



1. Child Safety Policy

Respecting the life and well-being of each child within the congregation and community is the highest priority of the Strathalbyn Church of Christ. Our objectives are:

- 1.1 To protect children by minimising the risk of abuse or harm within ministries, programs or activities associated with Strathalbyn Church of Christ.
- 1.2 To enable children and young people to flourish in ministries, programs and activities provided by the church.
- 1.3 To ensure that all Federal and State legislation pertaining to child protection is strictly adhered to in the ministries, programs and activities involving children in Strathalbyn Church of Christ.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1 The Strathalbyn Church of Christ acknowledges it has legal responsibility to ensure all children involved in any church ministries, programs and activities are safe.
- 2.2 The Board of Strathalbyn Church of Christ will appoint a Child Safe Coordinator to oversee the implementationⁱ of this Policy and associated procedures and must report to the Board of Strathalbyn Church on a quarterly basis on this.ⁱⁱ

3. Conduct of Leaders, Volunteers and Employees

- 3.1 Children in the care of Strathalbyn Church of Christ are entitled to be safe and feel safe at all times.
- 3.2 Every person involved in ministry at Strathalbyn Church of Christ must treat the safety and care of children as paramount.
- 3.3 As leaders, volunteers and employees are placed in a position of trust and responsibility, they will make every reasonable effort to avoid acting, or failing to act, in a way that compromises a child's sense of physical, emotional or spiritual safety and wellbeing.
- 3.4 Strathalbyn Church of Christ adopts the Child Safety Code of Conduct and associated procedures named in that Code. Every volunteer, leader and employee involved in ministry at Strathalbyn Church of Christ must comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct and associated procedures named in that Code. Failure to do so will be reported in accordance with the Child Safety Reporting Procedure and will be dealt with in accordance with the Child Safety Response Procedure.

4. Screening of Leaders, Volunteers and Employees

- 4.1 Leaders, volunteers and employees must be screened and appointed in line with measures and best practice standards outlined in the Child Safety Screening Procedure, which accords with the requirements in the Children's Protection Act 1993.
- 4.2 A leader, volunteer or employee must agree to abide by the Child Safety Code of Conduct before becoming involved in ministry in Strathalbyn Church of Christ.
- 4.3 Strathalbyn Church of Christ must ensure that relevant history assessment information is managed securely and confidentially in accordance with the Child Safety Records Procedure.

5. Support, training, supervision and enhancement

- 5.1 Leaders, volunteers and employees must receive child-safety training before becoming involved in ministry at Strathalbyn Church of Christ, including (without limitation) training on how to recognise and respond to abuse and neglect of children.
- 5.2 The training provider and/or content must be approved by the Church's governing body.
- 5.3 Strathalbyn Church of Christ is committed to its ongoing improvement and development of as a child safe and child friendly organisation. Therefore
 - 5.3.1 It is necessary for training to be provided on an ongoing basis, at least annually; and
 - 5.3.2 The following matters will be considered when conducting employee performance reviews:
 - Status of training
 - Awareness of this Policy and associated procedures (including the Code of Conduct), and compliance with it.

6. Reporting and responding to abuse and neglect

- 6.1 Strathalbyn Church of Christ acknowledges that any act that endangers a child's physical or emotional health or development is serious and must be reported and responded to seriously by it. Children are to be believed.
- 6.2 External reporting: Employees, volunteers and leaders must report suspected abuse or neglect to external authorities in accordance with the steps outlined in the Child Safety Reporting Procedure, which reflects the requirements of the Children's Protection Act 1993.
- 6.3 Internal reporting: In addition to any external reporting obligations, employees, volunteers and leaders must report any:
 - alleged breach of the Child Safety Code of Conduct;
 - suspected abuse or neglect of a child; and
 - any complaint or concern raised by a parent or member of the Strathalbyn Church of Christ community regarding child safety

to a Board member or to the Pastor in accordance with the steps outlined in the Child Safety Reporting Procedure.

6.4 Where a report is made to a Board member or to the Pastor, he or she must ensure that appropriate steps are taken in response to the report, as outlined in the Child Safety Response Procedure, to ensure the ongoing and future safety of children within Strathalbyn Church of Christ. This may include:

- Arranging for an investigation to be carried out and suspending the person whose conduct is the subject of the report from involvement at Strathalbyn Church of Christ while the investigation is carried out.
- Ensuring that the information has been securely and confidentially recorded.
- Ensuring, where applicable, external authorities have been notified.
- Advising the appropriate governing body of the congregation.
- Ensuring that the child, and the person making the report, are both aware of the services available to support them.

7. Bullying

7.1 Bullying of or by a leader or participant, in any program or activity, is always unacceptable.

8. Safe Environments

8.1 Strathalbyn Church of Christ believes that every measure should be taken to ensure that all programs and activities are planned and conducted in a safe manner.

8.2 No ministry activity or program can be undertaken in Strathalbyn Church of Christ without a risk management assessment being undertaken in accordance with The Child Safety Risk Management Plan. The risk management assessment must specifically consider the risks to children, including risks that may exist as a result of physical surroundings, and risks that may exist because of the personnel involved.

9. Child Participation and Training

9.1 Strathalbyn Church of Christ wants children to flourish. It values and embraces the opinion and views of children.

9.2 The Child Safe Coordinator is responsible for overseeing a communication program that will help children:

- Identify abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
- Know what to do (how to report it and how to find help) if it happens to them or to a friend or family member.
- Know what supports are available to support them before or after a report has been made, including during an investigation.

9.3 The Child Safe Coordinator will seek feedback from children on its programs and its child-safe policies and procedures.

10. Records

Personal information will be collected and stored privately and securely in accordance with Strathalbyn Church of Christ Privacy Policy and the Child Safety Records Procedure.

11. Review

This policy must be reviewed and updated annually. The person responsible for this is the Secretary of the Strathalbyn Church of Christ.

12. Procedures

The following procedures are relevant to the implementation of this Policy:

- Child Safety Screening Procedure
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Toileting & Bathing Procedure
- Child Safety Transportation Procedure
- Child Safety Leader: Participant Ratios Procedure
- Child Safety Reporting Procedure
- Child Safety Response Procedure
- Child Safety Records Procedure

This policy was adopted by resolution of the Board of Strathalbyn Church of Christ on 10 November 2022.

ⁱ Implementation includes ensuring that the policy has been appropriately communicated to all relevant audiences.

ⁱⁱ This person must become familiar with the Principles and Standards and should be sufficiently senior within the Church to be able to ensure the implementation of this Policy and associated Procedures.

ⁱⁱⁱ Anyone who has regular contact with children or works in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or who has responsibility for the supervision or management of people in positions involving regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or they have access to records that relate to: (i) an educational, child care, health or disability service related to children; or (ii) legal proceedings relating to children; or (iii) the administration of the requirements in the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, the *Family and Community Services Act 1972*, the *Young Offenders Act 1993* or the *Youth Court Act 1993*.