



SSJG MINISTRIES INC.

Commitment to Safeguarding of Children

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| Policy number | 1.06 | Approved by | Management Committee |
| Version | 1.0 | Approved on | 5 December 2019 |
| Responsible Person | Regional General Manager | Scheduled review | 31 December 2021 |

PURPOSE

The Mission and Values of SSJG Ministries Inc. reflect the Gospel teaching that all people have a unique dignity and the example of Jesus in especially showing care for the poor, powerless and vulnerable.

The purpose of this policy is to reinforce the organisational culture of safety for **Vulnerable Persons** served by the organisation (see policy 1.23) by placing emphasis on ensuring a child-safe culture and practices exists in those ministries of SSJG Ministries where our services and activities interact with children.

The key principles of a child safe organisation include:

- creating an environment where children's safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions;
- understanding the nature of abuse and risk factors;
- placing emphasis on genuine engagement with, & valuing of, children & young people;
- creating conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people;
- creating conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm; and
- responding appropriately to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

SCOPE

This policy applies to SSJG Ministries Inc. (Ministries Inc.).

DEFINITION

"**Church Entity**" means a diocese, religious institute and any other juridical person, body corporate, company, organisation or association, including an autonomous lay organisation, that exercises pastoral ministry within, or on behalf of, the Catholic Church.

"**Child**" and "**children**" means any children or young person under 18 years of age.

"**Child Abuse**" as referenced through source material refers to the long term and/or short term maltreatment of a person under 18 years of age. Child abuse may be categorised as including physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, psychological abuse and exposure to family violence.

“Child Protection” refers to prevention and response to abuse against children. This includes policies, procedures and preventative measures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm.

“Vulnerable Person” means any child or any person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of services or support due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability

POLICY

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (“the Standards”) issued by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) in 2018 are designed to ensure Catholic Church entities have a child safe culture and practices that are in accordance with legislative requirements, the Australian community’s expectations and Gospel values. The Standards are designed to be applied to all Church ministries throughout Australia. The Standards aim to ensure that every child is protected by the same rigorous standards regardless of where they live or what part of the Church they encounter.

SSJG Ministries as a Ministry of the Catholic Church in Australia is committed to applying these Standards as relevant to its services and activities and ensure that systems and processes promote the safeguarding of children. This includes developing and disseminating a Child Safety Commitment Statement to this effect.

Clearly the risk of harm to children will vary depending on the nature, size and characteristics of Church entities and the services they provide to children. Of relevance to SSJG Ministries in this context are the Retreat Centre at Safety Bay and the Heritage Centre at Broome. The operations of each of these Ministries differ in terms of the appropriate application of the Standards and procedures applicable to each are identified below.

Safety Bay

The Safety Bay Retreat Centre provides both overnight accommodation and day services supporting retreats and conferences for many individuals and groups including church and parish groups, guided retreats and school retreats. The distinguishing feature of these services in terms of the application of the Standards is the structured nature of the access to the Centre by children. Children are only permitted to use the accommodation or conference facilities where they are under the care and supervision of a third party. That is the Retreat Centre has no direct responsibility for care or supervision of children. The following procedures will apply:

1. All employees whose regular place of work is the Retreat Centre must hold a valid National Police Certificate and Working with Children Check at all times.
2. As part of the booking enquiry process, every group or individual (responsible entity) must identify whether children will be utilizing the facility. Where this is the case, the Retreat Centre Manager must be satisfied that the responsible entity understands its obligations toward supervision of the children at all times during the visit and acknowledges that the Retreat Centre is a child safe facility.
3. Where families are utilizing the accommodation units of the Retreat Centre on an individual basis, any children present remain the responsibility of their legal guardian(s) at all times.
4. The Retreat Centre will display the SSJG Ministries Child Safety Commitment Statement prominently within the premises.

Broome

The Broome Heritage Centre offers educational opportunities for both primary and secondary school structured visits as well as adult groups and ad-hoc visitors.

The following procedures will apply:

5. All employees whose regular place of work is the Heritage Centre must hold a valid National Police Certificate and Working with Children Check at all times.
6. In relation to structured visits by school groups, the Exhibition Support Officer must be satisfied that the school or other organisation making the booking (responsible entity) understands its obligations toward supervision of the children at all times during the visit and acknowledges that the Heritage Centre is a child safe facility.
7. Where ad-hoc visitors tour the Heritage Centre, they must remind those visitors as necessary that any children present remain the responsibility of their legal guardian(s) at all times.
8. The Heritage Centre will display the SSJG Ministries Child Safety Commitment Statement prominently within the premises.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *SSJG Ministries Inc. Child Safety Commitment Statement (Attachment A)*
- *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards issued by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd April 2018*
- *Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy, policy 1.23*

AUTHORISATION



SR ISOBEL MORAN

Chair, Management Committee

REVIEW HISTORY

This Policy is to be reviewed every two years or at such lesser intervals as the Management Committee shall require.

| Date | Reviewed by: | Notes |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 5 December 2019 | Regional Leader | Creation of policy |

NEXT REVIEW

| Date | Position Responsible |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 31 December 2021 | Regional General Manager |



ATTACHMENT A

SSJG MINISTRIES INC. – STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

1. The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards issued by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd in 2018 are designed to ensure Catholic Church entities have a child safe culture and practices that are in accordance with legislative requirements, the Australian community's expectations and Gospel values.
2. SSJG Ministries as a Ministry of the Catholic Church is committed to applying these Standards to its services and activities to ensure that systems and processes promote the safeguarding of children.
3. SSJG Ministries has developed and adopted a specific policy to emphasise its commitment to ensuring that a child-safe culture and practices exists in those Ministries where our services and activities interact with children.
4. SSJG Ministries has also taken steps to ensure that all clients utilizing its facilities for activities which involve children (school groups or other organisations) for both day and overnight visits are fully aware of its requirements in relation to the protection of children during these times.
5. Children are only permitted to use accommodation, conference, exhibition or other SSJG Ministries facilities where they are under the care and supervision of a third party. That is SSJG Ministries has no direct responsibility for care or supervision of children.
6. SSJG Ministries requires that all its employees whose regular place of work is a ministry or service that is accessed by children must hold a valid Working with Children Check at all times.
7. SSJG Ministries also requires that any client utilizing its facilities where children are involved:
 - a. acknowledge that it is a child safe facility; and
 - b. have adequate child supervisory arrangements in place at all times.
8. This Statement of Commitment to Child Safety will be displayed prominently throughout SSJG Ministry facilities providing services to children. It will also be made available on its website and drawn to the attention of clients booking its facilities.