

Children's Safe Ministry Policy:
Updated Sept 2024

In our children's ministry, we are committed to partnering with parents in sharing, teaching and caring for the spiritual life of the children in our church community. We see children's ministry as a vital aspect of our church life. As we take seriously the leadership of teaching our children, we want to ensure that the children are a part of a safe environment that cares for their well-being and spiritual growth.

Therefore, at St. David's we adopt the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney policy and guidelines on safe ministry and "Faithfulness in Service". We take seriously implementing and practising safe ministry through all of our children's programs and seek to uphold the standards of the PSU.

Following are important points taken from the PSU Safe ministry blueprint for leaders to be aware and reminded of.

Follow the following links for more information regarding safe ministry and the PSU guidelines.

"Faithfulness in Service"

https://safeministry.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FaithfulnessInService_May-2018.pdf

Safe Ministry Guidelines and Documents

Children's Ministry Leaders

<https://safeministry.org.au/blueprint-childrens-ministry-leaders/>

Head of Children's Ministry Leader

<https://safeministry.org.au/blueprint-head-of-childrens-ministry/>

Legal requirements:

All leaders who are above the age of 18 are required to:

- Have a Working with Children Check (WWCC) Clearance.
- This needs to be sent to the Kids' church co-ordinator, to the church office and the safe ministry representative for verification.

All leaders need to have completed Safe Ministry training, followed by a refresher every three years.

- Certificates and date of completion must be sent to the Kids Church Co-ordinator, to the church office and the Safe Ministry representative.

All leaders must read, understand and comply with '*Faithfulness in service*'

In addition, leaders must sign and agree with the guidelines outlined here and by the PSU.

Leaders below the age of 18:

- Leaders below the age of 18 are required to consider and think through a Safe ministry policy.
- They are required to sign and agree with the guidelines outlined here and by the PSU.
- Leader's aged 17 are required to complete safe ministry training and refresh every 3 years.
- Leaders aged 16 and below are to complete the youth module of safe ministry, if appropriate. Parental discretion and permission required.

Safe Ministry Assessment:

- All leaders must complete the required safe ministry assessment and be signed off by the senior minister before commencing their role.
- Clergy and lay ministers are to complete the required PSU Assessment, administered by the PSU.

Children's ministry:

The PSU summarise the code of conduct into a set of Golden rules, which we are to abide by.

- Always have two or more leaders aged 18 years or over present for all children's ministry events.
- Leaders must never be alone with a child during activities and should make sure as far as possible, that other leaders are not left alone with a child.
- If unavoidable, always be in an open space, with doors and windows open, near others to be able to hear conversations and in the view of other adults.
- Be aware of strangers wandering around- a person unknown to the leaders or not a part of the children's ministry should not be allowed access to children.

For further information on the children's ministry code of conduct refer to PSU Safe ministry for children's ministry leaders (4)

Spaces and off-property activities:

- Leaders should always consider the suitability of the space and safety of the space.
- They are to ensure safety measures are in place, before conducting ministry.

For further information, as to safety measures that should be considered refer to PSU Safe ministry for children's ministry leaders (5. A)

- If you are leaving church property, then you must always have written consent of the parent or guardian before leaving church property.
- You must inform the parents where you are taking their children and the timing of the event.
- Information regarding the physical needs of the child should be attained.

Communication/ Photographs/ videos:

- See St. David's social media policy

Crèche:

- All children need to be signed into the crèche space and signed out of the space. ???
- Children should never leave the crèche area unless accompanied by an adult.
- Children need to be supervised in all spaces they are using.
- Physical contact should be used primarily in assisting and comforting a child for short periods.
- Leaders should not continue physical contact for any longer than necessary to achieve its purpose
- All physical contact must be in view of other adults.

Further information in regard to appropriate Physical contact for this age group refer to PSU Safe ministry for children's ministry leaders (6. A)

Preschool age:

- Children should never leave the preschool area unless accompanied by an adult responsible for them.
- When accompanying a child to the toilet, the leader needs to be accompanied by another leader or with another child. The leader should only assist the child when necessary.
- Physical contact should only be initiated by the child and no longer than necessary to achieve its purpose.

Further information in regard to appropriate Physical contact for this age group refer to PSU Safe ministry for children's ministry leaders (6. B)

School-age (K-6):

- Clear thoughtful procedures for the conclusion of the program and advise parents of them.
- Parents should be kept informed of the details of the ministry, the leaders and the program.
- Physical contact should be kept to a minimum and always in the view of other adults.

Further information in regard to appropriate Physical contact for this age group refer to PSU Safe ministry for children's ministry leaders (6. C)

Reporting Abuse:

As leaders, children may disclose, or we may observe signs or cases of abuse.

If any of these two instances occur, it is your responsibility to report the information disclosed or signs you have observed.

Steps for reporting:

- Listen to their story, comfort if they are distressed; let them know you are glad they told and they did the right thing; let them know you are going to help with what to do next and that you will get back to them.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, write down the details of what was said and report the information to the appropriate authorities.

Issue or concern	Report to:
General Suspicions	Head ministry leader
Child or young person currently at risk of significant harm	FaCS If possible discuss with your head ministry leader or Senior Minister* first and use the Mandatory Reporters Guide. Police Contact the police first if the situation requires emergency assistance. Professional Standards Unit Contact the PSU where the alleged perpetrator is a church worker.
Knowledge of relevant criminal offences	Police Professional Standards Unit (regarding a church worker)
Child abuse by a church worker**	Senior Minister*/church worker's employer Anglican Abuse Report line (1800 77 49 45) Police

Contact the Professional Standards Unit if you are unsure of what to do in any circumstance or where an allegation is regarding the Senior Minister

* Do not report to the Senior Minister if the allegation is regarding the Senior Minister

** A church worker includes a minister, any ministry volunteer or leader (eg, Sunday School teacher, youth group leader, organist, etc), warden, parish councillor, parish Synod representative.

Do not undertake an investigation, and do not disclose the allegations to the alleged offender at this initial stage.

Taken from Safe Ministry for Children's Ministry Leaders, Professional Standards Unit of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.

Further information reporting signs of abuse refer to *Safe Ministry for Children's Ministry Leaders (7)*

For further questions or concerns please speak to the Kids church co-ordinator, safe ministry representative or senior minister.

Kids church Co-ordinator: Currently Sarah Bishop

Safe ministry Rep: Currently Ingrid Scouller

Senior Minister: Currently Jon Kwan