

## **St John's Anglican Church, Camberwell**

### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

St John's Church is a contemporary catholic Anglican parish of the Diocese of Melbourne in the Anglican Church of Australia. Our corporate life cherishes word and sacrament and is embedded in prayer and worship. We are committed to compassion and justice. St John's is an inclusive parish community welcoming people of all ages, gender, race, colour, creed and sexual orientation.

The parish community acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which St John's is built, and pays their respects to the Wurundjeri people and the elders of the Kulin Nation.

The parish community seeks to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and all children who come to us from a culturally or linguistically diverse background. We also seek to ensure the safety of any child with a disability.

The parish community affirms that all children who come to St John's have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to ensuring that children's best interests are met in our parish. We have zero tolerance towards child abuse. The parish community actively works to listen to and empower children within our community.

In order to ensure that we meet the highest standards of child safety for each child who comes into our community, we have the following policies and documents in place:

#### **Culture of the organisation**

Our organisational culture is one that ensures child safety through effective leadership and clear lines of accountability. We ensure that all those in positions of power or influence with children are properly screened, supervised and trained.

#### **Code of conduct and Duty of Care**

Our code of conduct is contained in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne "*Duty of Care*" handbook. A copy of this handbook is provided to all those, in paid or voluntary positions, who have contact with children.

The handbook is available at all our places of worship and can also be found online at:

<http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/youthchildrenfamily/childrenfamily/Pages/Duty-of-Care.aspx>, or from the Church office on request.

#### **Working with Children cards and Police checks**

All those working with children in the parish are required to have a current *Working With Children card and Police check*. We also conduct reference checks on those who move into our parish and ask to be part of leadership teams.

#### **Responding to and reporting of suspected incidents of child abuse**

The process of responding to and reporting suspected child abuse is as set out below by the diocese.

In the first instance talk to the ministry team, including the Vicar and Children's minister (Child Safety Officer) and they will discuss with you what further action should be taken.

OR You may also take your complaint directly to the diocese.

OR You may take up the option of making a complaint to the police if you feel that a child's safety has been compromised by the actions or words of someone operating within our programs.

### **Reporting complaints to the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne**

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne takes all complaints of misconduct very seriously. This information is intended to help you if you wish to make a complaint, have been or are being abused or harassed by Clergy or Church officers, including Regional Bishops, in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

The aim is to solve complaints as quickly as possible. There are different ways of dealing with complaints - informally, formally or referring the matter to another Church professional standards body or to a child protection authority or to the Police.

#### **Who manages the complaint?**

If the formal process as outlined in the Professional Standards Act is used (see below), the Director advises the Professional Standards Committee who investigates the matter. A protocol, *Power & Trust in the Church* guides the process.

#### **Steps to take in making a complaint to the Professional Standards of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne**

*The Director of Professional Standards* responds to all complaints of misconduct including sexual, physical, spiritual or emotional abuse by Clergy or Church officers. The Director is as independent as possible from the Diocese but is paid by the Diocese.

