

# **SANDGATE UNITING CHURCH**

## ***Growing a Christlike Community***

### **Child Protection Policy**

#### **Purpose**

The Purpose of this policy is to ensure that children are safe, respected and listened to, considered when decisions are made regarding Church activities, and are not abused physically, emotionally, sexually or spiritually whilst engaged in Church activities.

#### **Policy Statement**

In growing a Christlike community Sandgate Uniting Church (SUC) is committed to zero tolerance of child abuse, recognising children's interests, ensuring that employees and volunteers are screened, ensuring that child protection strategies are incorporated into risk management procedures, providing access to relevant training and learning programs for employees and volunteers and responding promptly and appropriately to reports and allegations of child abuse.

##### **1. Zero Tolerance of Child Abuse**

Child abuse is not tolerated by SUC, nor is possession of, or access to, child pornography. Children have the right to feel and be safe. SUC is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all children who engage with the Church.

##### **2. Recognising Children's Interests**

Decisionmakers must consider the needs and rights of children in any decision making process. SUC encourages children to express their views and make suggestions especially in matters that directly affect or involve children.

##### **3. Recruitment and Screening**

SUC interviews and conducts referee checks of all employees and volunteers who engage with children. All Ministers, Pastors, Elders and members of Church Council must maintain a current Blue Card

All employees and volunteers engaged in child related activities must maintain a current Blue Card.

##### **4. Risk Management Procedures**

A risk assessment must be completed for all child related activities of SUC. The Risk Assessment must be provided to Church Council.

##### **5. Training and Learning**

Moreton Rivers Presbytery of the UCA QLD provides training activities for all those engaged in child related activities within the life of the Church. All Ministers, Pastors and Leaders of child related activities must undertake this training every three years.

## **6. Responding to Reports of Suspected Abuse and Neglect**

SUC will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

Abuse and neglect includes:

- Physical abuse – when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child
- Emotional abuse -an attack on a child's self esteem eg through bullying, name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating a child
- Sexual abuse- any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child
- Neglect- where a child is harmed by the failure to provide the basic physical or emotional necessities
- Spiritual abuse – where a child is at risk of harm from threats or intimidation in regard to their spiritual life or beliefs

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to notify the relevant Government Department of a child at risk of harm.

Employees and volunteers must notify the Minister and/or the Chair of the Church Council of a child at risk of harm

Employees and volunteers must notify the Minister if a child makes a disclosure of having been abused.

### **Attached Documents**

Risk Assessment template

Incident Form