

The Rock Christian Family

Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Updated: 15/04/24

Statement of Commitment

The purpose of this strategy is to demonstrate the commitment of The Rock Christian Family to the wellbeing and safety of all children and youth, to promote a child safe culture within the church and to outline the expectations and requirements for all staff and volunteers who interact with children and youth activities within the church.

The Rock Christian Family is committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of its congregants and the community in which it operates, and ensuring that all children involved in our activities, services, events and programs **are** safe and **feel** safe. We take child protection seriously and are committed to providing safe environments where children are cared for, respected, nurtured and sustained.

We believe that all people are created in the image of God, and have zero tolerance of all forms of child abuse. We will do all in our power to safeguard children from abuse. We are committed to embedding child safety and wellbeing in all we do including our leadership and governance.

We are committed to implementing the relevant policies (both internal and governmental) and ensuring that people who work with children are suitable, trained, screened and supervised well.

We are committed to taking all complaints seriously, responding promptly through appropriate channels. We are committed to ensuring our leaders and volunteers undertake ongoing education and training on child safety. We are committed to regularly reviewing our procedures and learning from any accidents or incidents.

Code of Conduct

A volunteer code of conduct exists to ensure there is clarity for all staff and volunteers regarding their interactions with children and young persons. Induction training sessions are mandatory and ensure volunteers and staff familiar with the code of conduct and agree in writing to adhere to the code. There are clear supervision and escalation steps laid out in the code, if a breach occurs.

Capabilities

The recruitment and selection of volunteers to interact with children and young people is taken with serious consideration. Volunteers must commit to:

- Attending mandatory child protection and child safety training
- Successfully clearing a Working with Children Check
- Adherence with Code of Conduct and other policies
- A personal interview or history conversation with nominated leaders

Concerns

The Rock Christian Family has clear procedures to follow to ensure staff and volunteers respond as quickly as possible to a disclosure or suspicion of harm. Volunteer training includes defining harm, how to identify harm, managing and recording a disclosure or suspicion of harm, reporting a disclosure or suspicion of harm and reviewing policies and procedures following an incident. There are several Designated Persons nominated to receive and action any concerns raised by volunteers.

Managing breaches of this strategy

A breach is any action or inaction by any paid staff or volunteer of the Rock Christian Family Church, that fails to comply with any part of the strategy.

The consequences of a breach will depend on the degree of seriousness of the breach. Breaches are to be reported to the Rock Christian Family Leadership team, who will in turn assess and consult with the Designated Persons regarding the consequences.

The following outcomes may occur, depending on the severity of the breach:

- A revisit of training and education
- Providing closer supervision
- Review of policies and procedures
- Immediate withdrawal from all child-related activities and redeployment to alternate volunteer activities that do not engage with children and youth

High risk activities and special events

The Rock Christian Family will from time to time conduct high risk events and special events for example overnight camps or events taking place near water hazards. In these cases, specific risk management plans are written to support the safe running of the event. These would be written in the instance where children and young people were in the direct care of staff and volunteers of the Rock Christian Family (when legal guardians / parents are not physically present).

Compliance with the Blue Card system

The Rock Christian Family will comply with all its legislative requirements under the Blue Card system.

These include:

- Implementing and annually reviewing a child and youth risk management strategy
- Developing policies to ensure screening requirements are met
- Maintaining an active register of all volunteers and staff who have direct involvement with children's and youth activities, and their Blue Card status.

All volunteers and staff who have direct involvement with children's and youth activities will have a valid Blue Card or exemption before they start volunteering or working.

The Rock Christian Family will take reasonable steps to ensure the blue or exemption card belongs to the card holder. It will also link the card holder to The Rock Christian Family using appropriate channels prior to them engaging in work or volunteering.

Communication and Support

This risk management strategy is published on the Rock Christian Family's website and is available to all. This strategy, as well as the Code of Conduct, are supplied to staff and volunteers electronically, during face to face training. A signed declaration of compliance is made by all staff and volunteers.

There are multiple sources of support for staff and volunteers to ensure compliance but also in the event that counselling or assistance is needed. Their first point of contact is the Designated Persons listed in this document.

Responsible and Designated Persons

The Rock Christian Family leadership team are collectively responsible for implementing the risk management strategy. The following persons are Designated Persons of the Rock Christian Family:

John Cochrane

Fiona Cochrane

David Frewen-Lord

Kirsten White

Izaak Pearson

Janine Lemcke

Rachel Mudge

Toni Romair