



Child and Youth Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Purpose:

At Wheatland District Church, we believe every child is made in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity, care, and respect. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where all children feel valued and protected. This policy outlines our commitment to child safety and wellbeing and how we implement the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

1. Our Commitment to Child Safety

- We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all children.
- We have zero tolerance for child abuse and will take all allegations and safety concerns seriously.
- We actively work to listen to and empower children.

2. Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to all pastors, leaders, volunteers, contractors, and anyone involved in the programs or activities of Wheatland District Church where children are present.

3. Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

We encourage children to express their views and feel safe. We involve children in decisions that affect them and take their concerns seriously.

4. Valuing Diversity and Inclusion

We value and respect diversity. We do not tolerate discrimination based on culture, race, gender, disability, or family background. All children are welcome and respected at Wheatland District Church.

5. Recruitment and Screening

- All staff and volunteers working with children must hold a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC).
- We conduct interviews and reference checks for new leaders and volunteers.

- All team members must agree to and sign our Code of Conduct before working with children.

6. Training and Supervision

We provide training for leaders and volunteers to ensure they understand their child safety responsibilities. Leaders are supported and supervised to ensure safe practices are maintained.

7. Child Safe Practices and Ratios

- We follow recommended child-to-leader ratios based on age groups.
- Two adult leaders are required to be present at all times during children's programs.
- We use check-in and check-out systems to monitor attendance and child safety.

8. Responding to Concerns or Abuse

- We take all concerns, disclosures, or allegations of abuse seriously and respond in line with our Child Safety Reporting Procedure.
- Any concerns will be reported to the appropriate authorities (e.g., Child Protection, Victoria Police) as required by law.

9. Record Keeping

We maintain secure and confidential records of attendance, incidents, and any concerns raised regarding child safety.

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and in line with any updates to legislation or the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Approved by: Wheatland District Church Leadership Team

Date Approved: [Insert Date] _____

Next Review Date: [Insert Date] _____