auditor’s Name: Signature: Date of Audit: | |

**Audit Checksheet — Recruitment**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Matter for Verification** | **Assessment & Related Evidence** |
| *Have the matters identified in the previous audit been addressed?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Do all staff & leaders have an appropriate working with children check?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Are working with children checks current?*  *Can the government assessment be found?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Have all workers signed the “Children’s Worker Code of Behaviour”?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there evidence of training for workers?*  *Does it seem that training has been effective?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there an Induction & Training Log which is current and which covers all relevant staff?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Has there been training of new staff and/or revision training for existing staff?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Do staff and volunteers behave in a manner which ensures safety for the children?* | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
| General comment:  Auditor’s Name: Signature: Date of Audit: | |

**Audit Checksheet — Records**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Matter for Verification** | **Assessment & Related Evidence** |
| *Have the matters identified in the previous audit been addressed?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there a Records Control Sheet which indicates the records and their location?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Are records safely stored and legible?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Are there records which should be included in the Records Control Sheet and aren’t?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Are records traceable in that they clearly indicate the name of the person that prepared them?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Are records secured in a manner which ensures privacy of content, such personal details or information as to matters of abuse?* | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
| General comment:  Auditor’s Name: Signature: Date of Audit: | |

**Audit Checksheet — Auditing**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Matter for Verification** | **Assessment & Related Evidence** |
| *Have the matters identified in the previous audit been addressed?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Is there an audit schedule and have the audits been done as required by the schedule?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Have the audits been done by a person not directly involved in the process?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Do audit reports indicate the evidence which lead to the assessment of OK or NOT OK?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Do audit reports include suggestions for improvement or better/easier ways of doing things?* | OK / NOT OK |
| *Do audits result in corrective actions?* | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
|  | OK / NOT OK |
| General comment:  Auditor’s Name: Signature: Date of Audit: | |

**Audit Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity/Procedure** | **Year:** | | **Year:** | | **Year:** | |
|  | Due: | Done: | Due: | Done: | Due: | Done: |
|  | Due: | Done: | Due: | Done: | Due: | Done: |
|  | Due: | Done: | Due: | Done: | Due: | Done: |
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Records

Purpose

Records are the means by which an organisation can demonstrate that it has effectively implemented policies and procedures appropriate to a child safe environment. Claims of abuse by an organisation or persons within its authority structures can arise many years after an alleged event, therefore it is likely that records will need to be kept for substantial periods of time. This procedure and in particular the *Records Control Sheet* to which it refers provide indication of which records are to be retained, their location, the duration of their retention and (if appropriate) their method of disposal.

Definitions

***record*** *—* the objective evidence which indicates that the steps, authorities or decisions specified by a policy or within a procedure, have been performed

***Records Authority*** — the person whose task it is to determine the means, location, duration for retention and method of disposal for a record

***secure storage*** — a level of storage which prevents indiscriminate, unintended or unwitting disclosure of the information in the record, as may or may not necessitate lockable cabinets as a form of storage

Process

When it comes to the verification that an activity or policy has been effectively implemented it may be said:

• if it’s not written down it never happened, and

• for every procedure; a record and for every record; a procedure.

The steps presented in this procedure provide guidance on how to create a *Records Control Sheet* which can act as a record of those records which need to be managed and maintained.

1.0 Prepare and maintain the *Records Control Sheet*

Records Authority As part of setting up the defining policies and procedures which will ensure a child safe environment:

• Ensure that those procedures or activities which require evidence of having been implemented have a record which can provide evidence that the step is being performed.

• Write the name of the record on the *Records Control Sheet* and decide:

– where the record will be kept (in the immediate to short term)

– how the record is to be filed (e.g. by date, alphabetically or in numeric order etc.)

– the duration for which the record is to be retained

– whether the record should be subject to secure storage

– where the record will be archived (when kept beyond the immediate to short term)

– how the record is to be disposed of (if not being archived).

• Ensure that the *Records Control Sheet* is retained in a manner which ensures that it can be referred to or adjusted where new records are found to be necessary.

**Records Control Sheet**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Record** | **Where Kept** | **How indexed** | **Duration of Retention** | **Access/Security** | **Where/How archived** | **Method of Disposal** |
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