

KEIRAVIEW UNITING CHURCH – SAFE CHURCH COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Keiraview Uniting Church affirms that all people have the right to be emotionally, physically and spiritually safe, respected, and have their views and opinions valued at all times. We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety.

We believe that God calls his people to minister to the vulnerable. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (Ex 22:21-22, Deut 10:17-19, Jer 22:2-4, James 1:27).

This Statement has been developed to help us live out our Biblical call and our responsibilities under Australian legislation.

OUR STATEMENT AIMS TO:

- Minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
- Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled thoroughly.
- Ensure that leaders and programs are safe.
- Ensure that all people are respected and valued.

WE AT KEIRAVIEW COMMIT TO:

a) Safe recruitment of leaders

- Keiraview will screen all prospective leaders in our ministries, before they are appointed (eg. relevant working with children's check / police check).
- Keiraview have a minimum church attendance requirement for all prospective volunteer leaders.

b) Adequate training of leaders

- Keiraview requires that all leaders attend a Safe Church (SCTA endorsed) workshop within their first 6 months of ministry and refresh this training every 3 years.
- Keiraview requires all leaders to attend additional ministry-specific training as required.

c) Continued supervision of leaders

- Keiraview commits to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for leaders.
- All leaders at Keiraview agree to follow our Lay Leader's Code of Conduct.

d) Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious ministry misconduct

- All leaders at Keiraview will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, according to our procedures.
- Where a leader has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them we will provide support to alleged victims and alleged perpetrators and seek appropriate denominational help for a just and fair resolution. We will seek to maintain privacy as appropriate to the given situation.

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e) Safe environments in our ministry programs

- Keiraview will serve participants as servants of Christ, commit to the good news of Jesus and lead in spiritually non-abusive ways.
- Keiraview will afford participants, including children, a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by; fostering and valuing their ideas, and encouraging participation.
- Keiraview will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
- All leaders at Keiraview will discharge their duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates for establishment and maintenance of safe environments in our church.
- Keiraview has a Safe Church Team and Property Committee to establish and maintain: WHS, fire safety, building safety, first aid, food safety, safe transport, incident and emergency procedures.
- Team Leaders at Keiraview are to complete a written ministry approval process annually.

f) Child Safe Principles

Keiraview is committed to a child safe culture through the implementation of The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Keiraview is committed to ensuring the following standards are met:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Diversity is respected and equity is promoted.
5. Our people are suitable for work with children and committed to the values of child safety and wellbeing.
6. Child-focused complaints processes are in place.
7. Our people are provided with ongoing education and training on child safety.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety.
9. Policies and procedures document child safety.
10. Review and continuous improvement of policy, procedure and practice.

For further information regarding how the Synod of NSW & ACT is working towards ensuring all congregations uphold these standards see the Synod web page below.

<https://nswact.uca.org.au/safe-church-unit/child-safe-principles/>

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DEFINITIONS

Child: a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Safe Church Team: is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the Safe Church Commitment Statement and supporting documentation and processes.

Approval for Ministry: a process of written accountability, whereby the Church Council approves a program/event to take place in the church's name. This will include assessing the risks and ensuring the events have been thought through and planned.

Safe Leaders: have been through a recruitment process and understand their responsibilities. They may work as part of a team of leaders, or there maybe a team leader who supervises the other Safe Leaders.

SCTA: Safe Church Training Agreement under the National Council of Churches in Australia.

This Safe Church Commitment Statement applies to all staff members and volunteer workers associated with the ministry of Keiraview Uniting Church.