

Saint Panteleimon Russian Orthodox Church

Child Safety Contact Person position description

Introduction

The purpose of this *Child Safety Contact Person Position Description* is to clearly define the role and responsibilities of a Child Safety Contact Person. It should be read in conjunction with the parish *Child Safe Policy and Statement of Commitment to Child Safety*.

Definitions

Key terms in this Child Safe Code of Conduct are defined in the parish *Child Safe Policy and Statement of Commitment to Child Safety*.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Our parish is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children.

For the children who belong to or visit our parish, we will provide a child safe environment. This means that we will act to ensure that children feel safe, are safe, and can participate appropriately, actively, and confidently in the divine services and in the broader life of our parish.

We have zero tolerance for any form of harm to or abuse of children. This includes emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse.

Although our parish follows the traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church, it is multi-cultural and brings together families and individuals of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and needs. We value both our unity and our diversity and are committed to words and actions that make this clear to our children and the children who visit us.

We have publicly available policies and procedures in place to support these commitments, and we will provide our clergy, office-bearers, and volunteers with the necessary information, training, and other resources to ensure that they are met.

We take allegations and safety concerns seriously and will deal with them promptly and respectfully. They will be handled in accordance with our policies and procedures and, whenever necessary, New South Wales and other applicable Australian law.

We will engage sensitively with survivors of abuse and actively seek their input into our policies, procedures, and training. We will particularly draw on the experience of survivors of abuse in our own Russian Orthodox community here in Australia.

All who belong to or visit our parish will be advised of our commitment to child safety and of their role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children while here.

Children's participation

Our Russian Orthodox tradition is rich and multi-faceted. In the life of our parish, we preserve rites and customs developed over many centuries and in significantly different cultural settings. We value these things, the living

expression of our Orthodox Christian faith, as a precious inheritance that we, in turn, hope to pass to our children and to their children.

To make this possible, we want our children to participate appropriately, actively, and confidently in the divine services and in the broader life of our parish. To this end, we will answer their questions, listen to their views, respect what they say, and provide them with opportunities to learn, read, sing, serve, and help.

**Child Safety
Contact Persons**

Each year the parish Annual General Meeting will appoint two Child Safety Contact Persons. The Child Safety Contact Persons will be trusted parish members who have a demonstrated rapport with children and who have been assessed as suitable to work with them. Ideally, one Child Safety Contact Person will be female and the other male. At least one of the Child Safety Contact Persons should be a competent Russian speaker.

The Parish Council will ensure that the Child Safety Contact Persons are able to securely store records and that they are provided with all other necessary resources and support to perform their duties.

Responsibilities

It will be the responsibility of the Child Safety Contact persons to:

- Ensure the availability of age-appropriate information at church and on the parish website about child safety in parish life
- Plan quarterly activities for children, one of which should coincide with the Day of Youth of the Russian Church Abroad, that emphasise their role in parish life
- Plan meeting presentations, including quarterly presentations to the Parish Council, to help office-bearers and parish members understand child safety in our parish
- Receive and manage complaints in accordance with the parish *Child Safe Complaints Management Policy*
- Monitor parish compliance with NSW law and parish policy in relation to child safety, bringing any breaches to the immediate attention of the Parish Council
- participate in the work of the parish Pastoral Council
- Participate in the assessment of suitability of anyone working with children in parish life
- Keep records of their work
- Ensure that sensitive records are stored securely, and that confidentiality is maintained
- Maintain and review all parish policies relating to child safety

In undertaking their educational and compliance monitoring work, the Child Safety Contact Persons will work closely with the parish rector.

List of related parish policies and documents

The following parish documents are related to this Policy and Statement:

- Child Safe Policy and Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Complaints Management Policy
- Child Safe discussion points for Parish Council meetings

Monitoring and review

With the assistance of the Child Safety Contact Persons, this Policy and Statement will be reviewed annually by the Parish Council, and prior to the convening of the parish Annual General Meeting. To the extent possible, review of the statement will consider comments and suggestions from children; parish clergy, office-bearers, volunteers, and members; the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian; the Diocesan authorities; and the parish insurer. Consideration will also be given to information prepared by organisations advocating for child safety.
