



Section 2: Safe Church Governance

Adopted by MBC Leadership Council on: 27/05/20
Ratified by the Church Membership on [date]

- i) Safe Church Team Role Description
- ii) Work Health and Safety Team Role Description
- iii) Model Communication to Third Parties
- iv) Model Communication to Affiliated Entities

1. Safe Church Team Role Description

A person appointed as a Safe Church Team Member should be a mature Christian who has been recruited according to the Procedure for Staff and Volunteers, have a current WWCC clearance and have attended a Creating Safe Spaces workshop in the last 3 years. Close and direct liaison with the Senior Pastor and an ability to maintain confidentiality are essential. The Chairperson of the Safe Church Team will be a position appointed by the Church by way of vote.

The responsibilities of the Safe Church Team include:

- to provide oversight of the Church's Safe Church program, including *Safe Church Policy and Procedures*.
- to provide oversight of the management of Safe Church/Child Protection concerns/reports.

Specific Roles:

1. Oversight of Safe Church Policy and Procedures

- Preparing Safe Church Policy and Procedures for the Church in line with legal responsibilities and Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT recommendations
- Implementing *Safe Church Policy* and procedures
- Promoting awareness of and adherence to *Safe Church Policy and Procedures* (including ensuring that staff and volunteers have completed National Police Checks, WWCC clearances and Creating Safe Spaces training)
- Maintaining records related to *Safe Church Policy and Procedures*
- Preparing regular reports for church leadership meetings
- Reviewing *Safe Church Policy and Procedures* annually or more often if required due to changing legislation
- Receiving feedback from church leaders, children, families and communities regarding *Safe Church Policy and Procedures*
- Overseeing the completion of the 'Safe Church Health Check' every 3 years

2. Management of Safe Church/Child Protection Concerns and Incidents

- Receiving reports of child protection concerns from church staff, volunteers, ministry leaders and/or church members
- Providing support in following the procedure for responding to child protection concerns and incidents
- Contacting the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT Ministry Standards Manager to discuss action plan/appropriate action
- Making any reporting calls (to Police, Government agencies) as required
- Ensuring reporting in line with relevant Reportable Conduct Legislation
- Ensuring child protection concerns and subsequent responses have been appropriately documented
- Ensuring adequate follow-up and pastoral care of all persons involved in a child protection concern/incident
- Assisting with legal, procedural and risk management issues related to a child protection concern/incident
- Keeping records, filing complaints and reports of investigations in a secure file, in accordance with the record-keeping procedure

2. Work Health and Safety Team Role Description

To fulfil their duty of care, MBC Leadership Council will appoint a Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Coordinator who will also be a member of the Safe Church Team and attend Safe Church Team Meetings to report on WHS matters. The WHS Coordinator and all paid pastoral staff should complete WHS training.

The WHS Coordinator should undertake the free online WHS training offered by Baptist Insurance Services and is encouraged to make use of the many other resources provided by Baptist Insurance Services on their website to assist local churches in general risk management and church specific risk management.

The responsibility of the Work Health and Safety Coordinator includes:

- To provide oversight of the Church's Work Health and Safety program, including policy and procedures

Specific Roles:

- Assist the Safe Church Team in developing and implementing appropriate WHS policy and procedures including the following:
 - Evacuation and Emergency responses
 - Safe Manual Handling, Visual and Auditory Care
 - Risk Assessments
- Address health and safety concerns within one month of the concern being raised.
- Report to senior leadership team meetings regarding Work Health and Safety and provide reports as appropriate
- Ensure Risk Assessments are completed for all church ministry programs (both onsite and offsite)
- Ensure incident report documents are completed and stored, and that serious or dangerous incidents are notified to Baptist Insurance Services (or relevant insurer) as required.
- Undertake a safe environment audit of the Church site at least once a year, or more regularly for high-risk areas, ensuring that any concerns are appropriately rectified.
- Any other tasks as advised in the Baptist Insurance Services Risk Management Guide for Churches

3. Model Communication to Third Parties.

Model letter to third party entities

Name
Organisation
Address
State Postcode

By email [email address]

Confidential

Dear [Salutation]

Child Safe Standards for Child Safe Organisations: Third Parties

Menai Baptist Church is committed to the safety of all people who attend its activities and services, particularly children. We are interested in the approach to child safety taken by any entity that uses our premises or facilities, including any entity licensed to use these premises and facilities.

The purpose of this letter is to seek your commitment to uphold the Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The NSW Office of Children's Guardian (NSWOCG) has introduced legislation to make the Child Safe Standards mandatory for organisations that provide services to children. NSWOCG has indicated that compliance with the Child Safe Standards will be mandatory for any organisation where at least one worker is required to hold a Working with Children Check.

Please confirm your organisation's commitment to upholding the Child Safe Standards by completing the declaration attached. Please note that this will now be an essential term of all licence or lease agreements regarding the use of MBC property and facilities.

We are available to discuss the implementation of the Child Safe Standards with you. We are thankful for the services you provide to the community and we look forward to connections between the Church and your organisation.

Yours faithfully

[signatory]

Declaration of Commitment to Child Safe Standards

[Name of entity] commits to uphold the following Child Safe Standards*:

1. Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
3. Families and communities are informed and involved
4. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken into account
5. People working with children are suitable and supported
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child-focused
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
10. Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe.

[Name of entity] understands and accepts that compliance with the Child Safe Standards is a condition of any lease or licence to occupy or otherwise use any property or facilities of [name of Church].

Signed: _____
Name: _____
Position: _____
Date: _____

* For more information about the Child Safe Standards please see <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/become-a-child-safe-organisation/child-safe-standards>.

4. Model Letter to Affiliated Entities

Name
Organisation
Address
State Postcode

By email

Confidential

Dear [Salutation]

Compliance with legislated child safe standards: Affiliated entities

Menai Baptist Church is committed to the safety of all people who attend its activities and services, particularly children.

As an affiliated entity, we are interested in the approach you take to matters relating to child safety. The purpose of this letter is to draw your attention to:

- the enclosed recommendation 16.35 made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission);
- the enclosed Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission; and
- the proposal by the New South Wales Office of Children's Guardian (NSWOCG) to legislate the Child Safe Standards for all entities that provide services to children.

We ask that [name of entity] reports to Menai Baptist Church on an annual basis regarding their compliance with the Child Safe Standards. This report should detail how the entity is complying with each of the Child Safe Standards. Where there are existing obligations to report to a Government authority about compliance with the Child Safe Standards, it will be sufficient to share this report with the Church.

We hope that shared reporting and responsibility for child safety will demonstrate to members of the Church, the community, and the broader public that we are united in our efforts to create safe spaces for everyone, and particularly children.

Please do not hesitate to contact [insert contact] if you would like to discuss any aspect of this request.

(Royal Commission) Recommendation 16.35

Religious institutions in highly regulated sectors, such as schools and out-of-home care service providers, should report their compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards, as monitored by the relevant sector regulator, to the religious organisation to which they are affiliated.

Yours faithfully
[insert signatory name]