

PIBC Safe Churches Policy

Overview-

Phillip Island Baptist Church (PIBC) is committed to protecting the safety of **all people** within its ministries, services, and events.

Our Policy has been developed to uphold this commitment to safeguard people, and to adhere to the national and local legislation.

All people, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, ability, and family/social background have equal rights to this protection.

All people (including children) have the right to be respected and valued as well as feel emotionally, physically, and spiritually safe at all times.

Content-

Our Child Protection Policy exists:

- To provide protection for all children, young people and vulnerable people who receive PIBC services.
- To provide all staff, leaders, and volunteers, with information regarding the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

PIBC believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to operating in a way that protects them.

Our Policy aims to:

- Minimise the risk of abuse, misconduct, and the misuse of positional power.
- Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and misconduct are handed comprehensively.
- Ensure that all leaders and ministries operate in a safe environment.
- Ensure that all people are respected and valued.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

PIBC is committed to ministering to children, young people, and adults, by providing a church environment that is physically, emotionally, and spiritually safe.

PIBC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people, and adults, and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding measures will be incorporated in the recruitment process selection, including Working with Children Check (WWCC), training, induction, supervision, and reviews.

The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within PIBC:

- Due diligence
- Integrity
- Duty of care
- Transparency

- Inclusivity
- Collaborative ministry
- Christian ethics and gospel principles

WE RECOGNISE THAT:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, and is everyone's responsibility as outlined in the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (2009)
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other organisations/agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

WE COMMIT TO:

Providing a Safe Church Concerns Person

- **Screening all prospective leaders** in our ministries, before they are appointed, with a WWCC, and a Police Check.
- **Screening all prospective team members** in our ministries, before they are approved, with a WWCC.
- **Adequate training of Ministry leaders, volunteers, and staff.**
We require that all staff, as well as leaders and volunteers working with children and youth under 18 years attend a Safe Church Training Workshop within 12 months of commencing in their role, and a refresher course each 3 years.
- **Having a clear Code of Conduct.**
We will adopt and implement a Code of Conduct for all leaders, staff, and volunteers, including boundaries of behaviour and expectations of their interaction with children. All leaders, staff and volunteers are bound by our Code of Conduct.
- **Continued supervision of leaders, staff, and volunteers**
We commit to ongoing training, supervision, and support for leaders, staff, and volunteers.
- **Responding to allegations of risk of harm, abuse, or misconduct.**
All leaders/staff/volunteers will report disclosure or suspicions of abuse of any kind, according to our procedures. We will listen to and believe children who raise concerns. We will ensure that procedures are clear and appropriate in responding to allegations of abuse. Where a leader has an allegation of misconduct made against them, we will provide support to the alleged victim/s and the perpetrator and seek appropriate help from the BUV Professional Standards Worker for a just and fair resolution.
- **Providing an open, safe environment.**
We will afford participants a say in the ministries and activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation. We will be accountable and transparent.
We will create a child-friendly environment, allowing people to raise their concerns in an appropriate and safe manner. We will obtain appropriate information relating to the ministry participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

DEFINITIONS

Abuse	abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical abuse ○ Emotional abuse ○ Family violence ○ Sexual abuse ○ Grooming ○ Neglect ○ Bullying ○ Spiritual abuse ○ Financial abuse
Child	a person who is under the age of 18 years.
Disclosure	a disclosure occurs when someone informs a person in authority/staff member (or a trusted adult) within the PIBC, that they have been subject to abuse or know of abuse. A disclosure may or may not be an allegation or a notifiable circumstance, but it is the responsibility of the person in authority to investigate and take any appropriate action.
Leader	has been through a recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team player.
Safe Environment	discharges duty of care by taking steps to keep all those in our care safe, including spiritual, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, bullying or neglect.
Safe Ministry	all risks have been assessed and events thought through and planned.
Vulnerable person	a person who may be susceptible to abuse or exploitation based on factors such as their health status (physical or mental), age, grief, previous experience of abuse, social isolation or financial hardship. In this sense vulnerability can be temporary or permanent.
SCTA	Safe Church Training Agreement under the National Council of Churches in Australia- Safe Church Program.

Reference:

Children, Young Persons and their Families Act (1997), Tasmania

The Commission for Children and Young People Act (2012), Victoria

Child safe standards <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>

National Council of Churches

Legal Framework

This Policy reflects legislation and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

National Legislation

- National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children “Protecting Children is Everyone’s Business” 2009-2020 (Commonwealth of Australia)

State Legislation

- Children, Youth and families Act 2005 (Vic.)

Working With Children Checks

- Working With Children Act 2005 (Vic.)