

# CENTRAL MOUNTAINS BAPTIST CHURCH



## Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People

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# 2024

# Section 1 - Child Protection Policy

## 1.1 Policy Overview

### 1.1.1 A Commitment to Child Protection

The purpose of this Policy is to guide Central Mountains Baptist Church in developing a child-protective church.

Central Mountains Baptist Church is committed to welcoming children and their parents or carers and providing:

- a 'child-safe' environment,
- a child-safe attitude of the people, and
- child-safe programs for children (and other vulnerable people) who attend the services and other programs.

The NSW Criminal Procedure Act 1986 defines a vulnerable person as:

- a child (anyone less than 18 years old), or
- a cognitively impaired person. This includes: (a) an intellectual disability (b) a developmental disorder (including an autistic spectrum disorder) (c) a neurological disorder (d) dementia (e) a severe mental illness (f) a brain injury.

It is recognized that no organisation can guarantee the safety of children and other vulnerable people who are on site at a venue. The term 'child-safe' means that child safety is important to the organisation, that it has compliant policies and procedural documents that identify risk, and it has practices that reduce risk.

We see such a commitment as flowing naturally from our commitment to operate according to biblical, Christian principles for living and for recognising the unique value and potential of every person, regardless of race, age, gender, ability or disability.

All children who come to Central Mountains Baptist Church have a right to be safe. The welfare of children in our care will be an important priority. The church and ministry leaders accept the responsibility of providing a safe and friendly environment where children are listened to, are kept safe, are given enjoyable activities, accept challenges, learn and grow. This duty of care applies at all times, although when children attend church and are not taken from their parents/guardians, then the parents/guardians have the primary duty of care.

We recognise the particular need for sensitivity for those from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, including those with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. We take into consideration the needs of children with disabilities and seek to include them and make them feel safe and welcome.

This Policy recognises both Federal and State legislation and commits workers to responsibly and reasonably cooperating with Government departments, law enforcement, and child protection agencies. The operational principles of our Code of Conduct support and facilitate the protection of children and young people.

### 1.1.2 Scope

The provisions and duties of care expressed in this Child Protection Policy apply to:

- Pastors, being a person defined or appointed as a recognised leader amongst peers in our church. It includes anyone with the job description of 'pastor' e.g., 'senior pastor' or 'associate pastor'.

- All employees (including volunteers), members and attendees of Central Mountains Baptist Church.
- Church leadership, being the pastor(s) plus deacon(s) of Central Mountains Baptist Church.
- Ministry leadership, being leaders of ministries, programs, and activities of Central Mountains Baptist Church.
- All workers, being any adult or older child assisting, in any way, in a children's ministry of Central Mountains Baptist Church.
- All activities and programs organised by or with the approval of the pastor(s) of Central Mountains Baptist Church, on the premises or off-site, including camps and day trips.
- All guests of the venue and its facilities. Such temporary users of Central Mountains Baptist Church facilities will have access to copies of this Policy Code of Conduct and relevant procedures,
- Contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services on the premises, whether or not they have direct contact with children whilst on site. Normally such temporary visitors to Central Mountains Baptist Church's premises will be provided with an Induction Pack containing a copy of the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct for them to sign that they are willing to comply with the expectations outlined. A list of approved service providers will be developed and held by the Child Protection Officer.

### 1.1.3 Authority

This Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct was revised and updated to reflect the most recent changes to State and Federal law and guidelines towards being a child-safe organisation. It was approved by the membership and adopted for use by Central Mountains Baptist Church 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2024 with this present document containing all amendments (amendments can also be checked in the minutes).

### 1.1.4 Policy Review

The Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Code of Conduct will be reviewed at least every two years, or to remain compliant with new legislation. This will occur during first term of the school year, and be conducted by the Child Protection Officer with input from the church leadership.

Any proposed changes or updates will be submitted to the pastor(s) and deacon(s) of Central Mountains Baptist Church for approval. Such changes can be accepted or rejected at a meeting of Central Mountains Baptist Church's membership properly convened for consideration of the proposed changes.

### 1.1.5 Operating Principles

*Duty of Care:* Means any legal responsibility that Central Mountains Baptist Church has to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those who participate in programs or activities of Central Mountains Baptist Church.

*Vicarious Liability:* Means any legal liability that Central Mountains Baptist Church may be determined to have for the conduct of those who act on its behalf (e.g., its staff and approved voluntary leaders).

*Reasonable Standard of Care:* Refers to the level of care that a user may reasonably expect that Central Mountains Baptist Church will take in providing any program, activity, service, or facility.

*Reasonable Foresight:* Refers to a responsibility that Central Mountains Baptist Church has, when planning activities for children and young people, to identify any reasonably foreseen danger/risk and take reasonable steps to prevent or avert such risk.

*Child Protection Reporting Obligations:* This principle covers mandatory reporting, for those professions and roles that are defined by law, and the moral and legal responsibility that all adults have to report all types of known or possible child abuse, where there is a reasonable belief that a physical or sexual offence has occurred or may be committed against a child. It also includes obligations of "Reportable Conduct" to the Office of the Children's Guardian.

*Reasonable belief:* A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds, through disclosure by the child or a third party or personal observation of indicators that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk.

## 1.2 Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

The staff and leadership of Central Mountains Baptist Church encourage children to feel a part of Central Mountains Baptist Church by seeking their feedback regarding children's programs, and through listening to them when they speak about matters that directly affect their sense of safety or wellbeing.

Part of our work with children is to teach and inform them of what they can do if they feel unsafe, threatened or upset by the behaviour of adults or other children. We will listen to and if necessary, act on any concerns children or their parents/carers raise with us. We value diversity and do not tolerate discrimination in our words or practices or in those of others. It should not be seen as spiritual abuse when, in our preaching and teaching, we make a Biblical stance against sinful behaviour. Preaching and teaching about sinful behaviour is not discrimination against a person, nor is it spiritual abuse.

We are committed to protecting children from harm/self-harm. 'Harm', as used in this policy, includes any and all of the following types of abuse or neglect of children and young people: physical; sexual; emotional/psychological; racial/cultural or spiritual/ religious (See [Appendix 1, 'Definitions of Abuse Against Children'](#)). It should not be seen as spiritual abuse to seek repentance from sin and commitment to Christ.

### 1.2.1 Feedback from Children

Children and young adults will have the opportunity to reflect on their experience of church programs and to make comments regarding the standard of planning for and delivery of programs for their age-group. This can be done verbally or using the form in [Appendix 2, 'Example Feedback Survey of Children'](#). We will invite comments on other aspects of wellbeing, including staff conduct. Such feedback will inform Central Mountains Baptist Church and guide adjustments to practices, programs and training.

## 1.3 Employment of Staff and Volunteer Leaders

### 1.3.1 Recruitment, screening and selection practices

Central Mountains Baptist Church will be vigilant in the recruitment, selection and screening of all staff, contractors, leaders and volunteers to ensure they are safe and suitable to work with children and young people. It is important that every person who works with children under the auspices of this church upholds and exemplifies our Christian beliefs and values, especially in their interaction with children and other vulnerable people.

Workers will normally have been known to Central Mountains Baptist Church for at least six months. Only those children who have proved to be sensible can be workers in children's ministries.

Ministry leaderships roles will only be appointed to adults (i.e., those 18 years or older).

Mixed gender activities should normally have mixed gender workers.

1. Our statements of commitment to child safety and our behavioural expectations of employees and volunteers are included in all advertisements for jobs and job descriptions.
2. All people wanting to engage in ministry with children (either paid or volunteer) or a ministry where children participate as workers in that ministry, for example Music, IT and Digital, will complete an Application for Ministry ([Appendix 8, 'Application for Ministry'](#)).
3. We conduct reference checks on paid employees and those leading children's ministry prior to engagement, using an agreed set of questions ([Appendix 9, 'Suggested Interview Questions'](#), [Appendix 10, 'Letter to Referee'](#) and [Appendix 11, 'Questionnaire to Be Completed by Referee'](#)). Conversations will be documented and kept as part of the employment file of successful applicants.
4. Short-listed applicants will be interviewed by pastor(s) / ministry leader(s), prior to appointment being made official. The pastor will make appointments to a specific role in the form of an Employment Contract. Employment Contracts are to include a job description (according to our Constitution and will differ for each job) and a commitment to our Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Code of Conduct.

5. All paid ministry leaders and paid children's workers who do not have a current written Employment Contract are to accept such a contract dealing with their suitability to be workers and agreeing to these child protection policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct.
6. We will conduct thorough screening to determine whether a prospective staff member, contractor, volunteer or leader may pose a risk to children. This will include Central Mountains Baptist Church making reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child-connected work:
  - a. child-related Employment Screening Clearance (e.g., Working with Children Check, Criminal History Check);
  - b. proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
  - c. the person's history of work involving children; and
  - d. references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
7. The type of evidence that an applicant is required to provide to Central Mountains Baptist Church will vary depending on the type of position that they are applying for. However, Central Mountains Baptist Church will not offer any applicant a position at Central Mountains Baptist Church until they provide the required evidence to the Child Protection Officer. We have a clear staff and volunteer induction process that includes providing them with a copy of this Policy, the Code of Conduct and other relevant documents detailing standard operating procedures.
8. All staff and volunteers are normally trained annually to refresh their knowledge of our policies and expectations in terms of conduct and protocol, especially where there has been document review.

### 1.3.2 Support and Training

We provide a system of support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. To this end we have developed a Code of Conduct to guide our staff and volunteers.

1. Staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of this Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct that defines unacceptable conduct, boundaries and expectations for behaviour. Staff will sign a pledge stating they have read, understand and will comply with guidelines.
2. Each two years, 'Refresh, Renew, Update' sessions are run for all program staff and volunteers, to ensure staff and volunteers awareness of the importance of child safety and familiarity with child protective practices and expectations. Normally these will be conducted during term 1 of the school year. The training will be arranged by the Child Protection Officer.

### 1.4 Investigation of Suspected Child Abuse

In the case of an allegation being made against staff member, volunteer, leader and/or contractor at Central Mountains Baptist Church, the pastor and/or Child Protection Officer will follow the Child Protection Procedure. Central Mountains Baptist Church will take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount.

The first step is to withdraw the accused person from active duty, which could entail standing down (with pay, where applicable), re-assignment to other duties that do not have direct contact with children, or to work under increased supervision while the matter is being investigated.

#### 1.4.1 Case Management

In the event of a child disclosing an incident of abuse to someone they trust it is essential that it is dealt with swiftly, sensitively and professionally.

#### 1.4.2 Investigations

Central Mountains Baptist Church may conduct an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by the relevant authority, for example the Office of the Children's Guardian or the police, and will co-operate with the authorities as required.

All people covered by the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedures must co-operate fully with any investigation by any government Department, the police or Central Mountains Baptist Church. Central Mountains Baptist Church will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential, until otherwise necessary; however, from time-to-time other employees, leaders, volunteers and contractors may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation (e.g., to provide witness statements).

An investigation conducted by Central Mountains Baptist Church will be conducted in accordance with procedural fairness to protect the integrity of the investigation and the interests of all the participants involved in the investigation. Central Mountains Baptist Church will also handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for Central Mountains Baptist Church to engage a person (or persons) from outside Central Mountains Baptist Church to conduct an independent investigation in relation to allegations.

The outcome will depend on the findings of the investigation, but may include withdrawal from active duty, re-assignment to duties with no contact with children, increased supervision, disciplinary action, dismissal or criminal prosecutions.

### 1.5 Risk Management

Central Mountains Baptist Church will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall approach to risk management.

Risk assessment and management practices are embedded in our thinking for all services, programs or activities authorised by Central Mountains Baptist Church. We use these concerns to inform our planning and implementing of all aspects of operation at Central Mountains Baptist Church.

Risk management applies to Work Health and Safety generally. This policy applies specifically to the minimising of risks of abuse of any kind to children who are in our care and to maximising their physical safety in the buildings or activities of Central Mountains Baptist Church.

In situations where a person seeks to attend or join Central Mountains Baptist Church with a record of offending in child abuse of any kind, the leadership (and the Child Protection Officer) will put in place appropriate boundaries restricting access, to ensure the safety of children. The following are to be considered in establishing such boundaries:

- An offender will not be permitted to participate in ministries involving children.
- There should be restrictions on movement when an offender is present at church. This would relate to use of the toilets in particular and any space where other people cannot see, such as the space next to the stage. Policing requires everyone.
- The risks and degree of risks to a particular age group, sexes, ethnicity etc. should be identified. To ensure that procedure and/or standards will be successful they must negate the level and type of risk
- Anyone's relationship to the offending person may cloud their judgment. The leaders will need to be aware of this within themselves and others throughout the whole process of setting boundaries.
- Normally we would need to advise against victim and perpetrator being in the same church.

This is not to say that such a person, with demonstrated repentance, cannot attend and benefit from the pastoral care of Central Mountains Baptist Church.

Central Mountains Baptist Church will have the pastor(s), deacons, ministry leaders and Child Protection Officer commit to identifying and managing risks within Central Mountains Baptist Church and its environment. If risks of child abuse are identified, the Child Protection Officer will make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) to take to reduce or

remove the risks (i.e., risk controls). Risk identification, monitoring and evaluation will be reported at the Annual General Meeting by the Child Protection Officer.

The Child Protection Officer is recommended by the leadership and approved by the church membership. The Child Protection Officer is to be mature, experienced and readily accessible during those times children are on site.

The Child Protection Officer is to respond to complaints made by staff, contractors, volunteers, children or other attendees and members of the congregation. The Child Protection Officer is to work with the pastor(s), except where an accusation has been made against a pastor(s). In the event of an accusation against a pastor, the Child Protection Officer will work with any other pastor (provided they are not associated with the accusation) and the deacons. In the event of an accusation against the Child Protection Officer, the pastor and deacons will be responsible to implement the necessary reporting and other procedures set out in these instructions.

The Child Protection Officer has access to the Complaints and Incident Forms and is familiar with the legal requirements applying to the reporting of abuse against children.

The Child Protection Officer will normally serve a two-year term.

The Child Protection Officer will be identified and their role explained at appropriate times in Central Mountains Baptist Church each year. Staff and volunteers are mandated to use either the Complaints Form or the Incident Form to note concerns arising from observations or experience (See [Appendix 3, 'Complaint Form'](#) and [Appendix 4, 'Incident Report'](#)). Copies of these forms will be kept by the Child Protection Officer.

## 1.6 Record Keeping

All reports of alleged abuse or harm/self-harm, or risk thereof, must be recorded in the form of an Incident Report. Places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm/self-harm shall be recorded. Reports must be securely stored by the Child Protection Officer.

## 1.7 Privacy and Confidentiality

Central Mountains Baptist Church will collect, use, disclose and hold personal information in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.

That is, as much as is reasonably possible, an individual's confidentiality is to be protected. Both those who are making reports and those about whom accusations are being made are entitled to confidentiality. Where there is suspected abuse or misconduct, staff members, leaders, volunteers and contractors must not disclose or make use of the information in a manner that breaches confidentiality, other than to report and act consistent with the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedures, and relevant statutory requirements. If church discipline becomes necessary the Central Mountains Baptist Church Constitution will be followed.

The NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act, (Care Act) provides specific protections to reporters who make reports to institutions engaged in child related work. These reporters are protected from liability for defamation and civil and criminal liability. The Care Act also provides that the report does not constitute a breach of professional etiquette or ethics, or amount to unprofessional conduct. All reporters are now protected against retribution for making, or proposing to make, a report.

## Section 2 - Code of Conduct

### 2.1 Purpose

Central Mountains Baptist Church is a group of followers of Jesus Christ in the Blue Mountains of NSW seeking to reflect the teachings of Christ and of the New Testament with integrity and humility. Beyond personal faith in the redeeming work of Christ in His death and resurrection, we accept that this faith is worked out and expressed in the quality of relationships we develop as a church community and all those with whom we interact in our daily lives. Jesus summarised God's expectation for the conduct of His people into one famous and succinct sentence: *'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and your neighbours as yourself.'* (Luke 10:27). He reinforced this 'law of love' by adding, *'By this shall all men know that you are my disciples; if you love one another!'* (John 13:35). Jesus also taught and demonstrated the importance of truth and honesty, of justice and mercy as essential to healthy relationships.

This Code of Conduct seeks to apply to the ministerial, or pastoral relationship those ethical standards that God expects of all people. People in various forms of recognised ministry are therefore expected to be examples and models of Christian faith and practice. It is the duty of any person in a ministry position not to use the influence or authority of their position for personal gain, whether that gain is financial or in terms of power, sexual gratification, or otherwise. This includes any action, verbal, written or electronic, physical or emotional that could be interpreted as emotional, sexual or spiritual abuse, and applies especially when working with children.

The adoption of this Code of Conduct and the related Procedural Documents for investigating breaches of the Code, reflects a deep desire to follow an open, accountable process that seeks to express justice, acceptance and compassion to all parties, rather than to protect the organisation.

This Code has been written in recognition of the power differential between people in ministry roles and the people they serve. The potential for this power imbalance to impact detrimentally on relationships is high. These guidelines have been established to help inform the conduct expectations in all aspects of personal relationships between people in ministry and those they serve.

### 2.2 Our Commitment

Our commitment to expressing the love of Christ leads us to the view that all people should be able to live, work and learn in an environment that is free from abuse of any kind. Our commitment is to cultivate an environment where a diversity of people, regardless of age, gender, race and national culture can thrive and grow holistically. That is, we are committed to Central Mountains Baptist Church being a safe place for all people, with a special focus on the safety and wellbeing of children.

This Code of Conduct aims to detail the standards of conduct expected by staff (paid and voluntary) in the performance of their duties and to provide guidance in areas where there is a need to make personal and ethical decisions.

The Code of Conduct recognises and is aligned with all statutory and compliance requirements enshrined in State and Federal law. Central Mountains Baptist Church is committed to operating in accordance with this code of conduct, so that it provides a safe, ethical, and caring place for all users and activities.

### 2.3 Complaints regarding child abuse

Where there is a complaint made regarding child abuse, especially child sexual abuse, the procedures for reporting such abuse are outlined in Section 4, 'Procedures for Handling of Complaints and Allegations'.

### 2.4 Specific Expectations to Protect Children from Abuse



All those who minister or work under the auspices of Central Mountains Baptist Church with children should be fully aware of our Child Protection Policy and this Code of Conduct. Abusive behaviour towards children will not be tolerated and any and all allegations will be investigated and reported if found to be substantially true.

DO:

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of, or in connection with, Central Mountains Baptist Church must:

- ◆ contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of harm/self-harm (telephone '000');
- ◆ adhere to the Child Protection Policy and Procedure and uphold Central Mountains Baptist Church's statement of commitment to child safety at all times;
- ◆ take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- ◆ Contact a parent/guardian of the child for them to change their own child's nappy or for them to assist their four-year-old or younger child to go to the toilet. For children five or older, I will take them to the toilet, waiting outside the toilet and taking them back to the ministry once they are finished.
- ◆ conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as an employee, volunteer, leader, worker, or contractor of Central Mountains Baptist Church and as a positive role model to children and young people;
- ◆ work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of Central Mountains Baptist Church;
- ◆ be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area of ministry;
- ◆ maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities;
- ◆ establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
- ◆ take care in the context of physical games, both in regard to injury that may be caused, and also in relation to the example that is set for the children.
- ◆ be fair, considerate and honest with others;
- ◆ treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas, opinions and backgrounds;
- ◆ promote the cultural safety acceptance, participation and encouragement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island child's self-identification);
- ◆ promote the safety acceptance, participation and encouragement of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination);
- ◆ promote the safety, participation and encouragement of children with a disability;
- ◆ listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they are or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child;
- ◆ ensure (as far as practicable) that adults are not alone with a child;
- ◆ ensure that a child worker should be present with children from the arrival of the first child to the departure of the last child.
- ◆ During a camp situation where children will be staying away from their parents/guardians overnight sleeping arrangements will be organised to ensure the children's safety. Normally parents/guardians will be informed of the intended sleeping arrangements beforehand.
- ◆ For trips, camps and outings I acknowledge that there are to be at least two workers supervising the children at all times, and I will take care that there are adequate workers to ensure the appropriate oversight and safety of the children at all times. Anyone transporting children not belonging to their family must be over 18 years of age. Minimum licence level P2.
- ◆ comply with all reporting obligations as they relate to reporting under legislation (see Section 4, 'Procedures for Handling of Complaints and Allegations').
- ◆ raise concerns about suspected abuse with the pastor and/or Child Protection Officer as soon as possible;
- ◆ record and act upon (including all mandatory requirements) all allegations or suspicions of abuse, discrimination or harassment;
- ◆ if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) is/are safe;
- ◆ be professional in their actions;
- ◆ maintain strict impartiality;
- ◆ respect confidentiality when sharing information about children in accordance with the Child Protection

Policy and Procedure and your reporting obligations;

- ◆ maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people;
- ◆ act with reasonable care towards children when they are present at church even when the primary responsibility rests with the parents/guardians. For example, if I see a toddler enter a car park unsupervised, I will act;
- ◆ carry out my ministry responsibility with faithfulness. I will make proper arrangements if for some reason I must be absent from a ministry commitment. Proper arrangements include contacting my ministry leader or, if I am a ministry leader, the pastor.
- ◆ cooperate with the overall program of the church and with my ministry leader. If at any time this becomes impossible, I will resign and let someone else take my place so that the cause of Christ may not be harmed.
- ◆ spend adequate time preparing for each ministry opportunity.
- ◆ pray regularly for those children under me in ministry; and
- ◆ Operate within the policies, procedures and guidelines of Central Mountains Baptist Church and this Code. For example, where a ministry has a Sign In / Sign Out Register, I will ensure that the parent / guardian completes the Register each time their child attends the ministry.

DO NOT:

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of Central Mountains Baptist Church must not:

- ◆ ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- ◆ put a child at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors for an improper reason);
- ◆ speak to a child in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Some examples are:
  - swearing or using inappropriate language in the presence of a child;
  - yelling at a child, except in an emergency situation where a child's safety may be in danger;
  - dealing with a child while the adult is angry with the child; and
  - using hurtful sarcasm.
- ◆ discuss sexual activities with a child unless it is a specific job requirement (e.g., counsellor) and the person is equipped to discuss these matters;
- ◆ have contact with a child outside of church activities without the knowledge and/or consent of Central Mountains Baptist Church's leadership and/or the parents/guardian;
- ◆ have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) unless their parents/ guardian or ministry worker are copied in (that is, fully informed of the content of any online contact);
- ◆ use any personal communication channels/devices such as a personal email account to communicate with a child without parental/guardian knowledge;
- ◆ exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a child unless necessary; if this is necessary it should be done through the parents/guardians;
- ◆ make use of a breakout room when using online platforms with children and young people;
- ◆ allow children or young people to enter an online meeting until two or more are present in the waiting room;
- ◆ use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol while in the presence of or while supervising a child;
- ◆ use, possess, or be under the influence of any impairing substances whether prescription or illegal while in the presence of or while supervising a child;
- ◆ provide or allow a child to consume alcohol;
- ◆ provide or allow a child to consume illegal drugs or abuse prescription drugs;
- ◆ initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves;
- ◆ engage in rough physical games, hold, massage, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate and or/culturally insensitive way;
- ◆ engage in any sexual contact with a child for any purpose;
- ◆ Take a child to your home or encourage meetings outside program activities unless parental/guardian permission

has been provided. If this is to be ongoing, I will inform the Pastor of this regular contact so that they are aware of these visits or meetings with the child.

- ◆ be naked in the presence of a child;
- ◆ possess sexually explicit printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.);
- ◆ sleep in the same bed, sleeping bag, room or tent with a child/children;
- ◆ discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender identity, sex, race, culture, sexuality, or disability;
- ◆ engage in any activity with a child that is likely can be reasonably expected to physically or emotionally harm them; Biblical teaching protects children.
- ◆ be alone with a child unnecessarily and for more than a very short time;
- ◆ develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child for their own needs;
- ◆ show favoritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention;
- ◆ Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians. If consent has been given, I will not upload or publish these images on the church website, YouTube, WhatsApp or any other electronic media without the consent of the child's parents or guardians;
- ◆ administer physical punishment;
- ◆ do anything in contravention of Central Mountains Baptist Church's policies, procedures, guidelines or this Code.

#### DECLARATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the Code of Conduct and the Child Protection Policy and Procedures that express the intent of Central Mountains Baptist Church to protect and nurture children and other vulnerable people.

I declare that:

I have never made any kind of sexual approach to a child whether verbal or physical at any place nor at any time. I have never been involved with or convicted of, nor am I currently under investigation for any violence, sexual assault, or other crime against a child. I understand that a NSW Government 'Working With Children Check' showing clearance to work with children must be obtained to verify my claims (not applicable if you are less than 18 years old). I will make the results of this check available to the Child Protection Officer for verification. I understand this clearance lasts for five years. I understand that the applicable government agency responsible for child protection will conduct interim criminal history checks during this period.

I understand my responsibilities as a mandatory reporter in my role in children's ministry and my responsibilities under the Reportable Conduct Scheme overseen by the Office of the Children's Guardian.

I understand that should I fail to meet my commitments as set out above, I could be asked to withdraw from children's ministry at Central Mountains Baptist Church.

I make this declaration believing it to be true.

I agree to comply with these rules, expectations, Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Code of Conduct. I am aware that if I breach these, and/or break the law, that my actions will be reported to the Police and/or the Child Protection agencies.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

Pastor and Child Protection Officer Only

When a report of inappropriate activity is received, I will ensure that an appropriate investigation / action / report will be implemented. According to the circumstances, this response plan may include reporting the situation to the police, to

the relevant government department, and to the insurers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/ 20\_\_

For Contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services on the premises of CentralMountains Baptist Church

I have been provided with a copy of Central Mountains Baptist Church’s ‘Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People’. I am willing to comply with the expectations set down in this policy and code of conduct. I have never made any kind of sexual approach to a child whether verbal or physical at any place nor at any time. I have never been involved with or convicted of, nor am I currently under investigation for any violence, sexual assault, or other crime against a child.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/ 20\_\_

## Section 3 – Procedures When Commencing or renewing involvement in a Ministry Involving Children or Young People

3.1 All paid staff, Ministry leaders and workers are expected to meet the procedures of the Child protection policy outlined below. This includes when commencing ministry to children or when renewing required documentation.

To support completion of these requirements the Child protection officer will:

- Send out a reminder to all those who need to comply with all the necessary documents etc. A date will be set for completion.
- If the documents remain outstanding, the CPO will send a further "grace" reminder a day after the deadline.
- One week past the deadline, the Pastor will approach anyone who is non-compliant and lovingly warn them of the ramifications of not complying. If the person desires to continue serving in the church, a time frame of one-week would be set to provide the required documentation. (The Bible commands us to put ourselves under the authority of God-ordained governments. We want to obey God's Word - Romans 13:1-7)

### 3.2 Complete the Required Child Protection Training

The type and content of the Child Protection Training will be determined by the pastor and Child Protection Officer, in consultation with the church leadership.

The Child Protection Training must consist of at least one of the following:

1. Attending a Central Mountains Baptist training seminar on Child Protection.
2. Attending a training seminar on Child Protection at an Australian Fellowship of Bible-Believing Churches (AFBC) church e.g. Emmanuel Baptist Church at Glenwood.
3. Completing a Central Mountains Baptist Church training package on Child Protection. This training package will utilize the many resources now available (notably DVDs / videos and written materials).

All workers must undertake the required training before they take up a children's ministry role.

### 3.3 Apply for a 'Working With Children Check'

This is a NSW legislative requirement for all persons over 18 years old who are seeking or currently engaged in either paid or voluntary work with children.

To do this, you must do the following:

1. Complete the online form that can be found on the website of the Office of the Children's Guardian. Once the form is submitted, you will receive an application number. Please record it.
2. Completion of the check can be done online or you may go to any Service NSW. You will need the application number you received when you submitted the online form PLUS proof of your identity. A fee is payable for this check only if you are in paid employment with Central Mountains Baptist Church.
3. Forward the details of the 'Working With Children Check' (including the application number) and your date of birth to Central Mountains Baptist Church's Child Protection Officer.

### 3.4 Read and sign Central Mountains Baptist Church's Declaration relating to the Code of Conduct and the Child Protection Policy and Procedures

This form is to be renewed every two years.

At that time, (or any lesser time if circumstances warrant), further checks will be undertaken *if considered necessary* by the pastor, of the person's suitability to continue in children's ministries.

A signed copy of the declaration will be kept by Central Mountains Baptist Church.

All ministry workers aged 14 and above will read and sign Central Mountains Baptist Church's Declaration relating to the Code of Conduct and the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

### 3.5 Complete and sign Central Mountains Baptist Church's form 'Application for Ministry'

At the discretion of the pastor, an interview with the proposed child worker may be required. All paid positions for child workers will require an interview to be held. The interview panel will be drawn from among the pastor and deacons, and their wives. The panel will normally be chosen by the pastor. The make-up of the interview panel will depend on the position under consideration, and should include at least one female member.

The interview and documentation process will be implemented and maintained by the pastor or a person appointed by the pastor. The set questions for the interview will not preclude additional questions of a more general nature if needed.

At the discretion of the pastor, any referees nominated by the proposed child worker may be contacted. In such cases, the referee will typically be contacted by letter and asked to complete a questionnaire relating to the intended appointment.

A copy of an 'Application for Ministry' is set out in *Appendix 8, 'Application for Ministry'*.

## Section 4 – Procedures for Handling of Complaints and Allegations

### 4.1 Overview

An overview of the process to follow when a complaint or allegation is received is described in the table below.

Step	Action
1	Assess immediate risks.
2	Encourage the person (including a child) making an allegation to fill out a Complaints Form and give this to the Child Protection Officer, who may, if appropriate, share the allegation with the pastor of Central Mountains Baptist Church.
3	Determine whether a report needs to be made.
4	Advise the insurer of the allegation

### 4.2 Step 1 – Assess Immediate Risks

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or a life-threatening situation, call 000 and ask for the Police.

Otherwise, if a person is concerned about their own safety or the safety of another person, the person may speak to the Child Protection Officer.

Central Mountains Baptist Church encourages all persons with concerns about the safety of a child involved in the activities of the Central Mountains Baptist Church to raise these concerns promptly and directly with the Child Protection Officer, who can assist the person to make the report to relevant Government agency in NSW and/or the police as required. However, a person is not required to consult with Central Mountains Baptist Church, or gain the support of Central Mountains Baptist Church, prior to making a report.

A verbal comment, by a child(ren), to any worker or leader constitutes 'a report'. If the child will put the comment in writing it will be helpful. However, the leader or worker must make a report to the Child Protection Officer of the child's complaint. It is the Child Protection Officer's responsibility to support the worker in any mandatory action required.

The Child Protection Officer will meet with the complainant, and hear the story, taking notes and seeking clarification, ensuring that the complainant feels listened to, understood and protected. (Some complaints may be able to be dealt with at this time, where there is misunderstanding, a lack of evidence of any abuse or no reportable act has been committed.)

### 4.3 Step 2 – Encourage Completion of Complaints Form

Where possible, any person (including a child) making an allegation should be encouraged to fill out a Complaints Form and give this to the Child Protection Officer, who may, if appropriate, share the allegation with the pastor of Central Mountains Baptist Church.

A copy of this Form must be kept by the Child Protection Officer. The complainant may keep the original. This is an essential record of the event.

A Report to Child Protection Services is required if you believe, based on reasonable grounds, that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, significant self-harm/harm as a result of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

The following information will be required when making a formal report to Child Protection Services:

- The child's name, age (date of birth is preferable) and address.

- The name, age and address of any known siblings.
- Your reasons (observations or disclosures) for believing that the child is at risk of abuse, or actually being abused or neglected.
- Your assessment of the immediate danger to the child.
- Current whereabouts of the child or vulnerable person (if not in the home).
- Your description of injuries or 'sign' behaviours you have observed.
- Any other information you may have of relevance to the investigation.

Note: You do not have to be given permission by anyone at church to make such a report. Your identity as notifier will remain confidential unless you choose to inform the child or family.

#### 4.4 Step 3 – Determine Whether to Report

All Central Mountains Baptist Church workers in ministry to children are 'mandatory reporters'.

Penalties may be incurred by those named as 'mandatory reporters' if they fail to notify the relevant Government agency in NSW if they have reasonable grounds for a belief (not proof!) that a child or young person is in need of protection, because they have suffered, or are likely to suffer significant self-harm/harm particularly physical or sexual abuse.

In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse, may disclose that information to the Police or the relevant Government agency in NSW.

When is a child in need of protection?

Section 23(1) of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No 157* (NSW) deems that 'a child or young person is *at risk of significant harm* if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person because of the presence, to a significant extent, of any one or more of the following circumstances—

A child is in need of protection if any of the following grounds exist—

- a) the child has been abandoned by his or her parents/guardians;
- b) the child's parents/guardians are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person willing and able to care for the child;
- c) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant self-harm/harm as a result of physical injury and the child's parents/guardians have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;
- d) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and the child's parents/guardians have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;
- e) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is, or is likely to be, significantly damaged and the child's parents/guardians have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;
- f) the child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be, significantly harmed and the child's parents/guardians have not provided, arranged or allowed the provision of, or are unlikely to provide, arrange or allow the provision of, basic care or effective medical, surgical or other remedial care.

Making a report is to lay a serious allegation of a criminal offence against another person, so clarify your perceptions (talk to the Child Protection Officer) and decide the best method of reporting. The police are the most appropriate first responders if the report is regarding behaviour taking place in relationship to church activities. The Child Protection Officer may also decide to call the police as a first step.

A report to the NSW Child Protection Helpline may also be required. The number for the NSW Child Protection Helpline is 132 111. The Child Protection Helpline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Information on reporting a child at risk can be found on the website of Department of Communities and Justice.

If any person has trouble deciding whether to report or not, the "Decision Tree" can be used. This can be found on the Communities and Justice website Child Story Reporter-Mandatory Reporter Guide.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is operated by the Office of the Children's Guardian under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019*.

When the head of a 'relevant entity' becomes aware of a reportable allegation or a reportable conviction, the head of that entity must notify the Office of the Children's Guardian within seven business days and conduct an investigation into the allegations.

There are also obligations on employees of relevant entities, including religious bodies. Specifically, once an employee is aware of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction of another employee (including contractors and volunteers) they must report the allegation or conviction to the head of the entity (or to the Children's Guardian if it relates to the head of the entity).

The head of entity must, within 7 business days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation or a reportable conviction, give a written notice about it to the Children's Guardian.

The Child Protection Officer will be available to support anyone who has witnessed behaviour falling into a reportable conduct category.

*For people working in children's ministries the process would be:*

1. You become aware of or witness behaviour which falls into a reportable conduct category.
2. Report this to pastor unless the allegation involves the pastor\*.
3. Pastor makes report to the Office of the Children's Guardian within 7 days of the allegation.
4. An investigation is held into the incident and a report made available to the Office of the Children's Guardian within 30 days.

\*If the allegation is against the head of the entity (pastor) then the volunteer/employee/contractor must report the allegation to the Office of the Children's Guardian.

The Child Protection Officer may conduct an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by relevant Government agency in NSW or the police, and will co-operate with the authorities as required.

Where an allegation is made against a pastor or member of the church leadership, the Child Protection Officer should engage at least one independent 'investigator', to handle the case. The independent investigator should be a senior person from a church of like faith and practice. Where an allegation has been made, Central Mountains Baptist Church will make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the Central Mountains Baptist Church's response to it.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in this Procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

The accused person (staff member/volunteer or carer) may be stood down from duties and any access to children on the property, until the matter has been investigated and resolved.

#### 4.5 Step 4 – Advise the Insurer

When a report is made to the authorities, the leadership will contact the insurer, GJ Insurance Consulting Pty Ltd.

## Section 5 – Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Definitions of Abuse against Children

#### Biblical Perspectives of Abuse

##### *A Biblical Definition of Abuse*

Material extracted from A Biblical Definition of Abuse written by Greg Gifford for the *Biblical Counselling Coalition* January 14, 2019.

The Bible speaks about abuse and offers different responses based on the type of abuse. However, let's start with a biblical definition of abuse:

Abuse entails physical violence (Acts 16:19), threats of physical violence (Eph. 6:9), persecution (Matt. 5:44), sexual mistreatment (Judg. 19:25), reviling (Luke 6:28; 1 Pet. 2:23), speaking evil (James 4:11), or being under the misused power of another person or group of people (Gen. 16:6; 1 Sam. 2:16; Ezra 5:12).

The Bible would recognize all of these as aspects of what we would modernly call *abuse*.

##### Physical Violence (Acts 16:19)

Probably the most obvious form of abuse is when a person physically strikes another person with their own body or with an object. This qualifies as an example of both abuse and domestic violence but is not connected to violence on behalf of one's faith (that will be discussed under "persecution"). Physical violence is evidenced in passages like Acts 16:19-24 where Paul and Silas are beaten for disrupting the peace, so to speak, but that unjust treatment was not directly connected to their ministry. Rather, their mistreatment was motivated by selfish demon-girl owners who lost their source of income (v. 19).

##### Threats of Physical Violence (Eph. 6:9)

Again, the Bible does speak of threats of violence when masters are told to not threaten their bondservants (Eph. 6:9). This command is in the context of physical threats as this same word is translated in Acts 4:29 and 9:1 in the context of physical violence. The important clarification, again, is that this category is not connected to a person's faith— meaning a person is not threatened with violence because of their faith.

##### Sexual Mistreatment (Judg. 19:25)

Sexual mistreatment entails all forms of sexual misconduct committed non-consensually against another person. The Bible speaks of instances of rape (Deut. 22:25-27), unwanted touching (Gen. 39:12), intoxication for the purpose of rape (Gen. 19:33, 25), and sexual harassment (Eph. 5:3-4). The Bible clearly speaks about what would modernly be known as sexual abuse and does so in a way that we could call it sexual mistreatment.

##### Persecution (Matt. 5:45; Luke 6:22, 27-28)

Next is the idea of persecution on behalf of a person's faith. This type of abuse entails both violence and general forms of mistreatment (Matt. 5:39-40). Luke echoes Jesus's teaching in Matthew by commending prayer, good deeds, offering your tunic, and giving to those who are "your enemies" (cf. Luke 6:28-30). Notably, though, the commands in Matthew and Luke are in the context of persecution, not general forms of mistreatment. Persecution means that you are enduring mistreatment because of what Jesus says is "on account of His name" (Luke 6:22), not simply because of the unkindness of another. Persecution is a form of abuse.

##### Reviling and Speaking Evil (1 Pet. 2:23; James 4:11)

Jesus is said to have been “reviled” in 1 Peter 2:23 and Paul says that when he is reviled, he “blesses” (1 Cor. 4:12). James says to not “speak evil” of your brother (4:11). To be reviled or spoken evil of are literally to be slandered, insulted strongly, defamed, spoken degradingly about, or experience what we might term verbal abuse. Simply put, reviling and speaking evil is understood as “to speak in a highly insulting manner,” which would often be referred to as verbal abuse in modern contexts.

Misused Authority of People (Gen. 16:6)

The Bible also speaks of being under the misused authority of another person often by stating that a person is under the “hand” of another. For instance, Abraham tells Sarah that Hagar is in her “power,” and the text reminds us that Sarah misused that power over Hagar (Gen. 16:6). Some translations render this same passage as “hand,” thus capturing the same idea of “power.” The children of Israel are reminded that the Lord is the one who transferred them to His “mighty hand” from the “hand” of Pharaoh (Deut. 7:8). And Ezra sees the Lord’s work in placing the children of Israel under the “hand” of Nebuchadnezzar (Ezra 5:12).

Often Scripture speaks of being under the hand of another person, which isn’t always negative (cf. Josh. 9:25). However, when we speak of being under the misused authority of another, we often speak of someone “controlling” or “being controlling.” The idea of someone “being controlling” (i.e., not sharing proper financial support with a spouse) would be an illustration of the “misused authority of another.” To employ biblical terminology, we could say a person is under the misused “hand” of another when they are in a controlling relationship.

## Definitions of Child Abuse that inform Reporting requirements in NSW

Material below has been obtained from:

- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- Australian Government the National Office Child Abuse
- Australian Institute of Family Studies

The World Health Organization ([WHO], 2006, p. 9) defines child abuse and neglect as:

All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Definitions of child abuse and neglect can include adults, young people and older children as the perpetrators of the abuse. It is commonly stated in legislation that the term ‘child abuse and neglect’ refers to behaviours and treatment that result in the *actual* and/or *likelihood* of harm to the child or young person. Furthermore, such behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e. neglect) and commission (i.e. abuse) (Bromfield, 2005; Child Family Community Australia [CFCA], 2016).

## Types of abuse

### Neglect

Neglect is when a parent or caregiver cannot regularly give a child the basic things needed for their growth and development. This includes a safe place to live, food, clothing, medical and dental care, adequate supervision and enough parenting and care.

### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children or young people are bribed or threatened physically or psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Sexual abuse is a crime.

Sexual abuse of children includes any of the following acts committed against children who are under 16:

- sexual intercourse (this includes oral sex)

- sexual touching (which is any touching that could reasonably be considered sexual)
- sexual act (an act other than sexual touching which could reasonably be considered sexual)

Commercial child sexual exploitation includes:

- the production and distribution of child exploitation material
- exploiting children for prostitution (sometimes called child prostitution), which may involve promising money, food, clothing, accommodation or drugs to a child, or more often to a third person, in exchange for sexually abusing the child
- the abduction and trafficking of children for sexual abuse purposes, which can occur within or across countries

## Grooming

The term 'grooming' refers to behaviours that manipulate and control a child, as well as their family, kin and carers, other support networks, or organisations in order to perpetrate child sexual abuse.

The intent of grooming is to:

- gain access to the child or young person to perpetrate child sexual abuse
- obtain sexual material of the child or young person
- obtain the child or young person's trust and/or compliance
- maintain the child or young person's silence, and/or
- avoid discovery of sexual abuse.

Grooming can occur online or in-person. Online child grooming is the process of establishing and building a relationship with a child or young person while online, to facilitate sexual abuse that is either physical (in person) or online. This is achieved through the internet or other technologies such as phones, social media, gaming, chat and messaging apps.

## Physical abuse

In NSW, physical abuse is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or young person caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation. Any form of female circumcision, also known as female cutting or female genital mutilation (FGM), is illegal in NSW.

Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints. Any unreasonable physical force to a child is a crime in NSW. For example, hitting a child or young person around the head or neck, or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punish a child or young person may be considered a crime.

## Emotional abuse or psychological harm

Emotional abuse is also sometimes called 'emotional maltreatment', 'psychological maltreatment' and 'psychological abuse'.

Emotional abuse refers to a parent or caregiver's inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts towards a child and/or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurturing and emotional availability.

Although it is possible for one-off incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is how many times, and how long a parent or carer harms the child that determines its impact. This can include a range of behaviours such as underage marriage, parent/carer substance abuse, excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour, involving a child in illegal behaviour and forcing a child to observe live or depicted traumatic events.

In NSW it is a crime to intentionally do something that results in a young person suffering emotional or psychological harm that

significantly damages the emotional or intellectual development of that child or young person.

#### Exposure to domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence is a crime. It is when there is violent, abusive or bullying behaviour or actions towards a partner or former partner to scare and control them. It can happen at home or outside the home. It causes fear and harm to the body, mind and spirit.

Children and young people experience harm when they have to live in homes where domestic violence occurs.

In all Australian jurisdictions, exposure to family violence is grounds for 'when a child is in need of protection' In NSW there is specific mention of family violence as grounds for protection.

#### Racial, cultural or religious abuse

Racial abuse is any harmful conduct that discriminates against, or demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, ethnic origin, or skin colour. It may be overt, such as racial vilification or discrimination, or covert, such as demonstrating a lack of cultural sensitivity to a different ethnicity.

Religious or national cultural abuse is similar to racial abuse, but is directed towards expressions of religious faith or practice or national cultural dress, identifying styles of national cultural expression or practices. The harm that is caused by racial, religious or cultural abuse targets the child's identity.

Note that this does not negate the right of this church to preach Christianity as the ONLY way to God excluding all other supposed ways. It is to be noted that some aspects of any national culture may be sin, as defined by the Bible, and may need to be spoken against as sin. This is not to be seen as an attack on any individual's national culture.

#### Spiritual abuse

Spiritual and religious abuse is when a person uses spiritual or religious beliefs to hurt, scare or control someone.

For example, the perpetrator using their position of authority in Central Mountains Baptist Church or higher understanding of biblical teaching or God's will to manipulate a child for their own use or benefit, or to pressure a child for their own use or benefit.

#### Cyber-Abuse

Cyber-abuse occurs when a person uses any form of telecommunication to sexually groom, bully, suggest an inappropriate relationship be formed, or engage a child in sexual language or behaviours.





# Appendix 3 - Complaint Form

Please use this Form to make a Formal Complaint regarding discrimination or abuse of any kind towards yourself or another person, including a child.

Please read the Code of Conduct before using this form.

## COMPLAINT FORM (Private and Confidential)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

---

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Role at Central Mountains Baptist Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the complaint about offending behaviour:

a. directed towards you? Yes / No

b. concerning a child? Yes / No

c. about a vulnerable person? Yes / No

---

Who was the victim of the behaviour?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please briefly, but accurately, describe the alleged behaviour about which you are lodging this Complaint Form. (Keep to the facts, without interpretation or opinion.)

Who was the offending person? \_\_\_\_\_

What abusive behaviour did you observe or come to hear about? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is the abuse still happening or was it a past event? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the event/behaviour take place? \_\_\_\_\_

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Were there other witnesses? If so, provide name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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What is the level of risk to the victim now? Low – High; Immediate – possible;

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Any other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Statement of Intent: I make this complaint in all sincerity, recognising that such a complaint may have a serious or long term impact on all those involved. I will act in good faith in the process and accept the ruling of the 'investigator' where I believe it is fair and transparent.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_\_

Witness: (Print name) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_







## Appendix 5 - Legislation Relevant to Child Protection

Both Federal and State legislation is relevant to the concepts discussed in this policy. This legislation includes:

### Federal:

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

*Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*

*Fair Work Act 2009*

*Racial Discrimination Act 1975*

*Family Law Act, 1975*

*Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

*Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*

### New South Wales:

#### Principal Act:

*Children's Guardian Act 2019*

#### Other relevant Acts:

*The Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) 2021*

*Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Parental Responsibility Contracts) Act 2006*

*Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*

*Crimes Act 1900*

*Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection)*

*Regulation 2012*

*Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection)*

*(Child Employment) Regulation 2015*

*Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*

*Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013*

### International:

*The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)*



## Appendix 7 - Registration Form for Children and Youth Activities



Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your child taking any regular or currently prescribed medication? YES / NO

If so, please name the medication and provide details of dosage and administration.

\_\_\_\_\_

Your child's leader will administer medication to your child as directed by written instructions from you. Please clearly mark your child's name on all medication along with the dosage and administration procedures.

Are your child's vaccinations up to date?

Note: Vaccination information is being collected with the intention of providing information to parents whose children are too young to be fully immunised and have concerns about their exposure to particular illnesses.

The information might also be helpful for leaders during overnight camps for young people and the young person becomes unwell or receives an injury where immunisation information would be useful, e.g., knowing tetanus was up to date in the event of a cut.

Please circle vaccinations that are up to date below.

- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
- Measles
- Meningococcal C
- Mumps
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Poliomyelitis
- Rubella
- Tetanus.

Is there anything about your child's health which means that s/he should engage in only limited physical activity? YES / NO

If YES, please give details

\_\_\_\_\_

Does your child require a special diet because of health problems? YES / NO

If YES, please give details \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any other information which may help us care for your child? YES / NO

If YES, please give details

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you give permission for your child’s photograph to be taken during church activities? YES/NO

If YES, please indicate where this photo can be used.

- Central Mountains Baptist Church website
- Circulated on email
- Any form of social media
- Central Mountains Baptist Church Fliers
- In any Central Mountains Baptist Church display
- Other- please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact 1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact 2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Medical Centre/ Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have private medical insurance? YES / NO

If YES, please give the Provider’s details:

\_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORISATION

I have read the Central Mountains Baptist Church Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedures.

In the event of an accident or sudden illness, I authorise the person in charge to call an ambulance or to seek medical attention at my expense, should I not be contactable.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_/\_\_/20\_\_

(Parent/Guardian/Caregiver)

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 8 - Application for Ministry



FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MINISTRY INTERESTS: Sunday School / AWANA / Youth / Crèche / Kid’s Church / Scripture / Vacation Bible School / Music/ IT and Digital Ministry or Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you received a ‘Working With Children Check’ showing that you have been cleared to work with children? (This is a requirement for being a worker or leader in a ministry of CMBC ) YES / NO

If YES, what is your ‘Working With Children Check’ number? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read and signed the Central Mountains Baptist Church Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedures’? YES / NO

List any other names by which you have been known (including maiden name)

\_\_\_\_\_

List the name of any other churches in which you have served in children’s ministry or other ministry and the nature of that service

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you wish to serve in children’s ministry or your other ministry interests?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List any education, training, gifts, secular jobs, or other factors that you feel have prepared you for ministry to children or working with children in your ministry area

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List any other churches that you have regularly attended in the last 5 years

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List the name, address and telephone number of two people who can provide references based on working with you in a child related area (secular or spiritual)

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The information contained in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Appendix 9 - Suggested Interview Questions



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MINISTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

PANEL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

As you have expressed an interest in a ministry position that involves contact with children, and because we have an important duty of care to protect children under our care, we ask that you answer the following questions, and sign this record of interview.

1. Can you elaborate on the reason (s) given in your application for wanting to be involved in this ministry?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Can you share with us any positive experiences in your past involvement with children?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What about negative experiences?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you feel that you are a positive role model for children, and/or are you comfortable with the idea of being a role model?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you ever had a situation, directly or indirectly, where you feel a child was sexually provocative? If so, describe the incident, and how you handled it, or would handle it if it happened?

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6. Is there any other information relating to your suitability for this ministry that we should be aware of?

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Interviewee)

(Panel Chairman)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 10 – Letter to Referee



Dear

### CHARACTER REFERENCE

*(Name of worker)* has offered to help with our children's ministry.

Before any workers are appointed, we must take all reasonable care to satisfy ourselves that they are suitable. In particular it is our responsibility to ensure that the children in our care are not subjected to harm of a physical, emotional or sexual nature.

*(Name of worker)* has given us your name as someone who is in a position to give a character reference.

We will be grateful if you could complete the enclosed questionnaire – the information you provide will remain confidential.

*(Name of worker)* would mainly be involved with children (age range) as (brief description of work). With thanks,

Yours sincerely,

(Pastor)

# Appendix 11 - Questionnaire to Be Completed by Referee

Name of proposed worker \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship with (*name of worker*) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you known (*name of worker*) \_\_\_\_\_?

From your knowledge of and experience with (*name of worker*) please comment on his / her suitability to work with children / young people / the cognitively impaired.  
Specifically comment on his / her honesty, reliability, and experience / capacity in working with children / young people / the cognitively impaired.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any other comments you would like to make about (*name of worker*)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_