

1. Purpose

This policy reflects Newcastle Anglican’s commitment to

- safeguarding children and young people by upholding their rights, best interests, safety and wellbeing;
- Ensuring that the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people are paramount and guide all decisions and actions taken by Newcastle Anglican;
- creating environments that prevent harm to children, identify risks early, and respond appropriately where concerns arise.

This policy sets out principles which comply with obligations under the NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the NSW Child Safe Standards.

This policy may be supplemented by service specific procedures in accordance with each regulatory environment.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the following Newcastle Anglican agencies:

Newcastle Anglican Churches (Ministry)	Samaritans	Anglican Care	Newcastle Anglican Schools	Newcastle Anglican Corporate
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

This policy applies to all Workers.

All Workers share responsibility for safeguarding children and promoting environments where children feel safe, respected and heard.

3. Principles

Children and young people have a right to experience healthy caring communities, which offer safety from abuse, protection from harm, security of accommodation and stability of care.

Newcastle Anglican adopts the NSW Child Safe Standards, which require that:

- 1) child safety is embedded in leadership, governance and culture;
- 2) children participate in decisions that affect them and are taken seriously;
- 3) families and communities are informed and involved;
- 4) equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account;
- 5) people working with children are suitable and supported;
- 6) responses to complaints of child abuse are child-focused;
- 7) staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training;
- 8) physical and online environments minimise opportunities for abuse;

- 9) implementation of the Standards is regularly reviewed and improved; and
- 10) policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

Child safety is embedded in Newcastle Anglican's leadership, governance and organisational culture. Leaders at all levels are responsible for modelling safe behaviours, ensuring effective safeguarding systems are in place, and promoting a culture where children's safety and wellbeing are prioritised.

Newcastle Anglican acknowledges past systemic failures where children were not adequately protected and commits to continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

4. Definitions

Allegation means an assertion that someone has done something wrong. Proof is not required for an allegation.

Child means a person under the age of 18.

Child Abuse – Includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, neglect, grooming and exploitation.

Disclosure means that a person has reported, or made known, an instance of abuse or suspected abuse.

Mandatory Reporter a person, who in the course of their professional work or other paid employment, delivers or is directly responsible for managing and directing the delivery of health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services, or law enforcement, wholly or partly to children.

Reportable Conduct is defined in section 20 of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 as:

- any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence or an offence involving child abuse material), or
- any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child, or
- any offence under section 43B (fail to reduce or remove the risk of abuse) or 316A (concealing child abuse offence) of the Crimes Act 1900 or
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child

Risk of Significant Harm means a risk which is serious enough to warrant a response by a statutory authority, irrespective of a family's consent.

Working With Children Check – The NSW Government screening system for people engaged in child-related work.

Worker refers to person who carries out work, paid or unpaid, in any capacity for any Newcastle Anglican organisation. The term includes board members, committee members, employees, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, volunteers, and students, including apprentices, trainees, and those on work experience.

5. Organisational Commitment

Newcastle Anglican will:

- purposefully create conditions that prevent harm to children and enable risks to be identified early.
- ensure children and young people understand their physical, emotional, cultural and online rights.
- ensure children and young people know what actions they can take if they feel unsafe.
- ensure all Workers understand the standards of conduct expected of them and that child abuse is not tolerated within Newcastle Anglican.
- ensure Workers understand their duty to act if the rights, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person may be compromised.
- ensure concerns about risk of harm are reported to the appropriate authorities and that information is lawfully shared where necessary to protect children.
- actively seek and value the perspectives, experiences and feedback of children and young people.
- ensure the right of children and young people to participate and be heard informs decision-making, planning and service delivery where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- create culturally safe and inclusive environments where identity is affirmed, connections are protected and rights are respected.
- recognise and uphold the rights of children who may experience increased vulnerability, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, children with disability, LGBTIQ+ young people, children affected by child protection, out-of-home care or youth justice systems, and other children who may experience increased vulnerability.
- ensure children, young people and their circles of support can raise concerns and make complaints safely.
- ensure those who raise concerns are confident their views will be heard and responded to.
- maintain systems, policies and procedures that support the safe disclosure of risks of harm.
- support continuous improvement in child safety practice.

6. Application

The Newcastle Anglican Service Philosophy affirms that children, as people we support, are rights-holders and that our services to them must promote reliability, individuality, dignity and empowerment.

Safeguarding children and young people is central to this philosophy and to our vision of people flourishing through safe, respectful and accountable services and relationships.

6.1 Child Safety as Paramount

The safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people guide all decisions and actions. Newcastle Anglican seeks to create environments where children feel secure, supported and free from harm. We uphold our legal and ethical responsibilities to protect children and young people by ensuring that all Workers act on concerns of abuse, neglect or risk of significant harm.

6.2 Right to Participate

Children and young people are encouraged and supported to express their views and participate in decisions that affect them. They will receive clear information about their rights in ways they can understand. Their insights will help inform our services and responses.

6.3 Family, Kin, Community and Cultural Connections

We recognise the important role of families, kin and communities in the lives of children and young people. Where safe and appropriate, families and communities will be involved in decisions affecting children, with respect for cultural identity, connection and belonging.

We are committed to making active, purposeful and timely efforts to support children to remain safely with their families wherever possible. When children are removed from the care of their parents, we work toward safe restoration wherever possible. Where restoration is not possible, we support ongoing connection with family, kin and community.

These efforts will be undertaken in a culturally appropriate manner and in partnership with children, families and their support networks.

6.4 Child Safety Risk Management

Newcastle Anglican will identify, assess and manage risks to children associated with its programs, activities, facilities and online environments.

Risk management includes:

- identifying situations where abuse or harm could occur.
- implementing controls to reduce opportunities for abuse.
- monitoring safeguarding risks.
- reviewing safeguarding practices regularly.

6.5 Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

Children have the right to equitable treatment and to services that respond to their diverse needs and circumstances. In all decisions and actions, consideration will be given to each child's developmental capacity, abilities, language, religion, culture and identity so that support can be tailored to their individual circumstances.

Newcastle Anglican recognises the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and supports their connection to family, community, culture and Country.

We acknowledge the importance of self-determination and culturally respectful practice and seek to work in partnership with Aboriginal children, families and communities to support safety, wellbeing and participation.

6.6 Suitability of Workers

Newcastle Anglican will ensure that only people who are safe and suitable work with children. All Workers will be appropriately screened, inducted, supported and trained to uphold child safety.

Workers will understand their responsibilities for recognising and responding to concerns about children and will receive appropriate supervision and support.

Immediate action will be taken if any Worker is identified as posing a risk to children. This action may include temporary removal from duties or other protective measures, as required to ensure child safety. All responses will be conducted in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness, including providing the individual with an opportunity to respond to the concerns raised, ensuring decisions are based on objective evidence, and managing the process impartially.

Workers must comply with the Newcastle Anglican Code of Conduct and are expected to participate fully in any inquiry undertaken in line with these procedural fairness requirements.

6.7 Mandatory Reporting and Reporting of Crime

Workers are expected to meet applicable Mandatory Reporter obligations and report suspected Risk of Significant Harm in accordance with NSW legislation. Suspected criminal behaviour must also be reported in accordance with the Reporting of Crime Policy.

These responsibilities support a culture where concerns are taken seriously, and the safety and wellbeing of children remains paramount.

6.8 Child-Focused Responses to Concerns

Responses to complaints, concerns, disclosures or indicators of harm will be timely, respectful and child centred. Children—and anyone raising a concern on their behalf—will be heard without fear, judgement or retribution.

Our responses will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person.

6.9 Safe Physical, Cultural and Online Environments

Newcastle Anglican will provide safe physical, cultural and online environments that minimise the risk of harm, abuse or exploitation and support the wellbeing, development and dignity of children and young people.

Electronic communication with children must be transparent and consistent with organisational standards.

6.10 Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Child safety systems will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective. Newcastle Anglican will learn from experience, monitoring and feedback in order to strengthen child safety practice.

Newcastle Anglican will seek feedback from children, families and workers to inform ongoing improvement of child safety practices.

6.11 Support for Children and Families

Where concerns about safety or wellbeing arise, Newcastle Anglican will support children, young people and families to access appropriate services and assistance.

6.12 Trauma-Informed Care

Newcastle Anglican will seek to incorporate trauma-informed approaches in programs and services that support the resilience and wellbeing of children and young people.

6.13 Co-operation with Other Agencies

Newcastle Anglican will work in cooperation with government and non-government agencies to protect children and young people from the risk of harm.

6.14 Allegations and Investigations (Reportable Conduct Scheme)

Newcastle Anglican manages allegations of misconduct involving children in accordance with the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Newcastle Anglican will ensure children, families and workers can raise concerns about safety in ways that are accessible and appropriate to their age and communication needs.

This includes:

- child-friendly information about how to raise concerns.
- multiple channels for reporting concerns.
- access to trusted adults within the organisation.
- protection from retaliation for those raising concerns.

All allegations will be managed in line with the Reporting of Crime Policy and the Framework for Addressing Agency and School Child Safeguarding Incidents, ensuring that risks are addressed promptly, appropriate supports are provided, and investigations proceed with procedural fairness, confidentiality and child-centred practice.

6.15 Record Retention, storage and access

It is essential that full and accurate safeguarding records are kept to comply with legislation and assist with any safeguarding queries or investigations that arise in future. Newcastle Anglican will retain all safeguarding records permanently. All records must be stored securely and protected from loss, unauthorised access, or damage.

For the purpose of this policy safeguarding records are all records of information that relate to:

- Records relating to any incident, illness, injury, trauma, or allegation involving a child.
- Records relating to the death of a child.
- Records relate to actual or alleged child sexual abuse.

- Out of Home Care Records.
- Records relating to employment, engagement and screening of child related Workers.
- Records relating to safeguarding and child protection training.
- Records relating to safeguarding complaints, reporting and investigations.

Child records will be accessible only to authorised personnel and transferred securely when required by legislation, oversight bodies, or when a child accesses their own history.

All other child-related records must be kept for a minimum of 7 years after the child last attended the service.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Safeguarding Governance

Newcastle Anglican maintains organisational systems, policies and delegated authorities to ensure the protection of children and young people. Safeguarding responsibilities are exercised through these governance arrangements, with oversight provided by the Bishop, Board and CEO, and operational implementation undertaken by Executive Directors and Key Leaders within their areas of responsibility.

7.2 Bishop

The Bishop holds overall responsibility for ensuring Newcastle Anglican meets its child safeguarding obligations as Head of Entity.

The Bishop provides leadership that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children, ensures appropriate governance arrangements are in place, and ensures that the organisation has appropriate systems in place to ensure compliance with the NSW Child Safe Standards and relevant legislation.

7.3 NAC Board and CEO

The NAC Board and CEO are responsible for ensuring organisational structures, governance and culture support the protection of children and compliance with regulatory requirements.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding systems, policies and resources are implemented across Newcastle Anglican.

7.4 Executive Directors

Executive Directors hold operational responsibility for child safeguarding within their portfolios.

They ensure that safeguarding systems, supervision arrangements and reporting processes are implemented and maintained within their services.

Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring that risks are identified and managed, and that concerns, allegations and incidents involving children are addressed in accordance with legislation and organisational procedures.

7.5 Key Leaders

Key Leaders are responsible for the day-to-day safeguarding practice within their services.

Within Samaritans Permanency Support Program the Key Leader is the Principal Officer.

Within Newcastle Anglican Schools the Key Leader is the School Principal.

Key Leaders ensure that:

- safeguarding practice is embedded in service delivery
- workers are suitable, trained and supported
- risks are identified and managed
- concerns and allegations are reported and addressed appropriately.

The Principal Officer must comply with the OOHC Code of Practice.

School Principals must comply with NESA requirements.

7.6 Managers, Carers and Supervisors

Ensure that all practice reflects children's rights and that environments support participation, safety and cultural connection.

7.7 Workers

Act to uphold children's rights, complete required training, follow procedures, and report concerns.

7.8 Children, Young People and Families

Are encouraged and empowered to exercise their rights, provide feedback, and participate in decisions.

8. Information and Assistance

For assistance with practice safety and wellbeing contact your line manager, practice lead or executive director for your area.

For assistance with investigations and reportable conduct contact the Director of Professional Standards or Safeguarding Manager safeguarding@newcastleanglican.org.au

9. Legal and Policy Framework

9.1 Legislation

[Australian Education Act 2013 - Federal Register of Legislation](#)

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)

[Children \(Education and Care Services National Law Application\) Act 2010 \(NSW\)](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Regulation 2012 \(NSW\)](#)

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012 No 51 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Children's Guardian Act 2019 No 25 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Crimes Act 1900 No 40 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Ombudsman Act 1974 No 68 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Community Services \(Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring\) Act 1993 No 2 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Disability Inclusion Act 2014 No 41 - NSW Legislation](#)

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 No 48 - NSW Legislation](#)

9.2 Standards

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations | National Office for Child Safety](#)

[General information | What are the Child Safe Standards | Office of the Children's Guardian](#)

[Code of Practice resources | Office of the Children's Guardian](#)

[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

9.3 Policy Documents

Service Philosophy

Code of Conduct

Complaints Policy

Reporting of Crime Policy

Risk Management Framework

Hazard Incident and Disclosures Procedure

Addressing Agency and School Child Safeguarding Incidents Framework

10. Document Governance

Tier	1
Process Owner	Executive Director Family and Community Services Executive Director Education
Policy Owner	The Bishop
Policy Approver	The Bishop
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