



Safe people
safe environments

Guidelines

Guidelines

Safe people, safe environment commitment

The Uniting Church in Australia Bremer Brisbane Presbytery is committed to the safety and well-being of all people, including those who use our services. We believe that every person is precious to God, and in following Jesus' example we are a Child Safe Church for all people. ¹We will provide safe places where people of all ages, gender, ability and economic situations are cared for, nurtured and sustained.

We will treat all people with respect and understanding and we will address their concerns at all times.

Bremer Brisbane Presbytery commit to being a community who:

- provide and maintain a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all people including children and young people
- offer suitable and well equipped leadership for all activities offered by (insert name of congregation)
- provide a level of resourcing that reflects the value of all people
- provide clear and appropriate guidelines for managing the safety of people, programs and the environment²

Therefore in order to support our commitment to all people, including children and young people, we will consider within this Safe People, Safe Environment Policy

1. People 18years and over
2. Children and young people under the age of 18 years – Child Safe Church

Safe People, Safe Environment for people over 18 years

In the light of our Statement of Commitment, to be committed to the safety and well-being of all people, including those who use our services, we the Bremer Brisbane Presbytery need to take responsibility for the activities and the environment to ensure that they are as safe as can reasonably be expected. It is the role and responsibility of the Church Council to ensure that this is done.

Therefore to that end, and also for insurance purposes, each ministry group's activity/event (eg. Adult Fellowship functions) is to be

- assessed and a *Risk Assessment and Action Plan (Resource 8)* completed and together with an *Application for Permission to Proceed (Resource 12)* Form given to the Church Council prior to the activity/event date.
- Church Council will consider the request in the light of the risk and return the *Permission to Proceed (Resource 14)* form stating approval/non approval of activity/event to the group organiser.
- Note: Activity/event cannot occur until the group organiser has received the returned form.
- Church Council is to record the activity/event approval on the *Insurance Register of congregation/group approved activities (Resource 20)*
- Any environmental potential risks are to be recorded on the *Annual Risk Assessment Register (Resource 21)* to be actioned.

Note both the *Insurance Register of congregation/group approved activities* and the *Annual Risk Assessment Register* are to be maintained by the Church Council.



¹ Church in Australia Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Policy for Synod Services, Presbyteries and Congregations - Introduction

² Based on Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Policy for Synod Services, Presbyteries and Congregations – Introduction 1.1

Guidelines

For working with Children and young people under 18 years

Child Safe Church

In order to support our commitment to children and young people under the age of 18 years, we are committed to *The Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod's Child Safe Church Policy and Procedures* which includes risk management strategies to effectively address the safety and well-being of children and young people under the age of 18 years in our care.

Codes of Conduct

A Code of Conduct has been developed for all paid employees, team members, leaders and volunteers who enter our service environment (Resource 2). A separate Code of Conduct has been developed for the parents or carers of young people participating in a congregation activity or program (Resource 3).

Recruitment, Selection, Management and Training of Employees and Volunteers

Church Councils are ultimately responsible for implementing and monitoring the policies and practices within the congregation. This includes ensuring that all Coordinators, Team Leaders and Team Members of groups associated with the children and youth ministries of the church are screened and formally appointed by the Church Council and recorded in Church Council meeting minutes.

A person wishing to apply to become involved as a Team Leader or Team Member in the leadership of children and young people under the age of 18 years will need to complete a Volunteer Application Form (Resource 4) and, if wishing to assist in transportation of young people, a Driver Declaration (Resource 6).

Applicants will be required to hold a Blue Card or Exemption Card (Resource 23) and should be

informed that they will be interviewed for the position and referee checks (Resource 5) will be completed.

It is the responsibility of the Church Council to approve the appointment and to recognise it formally by recording the name of the person and their role within the Church Council minutes. It would be appropriate for the Church Council in conjunction with the minister to arrange an appropriate recognition of the person and their appointment within a service of worship¹.

Note: If an applicant is considered unsuitable for leadership with children or young people under the age of 18 years, it would be helpful to attempt to identify other roles that they may be able to be involved with, within the life of the congregation. The decision to deem an applicant unsuitable for a leadership role should be communicated in a sensitive way, and the person should be cared for pastorally².

Program Planning and Preparation

The Church Council is required to be aware of and agree to what is planned in the children and youth ministry programs.

The Coordinator or Team Leaders must submit a summary of the activities for each of the children and youth ministry programs under the auspice of the congregation for approval. This must take place at least once every 12 months.

When approving a program The Church Council is required to ensure that a documented risk assessment and action plan (Resource 8) has been submitted and approved for all activities in the congregation. This documentation is necessary for insurance purposes. Any environmental risks identified within the Risk Management plan need to be transferred to the *Annual Risk Assessment Register* (Resource 21) for action.

Before approving a program The Church Council must ensure they have received:

- Name of the Team Leader and a list of Team Members involved (Resource 7)
- Risk Assessment and Action Plan (Resource 8)
- Safety Information (Resource 9)
- Activity Information (Resource 10)
- Participant Information (Resource 11)
- Application for Permission to Proceed (Resource 12)



¹ Based on Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Policy for Synod Services, Presbyteries and Congregations – 3.5 Formalising the Appointment
² Based on Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Policy for Synod Services, Presbyteries and Congregations – 3.4 Unsuccessful applicants

Guidelines

For working with Children and young people under 18 years

Child Safe Church

To assist The Church Council in approving a program or activity the Checklist for assessing a safety plan (Resource 13) can be utilised. Formal approval is granted using the Permission to proceed form (Resource 14) with all approvals to be recorded on the *Insurance Register of Congregation/Group Approved Activities* (Resource 20). This register then becomes a quick reference for insurance.

It is also the Church Council's responsibility to ensure that a safe environment is provided for all persons. Regular building and ground checks should be carried out using the *Property Required Safety Checklist* (Resource 1) by the Church Council and any risks or maintenance recorded. This is then transferred to the *Annual Risk Assessment Register* to be recorded, prioritised and actioned. (Resource 21)

Training

All employees and volunteers who are working with children and young people under the age of 18 years **MUST** do the Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod's **Child Safe Church Training every 2 years**. Church Council needs to monitor that training of leaders is happening and the Congregation Child Safe Co-ordinator is to keep a record of those who have completed this training. (Resource 22)

If employees or volunteers receive additional training the details of this training can be included in their individual training record (Resource 24).