

# CHILD-SAFE CHILD-FRIENDLY POLICY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST MISSION, TOOWOOMBA

<b>Introduction</b>	<p>This policy focuses on the participation of children and young people in the life of St John the Baptist Mission, Toowoomba, and on making St John the Baptist Mission a safe environment for them.</p> <p>It supplements the <i>Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour</i> and the <i>Child-Safe, Child-Friendly Policy</i> of the Australian and New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia and provides guidance to St John the Baptist Mission clergy, officials, volunteers, members and all to all those involved in the parish life of St John the Baptist Mission.</p>
<b>Definitions</b>	<p>For the purposes of this policy, 'children' are aged 0-12, and 'young people' are aged 13-18.</p> <p><b>Child-safe</b> means taking active measures to keep children and young people safe from physical, sexual or emotional abuse.</p> <p><b>Child-friendly</b> means creating a trusting environment that values, respects and welcomes children and young people. This means children and young people feel confident to raise any problem or concern and know they will be listened to. Experience shows that abuse most often occurs when children lack that confidence and trust.</p> <p>All references to the 'parish' and 'parish life' are to St John the Baptist Mission, Toowoomba, and its activities. References to 'parish church' or 'parish grounds' refer to the premises on which we conduct advertised liturgical services. References to 'the Diocese' and to 'Diocesan policy' are to the Australian and New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia and its policies.</p>
<b>The participation of children and young people in parish life</b>	<p>Our parish wants children and young people involved in the life of the parish to have a safe, happy and spiritually beneficial experience.</p> <p>To this end, we welcome the appropriate participation of children and young people in parish life, and will plan ways that they can be involved.</p> <p>We will take into account the views of children and young people when making decisions that affect them.</p>
<b>A positive environment for children and young people</b>	<p>We will ensure that the parish church and grounds are places in which sources of physical harm to all are eliminated or positively managed.</p> <p>We will ensure that it is understood that in all parish and Diocesan activities inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people is unacceptable. This includes the conduct of children and young people towards one another.</p>
<b>Supporting our people who work with children and young people</b>	<p>We promote respect, fairness and consideration for parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, and volunteers who work with children.</p> <p>All new parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, volunteers, and members will receive a copy of this policy, the <i>Diocesan Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour</i> and <i>Code of Conduct</i>.</p>
<b>Clergy and volunteers</b>	<p>Our parish is committed to ensuring that our clergy and our volunteers who work with children and young people are suitable to do so.</p> <p>To this end, we will comply with State law and with Diocesan policy concerning <i>Working with Children Checks</i> and <i>National Criminal History Checks</i>.</p>

<b>What is our parish policy?</b>	<p>Simply stated, our parish policy on working with children is that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) All clergy, choir conductors, and any other adults in positions of responsibility/power where children may be participants – must have current Blue Cards or equivalent working with children checks (e.g. if the person is a school teacher, their existing accreditation via the school system would suffice).</li> <li>b) Except in emergencies (e.g. where there is immediate risk of injury/risk of death), no one is permitted to work with children on their own. There must always be at least one other adult present, or the work with children must occur in plain sight or within easy public access of other adults (e.g. the confessional is easily visible by the congregation simply by taking a few steps forward, the Altar space is accessible by the warden and others who enter and leave at regular times during services, the kliros is easily accessible). It is not permissible to work one-on-one with a child in a private space at any time in our parish (unless that child is the worker's own child, sibling or ward).</li> <li>c) All parish councillors and workers within the parish have a responsibility to check on and ensure that anyone working with children in the parish are not placed in situations where this policy could be transgressed.</li> </ul>
<b>Dealing with complaints</b>	<p>Each year, on the advice of the Parish Council, the Rector will appoint one or two Child Safety Contact Persons to receive and manage any complaints that a child or young person is at risk or has been treated inappropriately.</p> <p>The Child Safety Contact Persons should be trusted parish members who have a demonstrated rapport with children and young people and who have agreed to accept to be Child Safety Contact Persons.</p> <p>Complaints will be managed in accordance with the <i>Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour</i>, with the parish Child Safety Contact Person[s] providing an intermediate step for dealing with complaints about harm or inappropriate behaviour towards children or young people. The parish priest must be immediately notified of the complaint.</p>
<b>Communication</b>	<p>This policy will be discussed with all new parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, volunteers, and parish members.</p> <p>A logo will be clearly displayed on parish newsletters that clearly communicates the fact that the parish has a child-safe child-friendly possible. Where practicable, this logo will be clearly displayed within the parish church or grounds.</p> <p>Copies of the Diocesan <i>Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour</i> and <i>Child-safe, Child-friendly Policy</i> will be readily available.</p> <p>We will hold information sessions for children and young people annually. These information sessions will be organised and facilitated by the Child Safety Contact Person[s].</p>
<b>Review</b>	<p>With the assistance of the Child Safety Contact Person[s], this policy will be reviewed by the Parish Council every two years. Review of the policy will take into account comments and suggestions from children and young people, parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, volunteers, and members, with a copy forwarded to the Diocesan office.</p>