

The Parish of Christ Church South Yarra

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Christ Church South Yarra is an Anglican parish in the progressive catholic tradition which values liturgy, scripture, reason, and inclusive community with respect to age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and faith-tradition.

We affirm our commitment to ensuring the safety of each child who comes into our community. As a Parish with an Anglican Primary School on its campus and at the heart of its mission, we support a values-based education that cherishes each individual within an extensive system of pastoral care and the opportunity for regular worship.

All are welcome and cared for at Christ Church, where we acknowledge the sacredness of our site to peoples of the Kulin Nations, and specifically seek to honour and preserve the cultural heritage of Indigenous children and all who come to us from diverse backgrounds. We also seek to ensure the safety and promote the wellbeing of any child with a disability.

The church should be a place where young people can come to know and experience the love of God through those who care for, teach, and work with them. To ensure that we meet the highest standards of child safety, we have the following policies in place:

- Our culture is one of child safety where, 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, trained, and accredited.
- Our code of conduct is the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne “Duty of Care” handbook. A copy of the handbook is provided to all those, in paid or voluntary positions, who have contact with children. The handbook is available in the church and via the Parish Office and can also be found online at: www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/youthchildrenfamily/childrenfamily/Pages/Duty-of-Care.aspx
- The “Duty of Care” handbook operates alongside Victorian Government Child Safe standards, which can be accessed at: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards-resources
- All those working or volunteering in a child-related or community role, office, or position in the Parish are required to have current Working With Children cards and Police checks. This applies to existing staff and volunteers, as well as those who move into our Parish seeking leadership roles.
- The process of responding to and reporting suspected child abuse is set out by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. Members of the Ministry Team, Churchwardens, or Parish Councillors can assist with any inquiry, or matters can be referred directly to the Diocese (see below). Concerns may also be raised directly with the Police, or the Commission for Children and Young People (<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au>), if it is felt that a child’s safety is being compromised.
- A booklet entitled “Information for people thinking about making a complaint” published by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne is available in the church, via the Parish Office: (ccoffice@ccsy.org.au), or online from www.melbourne.anglican.com.au

How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made directly to the Police by phoning 000, to the Commission for Children and Young People (<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au>), and/or 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 (including bishops) or Church workers or volunteers in 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.

The first step in making a complaint is to call the recorded information line at any time on: **1800 135 246**.

All information provided to this service is strictly confidential. The person taking a message on this number will ask you to give a name and your phone number or address so that the Director can contact you as soon as possible.

Alternatively, you can write to the Director:

**Director of Professional Standards
Anglican Diocese of Melbourne
PO Box 329
Canterbury VIC 3126**

Mark your envelope Confidential

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.

If the formal process as outlined in the Professional Standards Act is used, the Director advises the Professional Standards Committee who investigates the matter.

A Protocol, *Power & Trust in the Church*, guides the process. This document is available online:

www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/theologicaleducation/Documents/Power-and-trust-in-the-church-protocol.pdf