The Christian Reformed Church of Gosnells Incorporated

Gosnells Christian Reformed Church

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People

A CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSON PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

Approved: _____ DATE: _____

CHAIRPERSON

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1. CHILD AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL ("Protection Policy")

1.1. Protection Policy Statement: A Commitment to Child Protection

The purpose of this Protection Policy is to guide The Christian Reformed Church of Gosnells Incorporated ("CRC Gosnells") in developing a child-protective culture. CRC Gosnells is committed to welcoming children and their parents or carers and providing a 'child-safe other and children for programs and culture environment, [1]' vulnerable people who attend the services and other programs. We are committed to demonstrating our care and respect for every child and vulnerable person by protecting them from abuse of any kind. We see such a commitment as flowing naturally from our vision and mission 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.

Our priority is to:

- provide safe physical, emotional and online environments.
- develop and implement clear expectations to guide the behaviour of adults towards children, expressed in a child-safe Code of Conduct that provides advice for managing relationships between adult and children.
- develop and implement strategies for identifying, mitigating or eliminating risks to children's wellbeing and safety.
- provide clear and accessible pathways for acting on observations, allegations and disclosures, including reporting abuse.

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. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse and discrimination. Our pastoral care and protection of all children expresses our love and commitment to their **wellbeing**, even if their statements and choices do not align with the beliefs and doctrines of this church community.

[1] 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 paramount to this organisation, that it has compliant policies and procedural documents and that risk identification and mitigation practices are embedded in the culture.

This Protection Policy recognises both Federal and State legislation as well as regulations and guidelines and commits workers to responsibly and reasonably cooperate 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.

If any person believes a child is in immediate danger, call 000.

1.2. Scope:

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

- Ministers.
- Church Council.
- All staff and volunteers.
- All members and adherents/regular attendees.
- All committees and subcommittees created by CRC Gosnells.
- All activities and programs organised by or with the approval of CRC Gosnells, on the premises or off-site, including camps and day trips.
- All guests or hirers of the venue and its facilities. Such temporary users of CRC Gosnells facilities will be provided with copies of this Protection Policy; the Code of Conduct and relevant procedures, and the Booking Form will include a signed commitment to comply with the expectations of these documents.
- Contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services on the premises, particularly if they have any contact with children whilst on site. Where possible, such temporary visitors to CRC Gosnells premises will be provided with an Induction Pack and required to sign their willingness to comply with the expectations outlined.

1.3. Roles and Responsibilities

Church Council is made up of the elected elders and deacons of the Church according to the Church Order and the Rules for The Christian Reformed Church of Gosnells ("CRC Gosnells"). It also includes the employed Minister(s) of the Church. Church Council has the oversight of the policies, programs and activities of CRC Gosnells.

Chairperson of Church Council. Unless an allegation is made against the Chairperson, the Chairperson is deemed the head of entity for the purposes of reporting and investigating; and for all provisions of the Reportable Conduct Scheme. The Chairperson shall be the first contact of Church Council.

ChildSafe Coordinator. Church Council has appointed the ChildSafe Coordinator to manage CRC Gosnells' child protection procedures, especially the process for

making, receiving, secure storing and managing the initial responses to complaints or allegations of abuse or misconduct against or in the presence of a child. The ChildSafe Coordinator will ensure that all those working with children have a Working With Children Check ("WWC Check") that is active and that regular training is undertaken by all those who have interaction with children in CRC Gosnells community.

1.4. Authority

This Protection Policy was revised and updated to reflect the most recent changes to State and Federal law and guidelines towards being a child-safe organisation.
This updated policy was approved by Church Council and adopted for use by CRC Gosnells on 6th August 2024.

Original Policy	4th July 2023
Revision 1	6th August 2024

1.5. Protection Policy Review

This Protection Policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or as required with the declaration of relevant legislation to remain compliant with new legislation.

Any proposed changes or updates will be submitted to the Church Council at a properly convened meeting for approval before being adopted and implemented. The date of approval and implementation will be noted in the minutes of Church Council and on the document that was approved.

1.6. Operating Principles

Duty of Care: Means any legal responsibility that CRC Gosnells has to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those who participate in programs or activities of CRC Gosnells.

Vicarious Liability: Means any legal liability that CRC Gosnells 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 CRC Gosnells will take in providing any program, activity, service, or facility.

Reasonable Foresight: Refers to a responsibility that CRC Gosnells 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.

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.

2. DEFINITIONS

Child means any person under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse is defined in Appendix 8 and includes all the following types of abuse and neglect of children and young people: physical; sexual; emotional/psychological; racial/cultural or spiritual/religious.

ChildSafe is the system of training and risk management for organisations, families and communities created by ChildSafe Limited (a harm prevention charity established by Scripture Union Australia in 2007).

Church Order is The Church Order of Christian Reformed Churches of Australia as approved at Synod 2012 and updated at Synod 2018

Rules is Rules For Christian Reformed Church of Gosnells which sets out the rules of CRC Gosnells.

Member means a member according to the Rules which state that "Membership of the Association is open to those persons who have confessed the Reformed Christian Faith and whose names have been entered on the roll of members by the Clerk".

Minister is the person(s) who is authorised to conduct services and ceremonies in accordance with the Church Order and has been employed for this role by Church Council.

SMO is the ChildSafe Safety Management Online program provided by ChildSafe.

3. POLICY STATEMENTS IN RELATION TO THE 10 NATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) Final Report emphasised that members of the public, children and young people, parents, carers, families and communities should feel confident that organisations working with children provide safe environments in which children's rights, needs and interests are met.

The Royal Commission made recommendations to improve child safe approaches in organisations, including through the development and implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles), which were committed to by national, state and territory governments in 2019[2].

3.1. National Principle 1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in CRC Gosnells culture at every level, from the Church Council to all members. This Protection Policy is to be provided to all members of CRC Gosnells. Our statement of commitment to child safety and our policies are on CRC Gosnells website. Our risk management strategies and procedures are comprehensive and well known. Our Code of Conduct is read and signed by all our staff and volunteers.

3.2. National Principle 2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

At CRC Gosnells, children and young people will be informed and empowered about their human rights: to be heard, consulted and included in decision-making processes that affect them. Children and young people will be informed of the strategies and procedures in place to keep them safe.

3.3. National Principle 3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

CRC Gosnells community will be informed and involved in developing and implementing the practices and procedures that will protect our children and their wellbeing.

[2] https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-communities/national-principles-child-safe-organisations

3.4. National Principle 4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

CRC Gosnells recognises some children are vulnerable because of their cultural and linguistic diversity, physical or intellectual disability, sexual identity or gender dysphoria, and will ensure they are not discriminated against or disadvantaged by the structures, policies and practices of CRC Gosnells.

3.5. National Principle 5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

CRC Gosnells requires all staff and volunteers to undertake training as set by ChildSafe. All volunteers and employees must have a valid WWC Check. CRC Gosnells provides induction; training and review for all staff and volunteers as suitable for their position.

3.6. National Principle 6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused

The processes for making, managing, and responding to complaints, including investigating complaints and child abuse concerns are visible, accessible and child focused. The ChildSafe Coordinator shall be known to CRC Gosnells community. Church Council will ensure that any complaint shall be taken seriously.

3.7. National Principle 7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

CRC Gosnells will provide regular training to equip all staff and volunteers with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep children safe. Staff and volunteers will complete appropriate levels of training and provided with certification of completion. All training is recorded on SMO.

3.8. National Principle 8. Physical and on-line environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children or young people to be harmed

CRC Gosnells has risk management strategies and polices that aim to mitigate the physical and on-line environmental risk for children.

3.9. National Principle 9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved

CRC Gosnells is committed to regular reviews and improvements of child safety and its implementations with CRC Gosnells community.

3.10. National Principle 10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

This Protection Policy and related documents show how CRC Gosnells works to exercise its duty of care to all children, and to provide evidence that these child-safe practices and procedures are well-known and complied with within CRC Gosnells community.

4. CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING ARE EMBEDDED IN CHURCH GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE – (NATIONAL PRINCIPLES ("NP") 1)

CRC Gosnells:

- will make a clear statement that child abuse of any kind or harmful discrimination on the basis of identified attributes will not be tolerated. This statement will be on the church website (https://gosnellsreformed.church). This statement is also a part of recruitment documentation and other Church publications.
- through Church Council, will assign the responsibility for child safety education and practices to the ChildSafe Coordinator. This responsibility will be practically shared by members of the Church Council and the ChildSafe Coordinator. They will ensure that all staff and volunteers complete mandatory reading and training in child protection, reporting obligations, risk management and duty of care, as well as other policies which support these principles.
- will undertake annual risk assessment audits and review of procedures at Church Council level.
- will ensure that all members of staff, including casually employed staff and volunteers, read and sign the **Code of Conduct**.
- builds Risk Management strategies into the planning of all activities of the church that involves children, including excursions, camps and special events. Each event will have a nominated Person-in-Charge who will complete risk assessment documentation and present it to the ChildSafe Coordinator for approval.
- will regularly provide all those involved with children with training and other forms of communication to ensure their understanding of obligations under the law regarding record keeping and information sharing.

5. EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (NP2 & NP7)

CRC Gosnells has identified the need for children to be educated and aware of child abuse; ways and opportunity to provide feedback to Team Leaders; and how to make a complaint or allegation about abuse.

To this end, CRC Gosnells will:

- make this Protection Policy and related documents available to all members of the Church community, as PDF documents on the website or by email.
- **inform and educate participants** about the importance of self-protection, personal safety, strategies for finding support and help if concerned.
- display Information posters in classrooms and other spaces.
- encourage children, families and leaders to complete Feedback Forms at the end of units of study or activities where personal safety could be an issue.
- ensure **Codes of Conduct** and other helpful materials are displayed in meeting rooms and other open spaces.
- ensure important information about **making a complaint** about alleged abuse to the ChildSafe Coordinator, or other pastoral carers will be available for participants.

CRC Gosnells will listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents/carers raise with us. We are committed to protecting children from abuse.

6. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (NP3)

A central principle of Family Engagement is that it is a partnership between the parents and the church – and, ideally, the church family. This involves all aspects of pastoral care of every participant. This Protection Policy affirms the right of parents to:

- have opportunity to comment on arrangements, policies and procedures in place for the safety and well-being of their children
- be fully informed of activities and the risk assessment and mitigation that has been undertaken
- have access to all the policies that guide governance and leadership decisions around child safety. These documents will be available on both the website and at the church.

7. UPHOLDING EQUITY AND RESPECTING DIVERSITY (NP4)

CRC Gosnells is blessed to have families from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and language backgrounds. We value and uphold this diversity and are enriched by it. Our beliefs - relating to the value of every child, regardless of age, gender or sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, ability or disability – underpin our policies and practices in ministry, behaviour management and pastoral care. We pay particular attention to the needs of children with physical or intellectual, or learning disabilities and for those with English as a second language or other cultural differences. Children who identify as LGBTIQ+ or who have gender dysphoria or anxiety or confusion about any of these identifications are protected from discrimination and cared for with the same consideration as offered to all children.

8. EMPLOYMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (NP5)

8.1. Recruitment, screening and selection practices

CRC Gosnells will be vigilant in the recruitment, screening and selection of all staff, contractors, activity 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, as expressed in this Protection Policy, especially in their interaction with children and other vulnerable people.

CRC Gosnells recruitment, screen and selection practices include:

- our statements of commitment to child safety and our behavioural expectations of employees and volunteers are included in all advertisements and Position Descriptions.

- 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 current WWC Check and a National Police Certificate;
  - proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
  - the person's history of work involving children; and
  - two references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.

- The type of evidence that an applicant is required to provide will vary depending on the type of position that they are applying for. Church Council

will not offer any applicant a position of responsibility until they provide the required evidence to the ChildSafe Coordinator.

Any person with a record of child abuse, either sexual or physical, will not be offered a role that involves working with children or being in contact with children in the conduct of their duties.

- Applicants will be interviewed by a church representative (Team Leader) prior to appointment being made official. Interviews will include specific questions relating to allegations or complaints made against the applicant involving misconduct against a child. The applicant will sign the questionnaire verifying the truthfulness and accuracy of the statements.

- In relation to contractors working on the church premises, Church Council, in ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people, has the right to request a WWC Check.

8.2. Induction and Training (NP5, NP7 & NP9)

CRC Gosnells provides a system of induction, support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. This system will train and guide our staff and volunteers in their interactions with children and clear procedures for managing programs and activities.

- All staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of this **Protection Policy** and the **Code of Conduct** that defines unacceptable conduct, boundaries and expectations for behaviour. Staff and volunteers will sign CRC Gosnells **Ministry Covenant** in Appendix 12 stating they have read, understand and will comply with polices, guidelines and follow procedures faithfully. Staff and volunteers will sign the **Code of Conduct**.
- Any person new to the children's or youth work team will complete appropriate Childsafe induction and training as part of their orientation to the specific ministry. This is arranged by the ChildSafe Coordinator.
- Refresh, Renew, Update sessions are run for all staff and volunteers, to ensure staff awareness of the risks to child safety and familiarity with CRC Gosnells' child-protective practices and reporting expectations, and where there have been changes to legislation or practice as appropriate.

8.3. Support and Supervision for Staff, Contractors and Volunteers (NP1, NP5 and NP7)

CRC Gosnells provides support and supervision so that people feel valued, respected and fairly treated in the following ways:

- All staff and volunteers are required to have a valid WWC Check. The ChildSafe Coordinator shall regularly check that each employee and volunteer has a valid WWC Check registered with CRC Gosnells.
- Staff and volunteers are accountable to read and familiarise themselves with CRC Gosnells policies as available on the website and as directed by the leadership.
- Those who work with children are aware that they are accountable to their peers, supervisors and ultimately, God for the safety and wellbeing of children in their care. Awareness, vigilance and conferring with colleagues and supervisors are important strategies that are encouraged in protecting our children.
- All staff and volunteers have opportunities to share any concerns with their Team Leader or the ChildSafe Coordinator.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT (NP1, NP8 & NP9)

9.1. Risk management in programs

Risk assessment and management practices are embedded in our procedures for all services, programs or activities organised or authorised by CRC Gosnells. Risk identification and mitigation is part of the planning process for all activities, especially community events that involve travel.

This Protection Policy applies specifically to the minimising of risks of abuse of any kind to children and vulnerable people who are in our care and to ensuring their physical safety in the buildings or activities of CRC Gosnells. CRC Gosnells has zero tolerance of child abuse of any kind.

In situations where a person seeks to attend or join CRC Gosnells with a record of offending in child abuse of any kind, the leadership will put in place appropriate boundaries restricting access to children, to ensure their safety. This is not to say that such a person, with a proven reformed attitude, cannot be received into fellowship and benefit from the pastoral care of CRC Gosnells. Please refer to the Person of Concern process document on the website: safechurchcrca.org.au under Policy Documents.

All programs and activities must have a risk assessment completed before the program or activity is approved by the ChildSafe Coordinator.

9.2. Risk management of physical environment

Church Council has appointed a Committee of Management to identify and manage risks within CRC Gosnells and its environment. If the Committee of Management identifies risks of child abuse occurring in CRC Gosnells or its environment the committee will make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) they will organise and authorise to reduce or remove the risks (i.e. risk controls).

As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the Committee of Management will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

9.3. Risk management of online environments

CRC Gosnells is committed to providing safe use of online environments. Our detailed policy regarding the use of online environments is outlined in our Electronics Communications Policy. This policy must be read and followed by all staff and volunteers.

10. RECORD KEEPING (NP1, NP3, NP5, NP6, NP9 & NP10)

Record keeping is an essential element of our Protection strategies.

- Teachers/Team Members of children and other volunteers should keep personal notes of concerns, observations and disclosures regarding child abuse during the process of forming a reasonable belief.
- Notes should be saved as a personal record, but in form that can be accessible to church leadership and external authorities, if required. (Use Safety Management Online).
- When a 'reasonable belief' has been established, these notes can be recorded on a **Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form** in Appendix 4. The ChildSafe Coordinator can assist and support filling this out, if required. If it is clear that the belief requires a mandatory report, the notes and the report can be supplied to the Police and the Department of Communities.
- If a report is made, then all notes and the Form will be saved to a case file, which will be kept by the ChildSafe Coordinator with all subsequent correspondence and materials relating to investigations, determinations and further actions.

Notes and forms will record places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm. Reports must be securely stored by the ChildSafe Coordinator using Safety Management Online. They provide valuable legal documents for any investigations and demonstrate CRC Gosnells' due diligence.

11. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY (NP1 & NP6)

CRC Gosnells will collect, use, disclose and hold personal information of all people who fulfil a role within CRC Gosnells, in accordance with relevant privacy legislation. Such data will be securely stored and protected. Greater detail is provided in CRC Gosnells' Privacy Policy. As much as is reasonably possible, an individual's confidentiality is to be protected where allegations of child abuse are made.

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 in a way consistent with this Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct and relevant statutory requirements.

12. GENERAL REVIEWS (NP9 & NP10)

All policies, procedures and practices for keeping children safe will be reviewed:

- every two years or,
- after every reportable incident or,
- following changes to the law, as appropriate.

The review will assess whether CRC Gosnells' policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under its care. The ChildSafe Coordinator will organise to obtain views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

13. CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS (NP 6)

Please refer to our flowchart **Reporting Concerns at CRC Gosnells** in Appendix 1.

13.1. Concerns, complaint and allegations

CRC Gosnells is committed to hearing any concerns, complaints or allegations from children and adults, staff and volunteers.

Anyone can report any of the following concerns:

- any concern about the safety of any person
- any allegations; suspicions or observations;
- any breach of the Code of Conduct;
- any alleged illegal act;
- any serious dispute between leaders; or
- any other situation you are concerned about.

Concerns may be brought to the ChildSafe Coordinator or any member of Church Council. The complainant is encouraged to complete the **Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form** in Appendix 4. If they are not willing or able to fill out the form, the ChildSafe Coordinator (or any other leader) may take notes and fill out the form. A copy of this form must be kept by the ChildSafe Coordinator and the complainant may keep the original.

13.2. Concerns and reports about the church buildings or surrounds

Anyone may bring any concern about the church buildings or surrounds, or any damage or loss of property report to the ChildSafe Coordinator; any member of Church Council; or any member of Committee of Management.

Where possible the report is to be made using the **Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form** in Appendix 4. Alternatively a report can be made in writing in the Maintenance Register located in the Church Council room.

14. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE (NP 6)

Child abuse, especially sexual abuse of a child must be reported, where a reasonable belief is held that the child concerned has been abused, is being, or is likely to be abused. Please refer to Appendix 8 for information about Child Abuse.

A responsible adult can come to a reasonable belief through:

- Disclosure by a child about abuse to his or herself.
- Disclosure by another child or an adult about abuse to a child, or
- Direct observation of the abuse or evidence of it by the reporting adult.

The identity of the abuser and the circumstances of the event determine the procedure that should be followed by the leadership, staff and volunteers of CRC Gosnells.

Any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse, should disclose that information to the ChildSafe Coordinator, the Chairperson, the Minister, the Police or the Department of Communities.

14.1 Allegation of Abuse

Any person (including a child or parent) making an allegation of child abuse is encouraged to fill out a Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form in Appendix 4 and give it to the ChildSafe Coordinator.

If they are not willing or able to fill out the Form, the ChildSafe Coordinator (or other leader) may take notes and fill out the form at a later time. The ChildSafe Coordinator **will** share the allegation with the Chairperson. A copy of this Form **must** be kept by the ChildSafe Coordinator. The complainant may keep the original. This is an essential record of the event.

If a child is concerned about their own safety or the safety of another person, the child may speak to **anyone**.

If a child or young person comes to you with an allegation of abuse, it is your responsibility to listen carefully and stay calm. Let the child know that is **not** their fault and that you will report this to someone else who can help. Please follow **Reporting Procedure 2** in Appendix 3.

- **Do not counsel them**
- **Do not ask more questions,** especially leading questions or introducing material the child or young person has not self-disclosed.
- Make detailed notes of what happened.
- Any conversation with a child or young person needs to be recorded word for word.

Any responsible adult should, if they have come to a reasonable belief that abuse of a child or vulnerable person has happened, is or is likely to happen, follow the steps outlined in **Reporting Procedure 1** in Appendix 2. This includes senior leadership, or any concerned member of CRC Gosnells.

If the allegation of abuse is made against someone who is not a member of CRC Gosnells, refer to section 14.2. If the allegation is made against an employee, volunteer or worker in a church program or activity, refer to section 14.3. In this case, the Chairperson must ALSO follow the steps outlined in **Reporting Procedure 2** in Appendix 3.

14.2 Allegation of abuse of a child by a person outside CRC Gosnells community

If a child attending a CRC Gosnells program discloses abuse against them or against another child by a person outside of CRC Gosnells community, then the procedures outlined in **Reporting Procedure 1** in Appendix 2 must be followed. All

such disclosures should be written up on a **Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form** in Appendix 4 and the ChildSafe Coordinator informed.

However, it is the duty of the person to whom the disclosure was made to report the matter to either the Police or Department of Communities, following the **Reporting Procedure 1**. Church Council may also decide to make a report.

If the abuse is of a sexual nature a report must also be made to the Mandatory Reporting Website by the Chairperson on the Department of Communities website – see mandatoryreportingweb.communities.wa.gov.au

In this case, **no further investigation by CRC Gosnells is required**. However, all reasonable steps to protect the child from harm should be taken.

14.3 Abuse of a child by a CRC Gosnells employee, volunteer or member.

In the case of an allegation being made against staff member, volunteer, leader or contractor at CRC Gosnells, the ChildSafe Coordinator will follow the **Reporting Procedure 2** in Appendix 3 to notify both Church Council and either the Police (if the matter is deemed severe or criminal) or the Department of Communities.

In this case, then the additional requirements of the **Reportable Conduct Scheme** as outlined in Appendix 6 must also be followed by the Chairperson, summarised here:

Step 1. Ensure that the details of the allegation are recorded on the **Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form** in Appendix 4, and Church Council is informed. Report the matter to the Police or the Department of Communities.

Step 2. If the incident involves a report of sexual abuse, the Mandatory Reporting must also be completed on the Department of Communities website – see mandatoryreportingweb.communities.wa.gov.au

Step 3. Guidance needs to be sought from the Police or Department of Communities about suspending an alleged abuser, balancing the need to prevent evidence removal with the safety of the child. When so advised the accused person should be withdrawn 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.

Step 4. When a report is made, the leadership will contact the insurer via GJ Insurance Consulting Pty Ltd. Ph 1300 384 799 or insure@gjic.com.au

CRC Gosnells will take all steps to
ensure that the safety of the child is paramount.

14.4 Investigations

CRC Gosnells will appropriately investigate all allegations relating to an incident of abuse in accordance with its obligations and to the extent reasonably practicable.
In some circumstances, it may be necessary for CRC Gosnells to conduct an investigation in addition to any investigation conducted by authorities (e.g. the police). CRC Gosnells may conduct an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by the Department or the police and will co-operate with the authorities as required. All people covered by this Protection Policy and Code of Conduct must co-operate fully with any investigation by the Department, the police or CRC Gosnells.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for CRC Gosnells to engage a person (or persons) from outside CRC Gosnells to conduct an independent investigation in relation to allegations. [3]

CRC Gosnells will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, other employees, leaders, volunteers and contractors may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation (e.g. to provide witness statements).

14.5 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. An investigation conducted by CRC Gosnells 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. CRC Gosnells will also handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible. The outcome will depend on the findings of the investigation, but may be (but not limited to):

- withdrawal from current role;
- re-assignment to duties with no contact with children;
- increased supervision;
- disciplinary action, dismissal or criminal prosecution;
- deposition from office.

[3] It is important to have an arrangement in place. The investigator must be a person of experience and qualification, maybe with a role in the wider church association or sourced through GJIC Insurance.

APPENDIX 1. REPORTING CONCERNS AT CRC GOSNELLS

On next page.

REPORTING CONCERNS AT GOSNELLS CRC

Anyone Can Report

- A Child
- An Adult
- A Staff or Volunteer

Any Concern

- Any concerns about the safety of any person
- Any allegation, suspicion or observation
- Any breach of the Code of Conduct
- Any alleged illegal act
- Any serious leader dispute
- Any other situation you are concerned about

- Any concern about the church buildings or surrounds
- Any damage of loss of property

If any person is in immediate danger
Call 000

HOW

Verbally, face to face, phone-call, meeting, letter, email or use the Complaints & Abuse Reporting Form

TO

- Our ChildSafe Coordinator
- Any of our Elders or our Pastor
- Committee of Management

If you have: an allegation of abuse;
a disclosure about abuse; or
a report on reasonable grounds of abuse;
Please Contact:

- ChildSafe Coordinator
- Police 13 14 44
- Church Council Chairperson
- Pastor(s)
- Department of Communities: **1800 273 889** or report online
- CRISIS CARE: **1800 199 008**

APPENDIX 2 REPORTING PROCEDURE 1

A report is required if you believe, based on reasonable grounds, that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect AND that the child's parents or caregivers have not, or are unlikely to, protect the child from such harm.

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

If you are **unsure** what to do you can speak to your Team Leader; the ChildSafe Coordinator or call the Department of Communities.

1. Clarifying, Recording Evidence and Specific Information about the Child

The following information will be requested when completing the **Complaint and Abuse Reporting Form** or making a formal report to either the Police or Department of Communities. Please do not seek this information from the child:

- 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

DO NOT confront or talk to the alleged abuser.

2. Fill out a Complaint and Abuse Reporting Form in Appendix 4

3. Make the Report

Making a report is to lay a serious allegation of a criminal offence against another person, so clarify your perceptions carefully before reporting.

You can make your report to:

- **ChildSafe Coordinator**, using the completed **Complaint and Abuse Reporting Form.** Attach your notes to the form, keeping a copy. Please note, the ChildSafe Coordinator will inform the Chairperson of your report, and they will act in accordance to law. You may still make an independent report to:
- **The Police.** Call **13 14 44**. The police are the most appropriate first responders if the report is regarding abuse that is immediate, criminal or

endangering the child either on church premises or in another location. **If a Child is in immediate danger call 000.**

- **Department of Communities.** Call **1800 273 889** The Department of Communities protects and cares for Western Australian children and young people who are in need, and supports families and individuals who are at risk or in crisis.
- **Crisis Care.** Call **1800 199 008.** Crisis Care provides Western Australia's after-hours response to reported concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing.
- **The Mandatory Reporting Service.** If the abuse is of sexual nature and you are a Mandatory Reporter, you must contact Department of Communities. Please refer to Appendix 6.

APPENDIX 3 REPORTING PROCEDURE 2.

Reporting Child Abuse – In your Church

The chart below outlines the process that a person working with children in a specific setting should follow to protect a vulnerable child from actual or possible abuse, from someone who is an employee, volunteer, visitor or member of CRC Gosnells. Even if you know the person as a colleague your first duty is to safeguard the child.

Disclosure	By a child who is being abused By another child or adult By personal observation
Reasonable Belief	Through observation, listening, checking with other adults you came to a **reasonable belief** that a child has been abused, is being abused or in danger of being abused (see definitions Appendix 8).
Recording/ Documenting	Make notes of observations and information gathered. Record data such as: the name, age, gender, current location or address of the child, describe any visible injuries or relevant behaviours. Note the identity of the abuser (if known), **DO NOT** confront this person unless to protect a child from immediate danger. **Do not** interrogate the child or ask leading questions. Fill out a **Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form** if possible, even if you wish to make a verbal complaint also. If you have access to SMO (Safety Management Online) please enter the complaint as an incident as soon as possible.
Severity	**Criminal** – sexual or physical abuse, grooming **Misconduct** – sexual, physical, emotional or severe neglect
Report to:	**The Police** Ring 000 if urgent Ring 13 14 44 if not urgent **Department of Communities** Ring 1800 273 889 Lodge your Complaint & Abuse Reporting Form with the ChildSafe Coordinator or Chairperson

There is nothing else you need to do as a responsible adult. Your identity as notifier will remain confidential unless you choose to inform the child or family.

Reporting Obligations of the Chairperson under a **Reportable Conduct Scheme**:

Notify	Chairperson has 7 working days to notify the Department of Communities. Refer Appendix 6 for details.
Investigate	You **must investigate** an allegation (subject to Police clearance on criminal matters), advise the Department of Communities as to who is conducting the investigation, manage the immediate risks to children (e.g. remove the alleged offender from any contact with children – again after seeking advice from Police).
Update	Within 30 days, provide a report which updates the Department of Communities with information and actions you have taken – even if your investigation cannot proceed on any advice from police.
Outcomes	Notify the Department of Communities of findings and actions (or why no action was taken).

APPENDIX 4. COMPLAINT AND ABUSE REPORTING FORM

Please use the form to report a Formal Complaint or Abuse of any kind towards yourself or another person, including a child. **Please read the Code of Conduct Document before using this form.**

When should this report be completed?
This report must be completed if:

- There is an alleged illegal act, a participant sent home, serious leader dispute, damage or loss of property.
- The situation relates to Child Protection (disclosure of abuse, allegation of abuse, or report based on reasonable grounds).
- You have a grievance about anything relating to the activities or buildings/physical environment of CRC Gosnells.
- Other situations will require judgement and consultation with your organisation. In situations where doubt exists about the use of this report, complete a report.

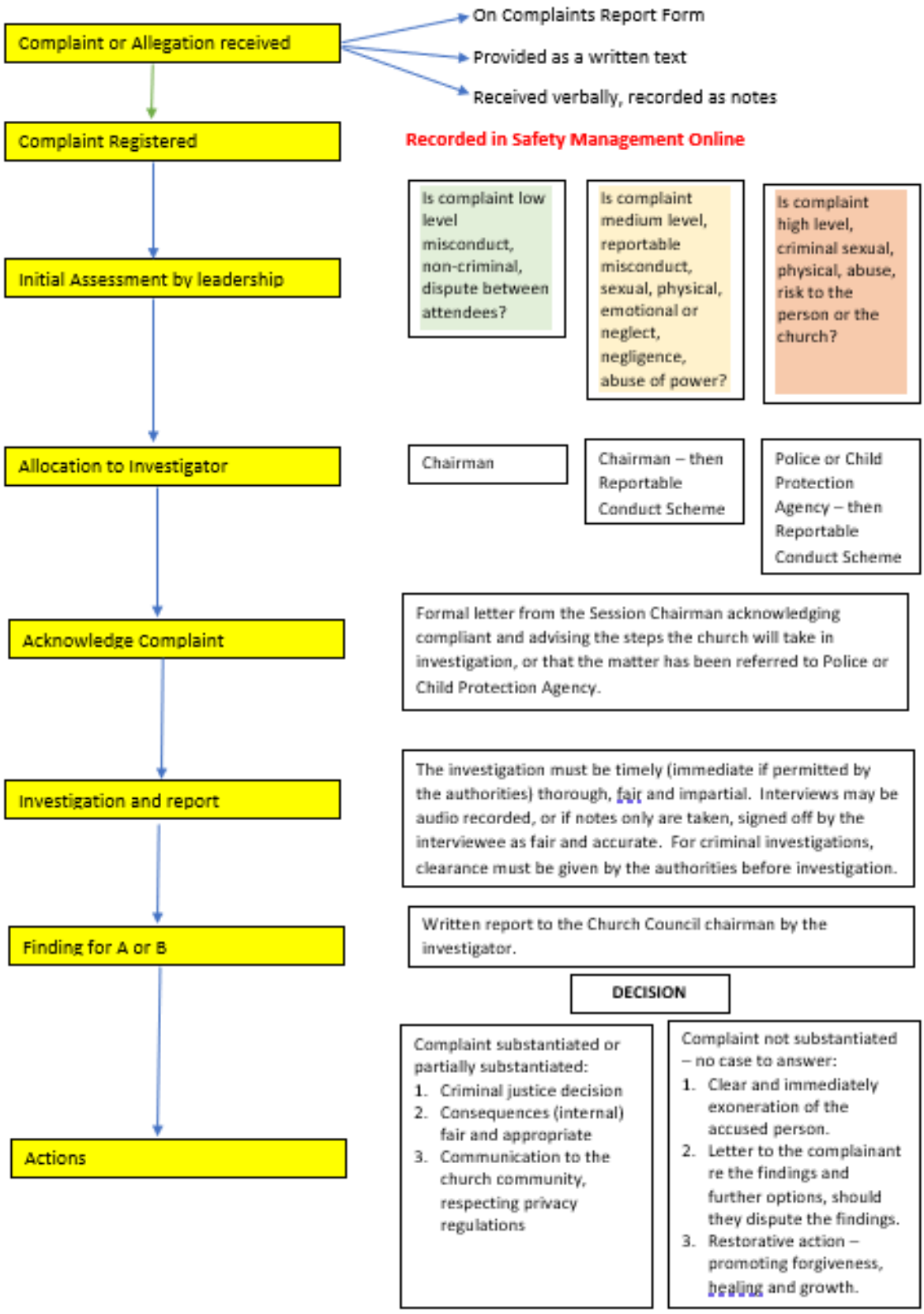
What do I do with this report after I have completed it?

1. Check that all information is correct to the best of your knowledge.
2. Check that the appropriate signatures are given.
3. The Team Leader forwards the form to the ChildSafe Coordinator as soon as possible. More severe complaints require immediate reporting, while other reports should be submitted within seven days.

The **Complaint and Abuse Report Form** can be downloaded using this link:
Link to Forms.
See https://safechurchcrca.org.au/safe-church-documents/4-forms

APPENDIX 5. MANAGING COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

COMPLAINT REPORT MANAGEMENT AND INVESTIGATION PROCESS



APPENDIX 6. THE REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

Ministers of religion are mandatory reporters. Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse is intended to protect children from sexual abuse that may be occurring now. As of 1 November 2022, a minister of religion has a duty to make a report **as soon as practicable** when they have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been the subject of sexual abuse since that date, or the child is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

Before making a report, mandatory reportors should consider the guide provided by the Department of Communities on their website to assess whether they believe a child has been or is being sexually abused.

All incidents that include sexual abuse must be reported to the Department of Communites by:

- using the Department of Communities website – see https://mandatoryreportingweb.communities.wa.gov.au/
- email: mrs@communities.wa.gov.au
- Telephone **1800 708 704** (24hours, 7 days a week service)
- Fax: (08) 6414 7316
- Post: Mandatory Reporting Service PO Box 8146, PERTH BC WA 6849

A mandatory report can be made in writing or orally. If an oral report is made, it must be followed by a written report as soon as practicable after making the oral report (ideally within 24 hours).

Where there is ongoing concern for the safety of children arising from historical abuse (which may have occurred when a person who is now an adult was a child) a person may contact the Department of Communities or Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889, or by submitting a Professional Referral Form online.

Historical abuse may also be reported to Police for investigation and potential prosecution (if the victim is over 18 years of age you should seek their views before doing this).

Where there is a concern about the physical or emotional abuse or neglect of a child, lodge your concern with the Department of Communities using the Professional Referral Form.

APPENDIX 7 INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Please use the Form to report an Incident. **Please read the Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct before using this form.**

When should this report be completed?

This report must be completed if:

1. An outside emergency service is contacted (Police, Ambulance, State Emergency Service etc.).
2. An individual is taken to hospital, doctor's surgery, emergency dental surgery, or other medical professional.
3. An injury results in a participant being unable to participate for 24 hours.
4. There is an alleged illegal act, a participant sent home, serious leader dispute, damage or loss of property.
5. Other situations will require judgement and consultation with your organisation. In situations where doubt exists about the use of this report, complete a report.

How do I complete this report:

- Sections A, B & D must be completed in all situations.
- Section C is to be completed where there is an injury to an individual.

What do I do with this report after I have completed it?

1. Check that all information is correct to the best of your knowledge.
2. Check that the appropriate signatures are given.
3. The Team Leader forwards the form to your Coordinator as soon as possible. More severe incidents require immediate reporting, while other reports should be submitted within seven days.

The **Incident Form** can be downloaded using this link: Link to Forms (https://safechurchcrca.org.au/safe-church-documents/4-forms)

APPENDIX 8 DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST CHILDREN

Child abuse includes:

Any act committed against a child involving

a. a sexual offence; or
b. an offence under section 498(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and
c. the infliction, on a child, of-
   i. physical violence; or
   ii. serious emotional or psychological harm; and
d. serious neglect of a child.

"Child" means a person under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child. Collective term for "child" is "children".

There are five common types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, neglect and racial/cultural.

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any non-accidental physical injury resulting from practices such as:

- Hitting, punching, kicking, beating (marks from belt buckles, fingers).
- Shaking (particularly babies).
- Burning (irons, cigarettes), biting, pulling out hair.
- Alcohol or other drug administration.
- Fractured bones – especially in young children.
- Strangulation.
- Unexplained or hidden injuries.

2. **Sexual Abuse, including 'grooming'**

Sexual abuse is any sexual act or threat to perform such upon another person. It occurs when a person uses their power and authority to take advantage of another's trust to involve them in sexual activity. It does not necessarily involve genital contact but is any act which erodes the sexual boundary between two persons. It may appear consensual but the validity of consent is negated by the power differential.

Sexual grooming is a pattern of behaviour aimed at engaging a child, as a precursor to sexual abuse. Examples include inappropriate special time with the

child, inappropriately giving gifts, 'accidental touching', allowing the child to sit on lap, and having secrets. In isolation, such behaviours may not indicate the risk of abuse occurring, but if there is a pattern of behaviour occurring, it may indicate grooming. Grooming behaviours often mimic the kind of relationship-developing strategies that Christian ministries use for the benefit and wellbeing of children, that is, gaining the trust of the child, demonstrating care and concern, spending time, visiting in the home, finding out about family, friends and hobbies. However, grooming to involve a child in sexual activities for the personal gratification of an adult is a crime. The grooming process often starts with the person 'grooming' the organisation or church by building trust. Then progressively the perpetrator starts to target families before starting to groom the child.

3. Emotional or Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse is the chronic attitude or behaviour of one person, which is directed at another person, or, the creation of an emotional environment which erodes a child's development, self-esteem and social confidence over time. Behaviours may include: devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising or chronic and extreme domestic violence in the child's presence.

4. Neglect

Neglect is characterised by the failure to provide for the child's basic needs. It includes any serious omission or commission which jeopardises or impairs a person's development. Examples include the failure to provide food, shelter, healthcare, adequate hygiene or schooling for a child.

5. Bullying and cyber-bullying

Bullying can be defined as repeated, unreasonable, unwanted behaviour conducted by an individual or group against another person, which has a negative impact on health and wellbeing. This includes aggression, verbal, emotional/psychological or physical acts or the use of social media or other forms of communication that intimidates, humiliates or threatens. It often involves an abuse of a power differential between the bully and the victim.

Cyber-bullying 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. The explosion of electronic communications (Facebook and other social media sites, text-messaging, internet chat rooms etc.) has seen a sharp increase in cyber-bullying. Please refer to CRC Gosnells' Electronic Communication Policy.

6. Other abuse

We recognise that abuse can also take many other forms, and we commit to treating all children and young people with respect, fairness, compassion and encouragement, regardless of any differences.

When is a child in need of protection?

A child is in need of protection when any of the following grounds exist:

- the child has been abandoned by his or her parents;
- the child's parents are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person willing and able to care for the child;
- the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;
- the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;
- 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 have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type;
- the child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be, significantly harmed and the child's parents 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.
- the child or vulnerable person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, bullying, image based abuse or similar harm of such a kind that the vulnerable person's emotional or intellectual development is, or is likely to be, significantly damaged;
- the vulnerable person has suffered, or is likely to suffer financial abuse or similar harm of such a kind that the vulnerable person's financial position is, or is likely to be, significantly damaged;
- the child or vulnerable person has suffered, or is likely to suffer spiritual abuse or similar harm of such a kind that the vulnerable person's emotional or intellectual development is, or is likely to be, significantly damaged.

APPENDIX 9 (EXAMPLE) FEEDBACK SURVEY OF CHILDREN.

Name:_____

This survey is your chance to have a say about the children's programs. Think about each statement and mark on the line, somewhere between "Not at all! 'and 'Absolutely!'.

1. I feel welcomed and looked after when I come to this church..

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

2. My parents like and follow the log-in process and arrangements for my care.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

3. I know which toilets to use and feel safe when using them.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

4. There are good spaces for activities and learning times.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

5. The activities are fun, challenging and well-organised.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

6. I feel safe and relaxed while I am in the children's programs.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

7. I feel that the leaders know what they are doing and are looking after me.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

8. The leaders are friendly and respectful of my friends and me.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

9. If I am worried or upset, I know who I can go to for help.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

10. I would recommend this church program as great for kids.

|_____|_____|

Not at all. Mostly Absolutely!

APPENDIX 10. ALTERNATIVE TO CHILDSAFE CSE3-MF FORM

MEDICAL & HEALTH INFORMATION – SPECIAL EVENT (EXAMPLE)

.....(Insert organisation name)**

Child's Name:.....
(Surname) (Christian 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.

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

If so, please give details.....

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

If so, please give details.....

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

If so, please give details.....

Emergency contact 1. Name: _____ Mobile: _____

Emergency contact 2. Name: _____ Mobile: _____

Preferred Medical Centre/ Doctor: _____ Phone: _____

Do you have private medical insurance? Provider: _____

AUTHORISATION

'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 [Print name if not one of the above] _____

Witness Name: _____ Signature: _____

APPENDIX 11. EXAMPLE PERMISSION FORM – ALTERNATIVE TO CHILDSAFE CSE3-RR

PERMISSION TO ATTEND EVENT/CAMP FORM (EXAMPLE)

.....**(**Insert organisation name)**

As a parent/caregiver of:.....

I, ...give my consent for him/her to take

part in the <special activity or camp> to be held at the ..... (event site)

from..... to..... (or on.....)
(date) *(date)* *(date)*

I have seen the attached copy of the programme for the .....(event) and acknowledge that risk of injuries is inherent in physical activities. While I am aware that staff will take all due care, I recognise that accidents may occur.

The staff and supervisors have my authority to take whatever action they think necessary to ensure the safety, wellbeing and successful conduct of the participants as a group or individually in the above-mentioned activity.

If my child becomes ill or is accidentally injured, I authorise the person-in-charge to obtain on my behalf whatever medical treatment my child requires. I will agree to pay all such medical expenses.

I have attached information as asked concerning my child's health including any relevant details of his/her limitations for the planned activity. My child's own local doctor or medical specialist may be contacted in an emergency.

I also acknowledge that CRC Gosnells and all its representative leaders or other helpers at <name of event> can accept no liability for any personal injury or property loss suffered by my child during the period of the <name of event>.

Signed: _____

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver

Date:___/____/20___

APPENDIX 12 CRC GOSNELLS MINISTRY COVENANT

I, _____
(Print name)

1. declare that, except as is stated below,
   (1) I have not been guilty of any sexual misconduct against any person;
   (2) I have never committed any criminal offence involving fraud, violence or drugs;
   (3) I am of good character and suitable for ministry within **CRC Gosnells**.
   (If exceptions to the above give details in an attachment document.)
2. acknowledge that I have read and agreed to CRC Gosnells Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy & Procedures Manual; the Code of Conduct; Transport Policy and the Electronic Communications Policy and any other policies of CRC Gosnells.
3. agree that I will cooperate with CRC Gosnells in any investigation undertaken in relation to a complaint or allegation of impropriety or misconduct made against me.
4. agree that I will attend and take part in education courses to prepare and equip me for ministry with children.
5. acknowledge that by signing this covenant no legal contract is created between myself and CRC Gosnells but accept that it acts as a consent for the operation of the Protection Policy and other policies of CRC Gosnells and that legal consequences may follow if I have knowingly given false answers to any of the questions 1 – 4 above.

Signature: ..... Witness: .....

Full name: ..... Name: .....

Address:……

Date: ……..

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Christian Reformed Church of Gosnells ("CRC Gosnells") is a group of followers of Jesus Christ in the City of Gosnells, Western Australia seeking to reflect the teachings of Christ and of the New Testament with integrity and humility. We accept that our 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.'* He reinforced this *'*law of love *'*by adding, *'By this shall all men know that you are my disciples; you love one another!'* 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. We recognise the power differential between children and adults in ministry roles, and these guidelines seek to ensure that such a power is not used to harm children or any vulnerable person.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, 'abuse' is defined in Appendix 8 and includes all the following types of abuse and neglect: physical, sexual; emotional/psychological; racial/cultural or spiritual/religious.

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

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 and culture where a diversity of people, regardless of age, gender, race and culture can thrive and grow holistically. That is, we are committed to CRC Gosnells 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 in working with children 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. CRC Gosnells is committed to operating in accordance with the law in all its operations.**

Specific Expectations to Protect Children and Vulnerable People from Abuse

All those who minister or work under the auspices of Gosnells with children and vulnerable people should be fully aware of the **Code of Conduct.** Abusive behaviour towards children or vulnerable people will not be tolerated. Any and all allegations will be investigated and reported if found to be substantially true.

I _____ commit that I will:

- contact the police (000) if a child is at immediate danger;
- adhere to the Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy & Procedure ("Protection Policy") and other policies of CRC Gosnells;
- uphold CRC Gosnells' commitment to children and vulnerable person's safety at all times;
- remember that "a child" means a person under the age of 18 years;
- take all reasonable steps to protect children and vulnerable people from abuse, recognising my duty of care;

- conduct myself in a manner consistent with my position as an employee, volunteer, leader or contractor of CRC Gosnells and as a positive role model to children and young people;
- work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of CRC Gosnells;
- be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in my area;
- use church resources responsibly and ethically;
- establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of my work;
- be fair, considerate and honest with others;
- treat all people with respect and dignity, value their ideas and opinions and consider their age, background and abilities;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island child's self-identification);
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people including those with **culturally and/or linguistically diverse** backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination);
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of **children with a disability**;
- listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling me 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, or, at least, observable by another adult;
- raise concerns about suspected abuse with the ChildSafe Coordinator or a leader as soon as possible;
- comply with all reporting obligations as they relate to reporting under legislation;

- record and act upon all allegations or suspicions of abuse, discrimination or harassment;
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure that, as quickly as possible, the immediate and ongoing safety of the child or children is attended to as a priority;
- be professional, consistent and responsible in all my actions;
- maintain strict impartiality;
- communicate directly with the child's parent or guardian;
- use best practice as outlined in the Electronic Communications Policy;
- respect confidentiality when sharing information about children in accordance with the Protection Policy and any reporting obligations.

I commit that I will NOT:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- put a child or vulnerable person at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors for an improper reason);
- speak to a child or vulnerable person 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 the child's safety may be in danger;
    - dealing with a child in anger; or
    - using hurtful sarcasm.
- discuss sexual activities with a child, unless it is a specific job requirement and I am trained or qualified to discuss these matters (and it is part of an approved program or activity);
- have private contact with a child outside of church activities without:
    - the knowledge and/or consent of CRC Gosnells' leadership; and
    - the knowledge and consent of the child's parent or guardian;

- have any personal online contact with a child, including by social media, email, instant messaging or any other forms of online contact, from any of my own personal accounts without:
    - the knowledge and/or consent of CRC Gosnells' leadership; and
    - the knowledge and consent of the child's parent or guardian;
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a child (unless necessary and approved by CRC Gosnells and the child's parents/guardians as the agreed form of communication);
- use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol while in the presence of or while supervising a child (unless my contact with the child is accidental/incidental and I am not performing my duties as directed by CRC Gosnells);
- use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs 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;
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or vulnerable 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 my home or encourage meetings outside program activities (unless necessary and approved by CRC Gosnells and the child's parents/guardians);
- be naked in the presence of a child;
- possess sexually explicit printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) in the presence of children;
- sleep in the same bed, sleeping bag, room or tent with a single child;

- treat any child or young person disrespectfully, unfairly, harshly or discouragingly based on their age, gender, race, culture, disability or any other differences;
- engage in any activity with a child that is likely to emotionally harm them (e.g. watch a movie that is age or content inappropriate for a child);
- be alone with a child unnecessarily and for more than a very short time, unless you are observable by another adult or it is unavoidable;
- develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child for their own needs;
- show favouritism 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;
- do anything in contravention of CRC Gosnells' policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.

DECLARATION

I, _____, have read this Code of Conduct that expresses the intent of CRC Gosnells to protect and nurture children and other vulnerable people.

I agree to comply with these rules and expectations. I understand that if I breach the Code of Conduct or commit an act of serious misconduct or break the law, this may lead to my:

➢ suspension from duties during investigation of allegations against me;

➢ termination of employment or role without notice or payment in lieu (summary or instant dismissal);

➢ being reported to the police and charged with a criminal offence.

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / 20___

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / 20___

ChildSafe Coordinator