

## Deep Creek Anglican Church – Child Safe Policy

**Purpose:** To outline the policy of the church for ensuring we are a Child Safe Organisation.

**Policy Effective:** 14 March 2019

**Policy Review:** 14 March 2021 (2 years)

At Deep Creek Anglican Church each staff member and member of the Church community is committed to living out our vision which is 'to build a community who live and love like Jesus, to bring those in East Doncaster and beyond into the new heaven and new earth'. In this context we are committed to respecting children and their right to a safe environment. Jesus demonstrated the valued place of children in the kingdom of God when he called for the little children to be brought to Him to be blessed. He rebuked the disciples who hindered the children's access to Him and stated that the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. The church should be a place where young people can come to know and experience the love of God through those who care for and work with them.

This policy has been developed and approved by the Parish Council to demonstrate the absolute commitment that the Deep Creek Anglican Church has towards the safety of children. This document outlines the policies and practices that have been developed and approved to keep all children safe from any harm including abuse.

### 1. Commitment to child safety

All children who attend Deep Creek Anglican Church have a right to feel and to be safe. We have a zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and can have fun.

### 2. Children's rights to safety and to participation

We respect and value all children and we work actively to listen to them and to empower them as members of our Church community. We make it clear to children that they should not feel unsafe when attending Deep Creek Anglican Church and we listen to and act on any concerns that children or their parents may express to us.

### 3. Valuing diversity

Our Church community is ethnically diverse and we welcome and encourage children of all cultural and family backgrounds to participate in our activities. We encourage children and their families of any cultural or linguistic background. We welcome children with a disability and their families in order to promote the child's and their participation in the life of the Church.

### 4. Recruiting staff and volunteers

Our organisational culture is one of child safety by which, through effective leadership and accountability, all people in positions of power or influence with children are properly screened, supervised and trained.

All persons working with children are required to have a current Working with Children card and police check. Reference checks are also conducted for those who move into the Church community and who seek to be part of leadership teams.

We also require that all members of the Parish Council and those who are on the church roster attend child safe training, have a Working with Children card and a Police Check to ensure that anyone that could be visibly seen to be in authority, even though not formally a leader, is screened as appropriate.

#### 5. Supporting Staff and volunteers

We provide appropriate information and training to our staff and volunteers on their commencement of duties and thereafter annually. We rely upon the “Duty of Care” handbook, published by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne which addresses issues of child safety and this constitutes our code of conduct. The handbook is available to all staff and volunteers and is also available in the foyer to the Church building. The handbook is also available online via <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au>

#### 6. Reporting child safety concerns or complaints

The process for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse is set out by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. All suspected child abuse must be reported to the child safe officer.

If any church worker believes on reasonable grounds that a child has suffered harm as a result of misconduct in connection to the church, the church worker must as soon as possible report the facts to the Office of Professional Standards. Details about making a complaint are set out in the booklet titled “Information for people thinking about making a complaint” published by the Diocese. This booklet is made available in the foyer of our Church building. Further information about making a complaint is available in the website for the Diocese – <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au>

All complaints about suspected child abuse must be referred directly to Victoria Police by anyone.

#### 7. Risk Management

We recognise the importance of risk management in minimising the potential of injury to children or the risk of child abuse or other harm. We use risk assessment and management to inform our policy, procedures and activities planning. In addition to our general occupational health and safety risk management, we actively manage risks specific to children including the risk of child abuse.

#### 8. Reviewing this policy

We will review this policy every two years and we shall seek the views of children, parents, staff and volunteers as part of the review.