

BRIDGEMAN BAPTIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

OUR SAFE CHURCH STRATEGY

WORKING WITH CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE

MAY, 2020

BASED ON QUEENSLAND BAPTISTS' RISK
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (OCTOBER 2019)

Risk Management Strategy Working with Children & Young People

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PART 1 - PRELIMINARY

The Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 requires that Bridgeman Baptist Community Church develop and implement a Child Protection Risk Management Strategy ("The / This Strategy") as part of providing a safe church environment for all children and young people.

The purpose of the Strategy is to promote the wellbeing of children and young people who come into contact with Bridgeman Baptist Community Church and to protect them from harm. To comply with the legislative framework of the Act, this Strategy also addresses eight minimum requirements of the legislation which can be summarised as follows:

1. Commitment

- A statement about commitment to the safety and well-being of children and the protection of children from harm.
- A code of conduct for interacting with children and young people.

2. Capability

- Recruitment, selection, training and management procedures for paid employees and volunteers.

3. Concerns

- Policies and procedures for handling disclosures and suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
- A plan for managing breaches of the risk management strategy, and
- Risk Management plans for high risk activities and special events.

4. Consistency

- Policies and procedures for compliance with blue card legislation including maintaining a register of staff/volunteers who hold blue cards.
- Strategies for communication and support including written information for parents/carers, paid employees and volunteers outlining this risk management strategy as well as training material for paid employees and volunteers to help them identify risks of harm and handle disclosures.

POLICY COMMITMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

It is our policy to respect everyone as unique individuals created by God, and to give special attention to the care, protection and wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons. We will behave towards them in a manner that resembles and represents Christ's attitude and approach, providing an environment and ministry that promotes their spiritual, social and physical safety and personal growth and development.

To this end we will promote a “safe church” culture throughout our church, constantly communicating and reinforcing our commitment at all levels of our church’s life and ministry.

Regarding the church’s commitment to providing a safe environment for all, *especially children and vulnerable persons*, the church acknowledges that Australian Baptists have agreed to adopt the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and that these principles represent ‘best practices’.

Therefore, the church will have regard to the following as guiding principles for cultivating a safe church environment and safe activities.

1. Embedding a “safe church’ perspective, including child safety, in our church’s culture, leadership and governance
2. Respecting children and vulnerable persons by giving them opportunities to participate and have a say in the decisions affecting them
3. Keeping families and communities informed and involved in the development of the church as a safe environment
4. Upholding equity and considering the diversity of needs and interests among children and vulnerable persons
5. Ensuring that people working with children and vulnerable persons are suitable and are properly supported
6. Keeping the processes for responding to complaints of sexual abuse focussed upon the needs and best interests of children and vulnerable persons
7. Equipping staff and volunteers with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and vulnerable persons safe through continuing education, training and support
8. Managing physical and online environments to minimise the opportunity for abuse occurring
9. Reviewing and improving the implementation of these principles for creating and maintaining a safe church environment
10. Maintaining up to date policies, procedures and records that document how the church is implementing and managing its safe church strategy

1. Purpose

Our philosophy of care is based upon the conviction that we must care for our children in ways that respect their dignity and value as unique individuals in a Christ-like manner. To that end we will promote a culture of child safety throughout the organisation through constant communication and reinforcement of this conviction at all levels of our church life and ministry. This Strategy therefore aims to promote the wellbeing of children under our care and to protect them from harm and will be continuously reviewed and improved as appropriate.

2. Related documents and resources

Documents and resources that directly relate to or are affected by this Strategy include:

- (a) Code of Conduct ([Schedule 1](#));
- (b) Church Constitution;
- (c) The Ethical Issues Response Guidelines (“EIRG”) used by Queensland Baptists;
- (d) [The Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000](#) and the [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Regulation 2011](#)
- (e) Blue Card Services website www.bluecard.qld.gov.au
- (f) Baptist Insurance Services website (Risk Management) www.baptistinsurance.com.au

3. Definitions

The dictionary in Schedule 2 defines particular words in this Strategy.

4. Who must comply with this Strategy

This Strategy applies to the following persons, referred to in this document collectively as “staff and volunteers”:

- (a) The church leadership which consists of the church council and pastoral team.
- (b) Employees of the church who provide services directed mainly towards children or conducting activities mainly involving children;
- (c) Volunteers of the church who provide services directed mainly towards children or conducting activities mainly involving children;
- (d) Contractors or agents at the church who provide services directed mainly towards children or conducting activities mainly involving children;
- (e) All members of the church leadership team who make decisions about children.
- (f) Trainee students doing placement in the church as part of their studies with an education provider.

5. Scope of Strategy

This Strategy covers the following:

- (a) Staff and volunteer screening and selection;
- (b) Standards of behaviour expected of staff and volunteers (Code of Conduct);
- (c) Promotion of the participation and empowerment of children, including particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
- (d) Prevention of harm through the adoption of a risk management process;
- (e) Minimisation of harm through clear and transparent procedures for dealing with and reporting allegations of harm;
- (f) Risk management processes for high risk activities and special events;
- (g) Privacy considerations - how information is collected, stored and used

PART 2 - POLICY

Division 1 - Staff and volunteer Pre-Screening and Selection

6. Church leadership

All members of the church council and pastoral team are required to have a current Blue Card or Exemption Card at all times whilst active in their position.

7. Volunteers

A volunteer must not be engaged for any work with children or young people unless and until an application for a current Blue Card has been made and a current Blue Card is issued to the volunteer. (Available from www.bluecard.qld.gov.au)

8. New employees

An application for a Blue Card must be made and a current Blue Card issued prior to a new paid employee commencing work.

9. Existing employees

A new application for a Blue Card must be made urgently in circumstances where the currency of an existing employee's Blue Card has expired. Existing employees must hold a current Blue Card at all times, and therefore will not be allowed to continue to work until the new card is issued if their existing Blue Card has expired. Care should be taken to ensure that existing employees' make an application for renewal of their Blue Card prior to its expiry to prevent this outcome.

10. Persons legally exempt from holding a Blue Card

Persons exempt from holding a Blue Card under the Act shall still be required to obtain a Blue Card if they have regular contact with children as part of a church ministry e.g. they are on a roster (however infrequent) that involves interaction with children and young people. In relation to police officers and registered teachers who are exempt from holding a Blue Card, they must apply for an Exemption Card prior to becoming involved in children's or youth ministry in any capacity.

11. Withdrawal of screening authority

Where a person withdraws their consent to screening under a Blue Card application, that person cannot commence or continue work, or be engaged in any capacity with children or young people as part of a church ministry.

12. Recording of current Blue Cards

The Church leadership (or their nominee) is responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate recording of information relating to positive notices (see Schedule 5). The church leadership (or their nominee) must sight the original Blue Card to verify its authenticity before entry of data.

13. Changes in circumstances affecting a Blue Card

If for a staff member or volunteer there is a change in their circumstances that might or will affect their Blue Card status, then that person must:

- notify immediately the church's Safe Church Coordinator; and
- notify the Queensland Government's Blue Card Services

The Safe Church Coordinator, in consultation with the Church Leaders, can require the person to desist from attending or participating in any activities that will bring them into contact with children or vulnerable persons.

14. Agreement to comply with policies and codes

Upon commencement of employment or engagement, new staff or volunteers must be provided with a copy of this Strategy including the Code of Conduct.

Division 2 - Additional Staff and Volunteer Selection Steps

15. Application process for staff and volunteers

In addition to the requirements contained in Division 1, all staff (current and future) and volunteers must undergo the following application process to be engaged in any work with children or young people as part of a church ministry:

- (a) Apply for a Blue Card or if a Blue Card is already held give details to the church so the card can be validated with Blue Card services.
- (b) Submit a written application ([Schedule 3](#));
- (c) Provide the contact details of at least two referees;
- (d) Attend an interview if deemed necessary by church leadership ([Schedule 6](#));
- (e) Sign an agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct ([Schedule 3](#)).

16. Church leadership obligations - application process

Where a person makes an application under section 15 above, the Church leadership (or their nominee) must ensure the following before accepting the application and allowing the applicant to commence any work with children or young people:

All churches the applicant has attended (or been involved or connected with) in the past five (5) years are to be contacted and asked whether there have been any alleged or actual incidents of harm involving the applicant;

If the church leadership determines that more detailed information is required from the application, interview the applicant using the questions in *Schedule 6* as a guide to ascertain the suitability of the applicant;

The person has attended the church regularly for a minimum of **six (6) months** unless exceptional circumstances apply;

If the applicant has not obtained their Blue Card through the Church, the Church leadership must also arrange completion of an “*Link an applicant/cardholder to this organisation*” form and submit to Blue Card Services; (available from www.bluecard.qld.gov.au)

17. Additional employment requirements

These additional requirements apply in the following situations:

- (a) Where certain roles require registration by the Baptist Union of Queensland (Queensland Baptists), the applicant must also successfully pass the application process under those Registration Guidelines;
- (b) Where a job or role description has stipulated additional educational, skill or other requirements, the applicant is also required to satisfy these criteria before employment will be considered.

18. Upon receipt of positive Blue Card notice

Once a positive Blue Card notice has been received in respect of the applicant, the Church leadership (or nominee) will:

- (a) Use their discretion to accept or reject the application, taking into consideration all aspects of the application process and being satisfied of the applicant's suitability for work with children and young people;
- (b) If the application is accepted, enter the staff or volunteer's details into the Blue Card Register contained in *Schedule 5*;
- (c) Provide staff or volunteers with **induction training** that includes education regarding the terms of this Risk Management Strategy;
- (d) Provide ongoing training and education (minimum yearly) that will enable staff or volunteers to be equipped with knowledge, awareness and skills to keep children safe and promote their welfare. This will include indicators of abuse, grooming and responding to disclosures of harm.

19. Support and training

- 1. The Safe Church Coordinator is responsible for establishing an arrangement for the appropriate supervision, support and training of staff and volunteers in contact with children and vulnerable persons.
- 2. The coordinator must report to the church leaders and the annual church members' meeting about the supervision, support and training of staff and volunteers.
- 3. Where a person is appointed either as a staff member or as a volunteer who will have contact with children or vulnerable persons, the Safe Church Coordinator will ensure that the person's Blue Card or Exemption Card details are recorded in a register similar to the template provided by Schedule 4.

4. The Safe Church Coordinator will, in consultation with the staff member or volunteer, establish a training plan, setting out the type of training that will be provided, the regularity of the training and the expectations that the church has for the staff member's or volunteer's attendance and participation.
5. Staff and volunteers must receive training and development on an annual basis.

Division 3 - Risk Management Process

20. Guidelines for involvement with children

- a) All staff and volunteers must comply with the Code of Conduct ([Schedule 1](#)) while working with children.
- b) All staff and volunteers must comply with the requirements of risk management plans that are required and in place for high risk activities or special events. (see www.baptistinsurance.com.au for risk management resources)
- c) All staff and volunteers will promote the participation and empowerment of children through listening to and input from children recognising that particular attention needs to be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and other vulnerable groups. Children will be listened to and their input taken seriously particularly around decisions affecting them and also in regard to what makes them feel safe or unsafe. All staff and volunteers will be committed to ensuring a child friendly and safe environment for children.
- d) All staff and volunteers will ensure children's personal information is treated appropriately and in line with the organisation's policy on how information is collected, stored and used.
- e) All staff and volunteers will comply with all relevant legislation and regulations related to working with children including compliance with the Act.
- f) All staff and volunteers will avail themselves of training opportunities provided in respect to child safety matters and this Risk Management Strategy in particular.

21. Complaints of harm procedure

The following guidelines are for responding to and reporting disclosures or evidence of harm or misconduct (a breach of the Code of Conduct).

1. When a person discloses harm or misconduct, whether it took place recently or a long time ago, we will respond with respect, compassion and appropriate action.
2. In all cases where harm or misconduct is disclosed, the best interests of the child or vulnerable person will be paramount, and the church response will be clear and transparent to those affected.

3. The church's Safe Church Coordinator will assess and minimise any risks to a child, to children and to vulnerable persons, especially ensuring the safety and support of the child or adult who disclosed harm or misconduct. The coordinator will also respect the right of the child or adult disclosing harm or misconduct to confidentiality and will consult them before reporting their identity and information to others. The coordinator will also consider restrictions imposed by Privacy legislation for passing on information to others.
4. The Safe Church Coordinator will connect the child or person disclosing harm or misconduct with church staff and/or professionals identified by the church as competent to provide care and support during and after the process.
5. The church's Safe Church Coordinator will complete a report to document the disclosure or evidence and the coordinator's and/or church leaders' response (Schedule 7). Care must be taken to record information and evidence in the words of the child or person to assist with the accurate presentation of the information or evidence, especially if the matter is referred to a government department or to the police to be investigated. The church's Safe Church Coordinator will ensure that these reports are properly stored either physically and/or electronically and accessible to the church leaders.
6. Where we have reason to suspect that a child is experiencing harm or is at risk of experiencing harm or being neglected, or receive a disclosure of harm or misconduct, we will contact Child Safety Services and seek information and advice about how to proceed.

During normal business hours - we will contact the Regional Intake Service.

After hours and on weekends - we will contact the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre on 1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999.

7. If the alleged misconduct or harm was perpetrated by a Registered Minister of Queensland Baptists, then the Safe Church Coordinator or church leaders will also inform either the QB Safe Church Officer or the Director of Pastoral Services for Queensland Baptists.
8. The person identified by the disclosure as accused of harming and/or guilty of misconduct will be required to step aside from any activities that will bring them into contact with children or vulnerable persons while the matter is being investigated either by the church's Safe Church Coordinator, the church leaders, the police or a government department/agency, and until a determination about the matter has been made.
9. The church leaders in consultation with the Safe Church Coordinator would determine the parameters that will be put in place regarding the attendance and participation of the person identified by the disclosure, in other church meetings and activities during this process. This person will also relate to a person identified by the church leaders to liaise with the person and ensure they are kept informed about the process.
10. Where a staff member or volunteer has breached a legislative requirement pertaining to the protection and welfare of children, or an obligation stipulated by the Blue Card Services, then the authority responsible for issuing the Blue Card will be notified.
11. If the misconduct identified by a disclosure is outside the scope of government legislation and regulations but is covered by the Code of Conduct or the Church's constitution, then the provisions of this strategy and the church's constitution will be applied.

PART 3 - BLUE CARD COMPLIANCE

22. Monitoring Blue Cards

The Church leadership (or its nominee) should review the Blue Card Register ([contained in Schedule 5](#)) annually to ensure the following:

- Blue Cards are still current and positive;
- That all staff and volunteers as defined in section 4 of this Strategy are included in the Register.

23. Stolen or lost cards

If a staff member or volunteer's Blue Card is stolen or lost, the following procedure will apply:

- The staff or volunteer must notify the Church leadership (or its nominee) within five (5) days;
- The staff or volunteer must make an application to Blue Card Services for a new card within fourteen (14) days of the card being lost or stolen.

24. Criminal Charges or Convictions - obligations of staff and volunteers

If the staff or volunteer has any changes to their criminal history (i.e. is convicted of any criminal offence) (other than further restrictions dealt with in section 26 below) they must:

- Notify Blue Card Services immediately
- Notify the Church leadership (or nominee) immediately;
- Stand down from their position and cease working with children in connection with a Church ministry until such time as they may receive a new Blue Card;
- Return their old Blue Card to Blue Card Services within seven (7) days;
- Apply to Blue Card Services for a positive notice (new Blue Card).

25. Criminal Charges or Convictions - obligations of church leadership or nominee

As soon as the Church leadership (or its nominee) receive notification of a change in criminal history of the staff member or volunteer (other than further restrictions dealt with in section 26 below) they must:

- Suspend the person from all ministries involving children until they receive a new Blue Card;
- Complete Part B of the change in criminal history form;

- If a new Blue Card is later received from Blue Card Services, the Church may reinstate the person (in the absolute discretion of the Church leadership);
- If a negative notice is received, the person cannot apply, start or continue working with children in any capacity in connection with a Church ministry. The Church leadership should also liaise with Professional Standards Officer of Queensland Baptists in relation to those persons whose convictions would indicate they fall within the definition of a person of concern ([see Definitions Schedule 2](#))

26. Criminal ‘charges’ for excluding offences pending conviction or acquittal

If a staff member or volunteer is ‘charged’ with an excluding offence ([defined in Schedule 8](#)) the following procedure must apply:

- The person charged or the Church leadership (or nominee) must notify Blue Card Services;
- The person charged cannot apply, start or continue to work in the Church ministries involving children;
- The person charged must return their Blue Card to Blue Card Services within seven (7) days;
- The Church leadership (or nominee) must suspend the person charged. They cannot terminate the person’s employment solely or mainly because the person’s Blue Card is suspended. If a new Blue Card is later received from Blue Card Services, they can reinstate the person;
- If a negative notice is received, the person charged cannot continue to work in Church ministries involving children.
- The Church leadership should also liaise with Professional Standards Officer of Queensland Baptists in relation to those persons whose charges would indicate they fall within the definition of a person of concern ([see Definitions Schedule 2](#))

27. Negative notices

If a person is convicted of a serious offence or Blue Card Services cancels their Blue Card and issues a negative notice to the person, that person must immediately return the Blue Card to Blue Card Services.

28. Breaches

If any staff member or volunteer breaches this Strategy, the following will apply:

- (a) Where the applicant has breached legal requirements under the Act, Blue Card Services will be notified, and the person will be subject to any legal process under their procedures;

(b) If the breach falls outside the scope of the Act, the dispute resolution procedure in the Church Constitution will apply unless there is no dispute resolution procedure, and then:

- (i) The Church leadership will deal with the person in accordance with the rules of natural justice;
- (ii) The decision of the Church leadership will be final.
- (iii) In addition, the church leadership will consider whether the following need to occur:
 - further education, training or reinforcement of this strategy with all stakeholders
 - a review of current policies and procedures to ensure their adequacy.

(c) Where a Registered Minister causes the breach, EIRG procedures will apply.

Schedule 1 - Code of Conduct

1. The staff and volunteers must respect persons and property and acknowledge that they:

- a) Must be responsive and courteous to others and avoid improper use of their position;
- b) Must avoid discriminatory and /or harassing treatment of others; must not use inappropriate or crude language in the presence of, or towards others;
- c) Must show integrity at all times and act in a manner consistent with a church representative;
- d) Must respect privacy and protect the confidential information of others, subject to the requirement to comply with the Working with Children Policy & Procedures document and to comply with any other obligations under the law.

2. The church is committed to maintaining an illegal drug and alcohol-free environment with children and the staff and volunteers acknowledge that:

- a) The consumption, sale of or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with children (other than properly prescribed and administered drugs) will result in dismissal and possibly a report to the police.

3. In relation to behaviour, staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:

- a) Must comply with the church's guidelines for the use of electronic communication and social media when interacting with children
- b) Must not be alone with children where they cannot be seen by other Church Workers;
- c) Must not take a child to their home or visit a child in their home unless the visit is part of a church approved organised activity for the group or in the company or written consent of the child's parents/guardian.
- d) Must not make any sexual or crude innuendos such as suggestive looks, comments, jokes, sounds, display visuals, words, acts or gestures towards any child, staff member or volunteer;
- e) Must not touch, hug, or kiss any person in a way that is inappropriate to the situation, or uncomfortable or confusing to the receiver;
- f) Must not drive a child unaccompanied unless in extreme circumstances and after gaining permission from child's parents and the church leader in a direct position of responsibility;
- g) Must not commit any sexual offence, sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence) or any assault, ill treatment of or neglect of a child or any behaviours that causes psychological or other harm to a child.
- h) Must not attempt to do any of the things described above, or do any act in preparation of doing any of the things described above.
- i) Must not engage in any communication via electronic or other means that would be in breach of this policy.

4. In relation to pastoral care staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:

- a) Will not step beyond their level of competency or training;
- b) Will not encourage children to keep things hidden from their parents, guardians or other leaders;
- c) Will avoid providing pastoral care for members of the opposite sex where possible;
- d) Will always provide pastoral care in an open area in view of others, never in a closed room;
- e) Will only console (if a child is distressed and needs to be consoled) if this is with the permission and or welcomed by the child;
- f) Will only console same gender of child and with another staff or volunteer within sight;
- g) If a child makes a disclosure regarding any kind of harm, this disclosure must be divulged to relevant church leadership but must not be revealed to any person, except as required by this policy or the law.

5. In relation to pornography and sexuality, staff and volunteers acknowledges that:

- a) They recognise it is inappropriate to access or view pornography;
- b) They will not display, discuss or distribute pornography to other adults or children;
- c) The sexuality of staff must be under the guidelines and Lordship of Christ;
- d) They will dress modestly, and not sexually suggestive, without insulting or using slogans contrary to Christian principles.

6. In relation to occupational health & safety, staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:

- a) Must not put themselves or others in danger;
- b) Must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything in the interests of safety;
- c) Must follow safe work practices and encourage others to do the same;
- d) Staff must use all safety devices including knowing the location of first aid kits and fire extinguishers and should know the identity of the first aid attendant in their area;
- e) Staff must report all incidents and accidents.

7. If there is a breach by any person, staff and volunteers agree to:

- a) Report any suspected breaches of this Code of Conduct, or of the law to the relevant church leadership immediately;
- b) Take careful written records of any suspected breaches for future reference.
- c) Not make a report which is false, vexatious or malicious.

Schedule 2 - Definitions

Registered Church Worker means a Registered Minister of Queensland Baptists.

Blue Card means the card issued by Blue Card Services after an application is received, verifying suitability for working with children. A positive notice always accompanies a Blue Card and accordingly where the term 'Blue Card' is used in this Strategy document, this also refers to the positive notice issued by Blue Card Services.

Child is any person under eighteen (18) years of age.

Church means **Bridgeman Baptist Community Church** and also includes the associated ministries and activities of the church.

Church Leadership means primary governing group of the church such as the council, board, elders or deacons.

Designated person means the person appointed by the church to be responsible managing all Blue Card related issues which includes but is not limited to the Blue Card Register, application forms, Blue Card forms and harm reports. If there is no designated person in the church, this person means the most senior pastor in the church.

CCYPCG Act [The Working with Children \(Risk Management & Screening\) Act 2000](#)

EIRG means the 'Ethical Issues Response Guidelines' of Queensland Baptists.

Harm means any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse or exploitation.

Parent means custodial parent or lawful guardian of the child.

Person of concern means a person who:

- has pleaded guilty to, been convicted of, or has admitted to a sexual criminal offence.
- has been found to have sexually offended, arising through due diligence checks related to recruitment (screening).

- is currently charged with a sexual offence.
- has been the subject of an allegation of a sexual offence and this was not appropriately investigated.
- has been found to have received an adverse risk assessment arising from sexual misconduct.
- is deemed to be a risk to the safety of children and/or vulnerable adults because of an adverse risk assessment relating to sexual misconduct.
- exhibits constant wandering across other people's sexual boundaries.

Staff and volunteer refers to both volunteers who have regular contact with children, paid employees who have regular contact with children, contractors or agents at the church who have regular contact with children at the church or members of the leadership team who make decisions about children.

The Act [The Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000.](#)

Work refers to any activity or Church ministry whereby staff or volunteers have regular contact with children or young people, whether in an employed or voluntary capacity

Schedule 3 - Application for Working with Children

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any positions (voluntary and paid) involving the supervision of children.

1. Personal Information:		
Full name		DOB
Address		
Email Address		
Phone Numbers	H:	M:
2. Activities:		
What types of activities are you interested in being involved in?		
Date available to begin?	/ /	
Minimum length of commitment?		
3. Church involvement:		
Length of attendance at church?		
Are you a member of the church?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name all churches you have attended or been involved in during the past 5 years.		
List all previous involvement in the church involving children (identify which church next to the type of work).		
List any gifts, training, qualifications or any other facts that have prepared you for working with children.		
4. Overseas status:		
Have you lived or worked overseas for more than 12 months in the past 5 years?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Where?
Do you consent to a criminal history check in these countries?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

5. Referees (2 required):		
Name (first referee)		
Address		
Phone	H:	M:
Name (second referee)		
Address		
Phone	H:	M:
6. Blue Card information:		
Do you have a current Blue Card?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date expires
If yes have you attached a photocopy of the card?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> *Must also hand original to leader. Have them initial here to confirm sighting. _____	
If no have you completed a Blue Card application and attached it to this application?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> *Please note you MUST complete an application to be considered or accepted in any positions involving children.	
Has your Blue Card ever been suspended for any reason?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Has any complaint ever been made against you alleging harm to a child? (provide details)		
7. Medical Information		
Medicare number		
Private health provider	(if applicable)	
Any medical condition which may impact your interaction with children?		
Any physical or other conditions/limitations affecting your interaction with children?		

8. Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorise and churches listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for working with children. Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Constitution and by-laws and policies of Queensland Baptists and my individual church and refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

I have read and agree to abide by the following:

Staff Code of Conduct; and

Risk Management Strategy.

Signed (applicant)		Date / / 20
Signed (witness)		Date / / 20

Office Use Only

I confirm that I have completed the following in relation to the applicant:	<input type="checkbox"/> Sighted the original Blue Card. <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmed the expiration date on the original Blue Card. <input type="checkbox"/> Forwarded the Blue Card application (if applicable to Blue Card Services). <input type="checkbox"/> Forwarded the overseas criminal check to relevant authority (if applicable). <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted the referees and churches and completed the 'record of references check'.	
Details of person:	Signed _____	Date / /
	Full name _____	

Schedule 4 - Record of Reference Check

1. Details of applicant:		
Full name		
2. First referee contacted:		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Conversation in person
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		
3. Second referee contacted:		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Conversation in person
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		
4. Church contacted:		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Conversation in person
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		
5. Church contacted:		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone / <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Conversation in person
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		

Details of person who conducted check:

Signature _____ Date _____ Full Name _____

Please note the information collected above is highly confidential and sensitive and must be stored in a confidential place and only accessible to church leadership.

Schedule 6 - Interview with Applicant

Please note, these questions are simply a guide. Use your discretion to elaborate on any issues raised or ask for more details on issues raised in application.

Questions:

1. Why do you want to be a part of our church's ministry?
2. What involvement / experience in the past have you had with children?
3. Have you read the Code of Conduct and do you have any questions regarding the code?
4. Why do you think that our church's Safe Church Strategy is necessary? Are you willing to cooperate and comply with the standards and requirements of the policy that relate to or affect your participation in the church's ministries and activities?
5. Have you ever been known by any other name?
6. Have you ever been the subject of a:
 - a. complaint of harm to a child;
 - b. breach of a code of conduct or policy; or
 - c. decision to be precluded from attending or participating in a church/organisation' activities?
7. If so, what steps were taken (if any) by the church/organisation in response to the above, and what was the outcome?
8. Are you aware of any other matter which if known would call into question your suitability to work with children?
9. Do you have a Blue Card? If so, who did you obtain your Blue Card through?

Schedule 7 - Record of a disclosure of harm or misconduct

1. Details of person disclosing			
Full name:		DOB	
Address:			
Phone Numbers: H:		M:	
2. Details of other persons involved in incident including witnesses (attach additional pages if necessary)			
Full name		DOB	
Address			
Phone Numbers H:		M:	
Full name		DOB	
Address			
Phone Numbers H:		M:	
3. Incident			
Description what allegedly occurred (ask open ended questions). Use additional paper for full statement.		Advisable to attach a written statement from complainant to this report.	
Location it occurred		Time occurred:	
5. Reporting			
Has the Department of Child Safety been contacted and consulted?		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____	
		Response:	
Has the church leadership been informed?		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____	
		Response:	
Have the Police been contacted?		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____	
		Response:	
Has the QB Safe Church Officer been contacted?		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____	
		Response:	
7. Records			
A record of all conversations (with dates, times and names) has been kept.		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
File kept in a locked filing cabinet & marked "Do not destroy"		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

Name of person completing report _____ Position _____

Signature person completing report _____ Signature designated person _____

Schedule 8 - Excluding Offences

(A comprehensive but not exhaustive list of excluding offences)

Computer Games

- Demonstration of an objectionable computer game before a minor.
- Possession of objectionable computer game.
- Making objectionable computer game.
- Obtaining a minor for objectionable computer game.

Films

- Possession of objectionable film.
- Making objectionable film.
- Procurement of minor for objectionable film.

Publications

- Sale etc. of prohibited publication or child abuse material.
- Possession of prohibited publication or material.
- Possession of child abuse publication or child abuse material.
- Exhibition or display of prohibited publication or child abuse material.
- Leaving prohibited publication or child abuse material in or on public place.
- Producing prohibited publication.
- Procurement of minor for RC publication or child abuse material.
- Leaving prohibited publication or child abuse photograph in or on private premises.
- Obscene publications and exhibitions.
- Involving child in making child exploitation material.
- Distributing child exploitation material.
- Possessing child exploitation material.

Internet

- Using internet etc. to procure children under 16.

Unlawful Acts

- Unlawful sodomy.
- Attempted sodomy.
- Indecent treatment of children under 16.
- Bestiality.
- Owner etc. permitting abuse of children on premises.
- Carnal knowledge with or of children under 16.
- Abuse of intellectually impaired persons.
- Procuring young person etc. for carnal knowledge.

- Procuring sexual acts by coercion etc.
- Taking child for immoral purposes.
- Conspiracy to defile.
- Incest.
- Maintaining a sexual relationship with a child.
- Unlawful homicide.
- Attempt to murder.
- Conspiring to murder.
- Killing unborn child.
- Disabling in order to commit indictable offence.
- Stupefying in order to commit indictable offence.
- Acts intended to cause grievous bodily harm and other malicious acts.
- Torture.
- Maliciously administering poison with intent to harm.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Removal of child from state for female genital mutilation.
- Failure to supply necessities.
- Endangering life of child by exposure.
- Rape
- Murder.
- Attempt to commit rape.
- Assault with intent to rape.
- Sexual assaults.
- Kidnapping.
- Kidnapping for ransom.
- Child-stealing.
- Abduction or kidnapping of a child or child stealing.
- Cruelty to children under 16.
- Definition of robbery.
- Burglary.
- Unlawful entry of vehicle for committing indictable offence.

Prostitution

- Procuring prostitution.
- Knowingly participating in provision of prostitution.
- Persons found in places reasonably suspected of being used for prostitution etc.
- Permitting young person etc. to be at place used for prostitution.

Drugs

- Trafficking in dangerous drugs.
- Supplying dangerous drugs.
- Producing dangerous drugs.

Schedule 9 - Annual Checklist

YEAR _____

Currency of Blue Cards	
1. All volunteers and staff are entered into the Blue Card Register?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. All cards are current?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Any volunteers or staff with cards that are not current have completed new applications and we have forwarded them to the Commission?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Any persons with a negative or suspended notice are not currently employed in children's ministry?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Annual training session for all volunteers and staff scheduled and followed through	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Signed _____

Full name _____

Dated _____

Schedule 10 - A Fact Sheet on Sexual Grooming

A lot of information exists about how to respond to sexual abuse once it has been discovered. But the best way of protecting children from harm is to be aware of the behaviours that can lead to sexual abuse before it occurs. These behaviours are called 'grooming'. Organisations with unclear boundaries around contact with children can be magnets to people who wish to 'groom' children for sexual abuse (1). By learning about the strategies used to 'groom' children and their families and recognising them as inappropriate behaviours in your service you create an environment that will deter infiltration by sexual abusers (2).

Sexual abuse thrives in secrecy and ignorance. By being alert to potential danger signs, we are better able to understand the steps we can take to keep children as safe as possible.

What is "Grooming?"

Sexual abusers are often people we know; more than 8 out of 10 children (3) who are sexually abused know their abuser. They may hold responsible positions in their local community and can be personable or charismatic. Abusers come from all classes, ethnic and religious backgrounds and may be heterosexual or homosexual. Whilst a high percentage of abusers are men, some are also women (4). You cannot pick an abuser out in a crowd; however you can identify behaviour that precipitates abuse. This behaviour is known as 'grooming' and research shows us that it can occur for up to 12 months before the actual sexual abuse take place (5).

Grooming is defined as communication with a child where this is an intention to meet and commit a sex offence (6). More generally it can be seen as the process by which an individual manipulates those around them - particularly, but not exclusively, the child - to provide opportunities to abuse and reduce the likelihood of being reported or discovered.

Research suggests that this process can be very deliberate, and while it can occur over a long period of time, sometimes this period of time is much shorter; there may not be any conscious motivation to sexually abuse a child until just before the abuse occurs. In both cases, there are often opportunities to observe and intervene, even before the would-be abuser is fully aware of what may become sexual intentions.

Unfortunately, identifying sexual grooming of children isn't always straightforward. Sometimes sexual abuse occurs as part of a pre-existing relationship in which there is genuine affection, which makes it a complex issue. But there are often clear signs that can be detected before the abuse occurs.

How Do People Groom Children for Sexual Abuse?

By getting close to children - child sex offenders will often seek out adults and groom them in order to get access to their children. The sex offender can create a relationship built on trust or dependency and gain access to the children through it. Some befriend parents or carers who are facing difficulties or who are vulnerable themselves.

By silencing children – people who want to sexually abuse children may:

- offer them gifts or treats, and sometimes combine these with threats about what will happen if the child says 'no' or tells someone
- threaten them with exclusion from their peer group or loss of favour if they do not comply
- make the child afraid of being hurt physically, or threaten what may happen to other people if the child tells
- play on the child's embarrassment or guilt about what is happening, perhaps convincing them that no one will believe them
- make the child believe he or she wanted it to happen.

Signs an Adult May Be Grooming a Child for Sexual Abuse:

There may be cause for concern about the behaviour of an adult or young person if they:

- 1.** Exhibit frequent physical affection such as kissing, hugging, stroking hair or wrestling even when the child clearly does not want it, or it is not required.
- 2.** Encourage child or particular children to sit on their lap and offer regular physical comfort or reassurance to a particular child without a recognised cause.
- 3.** Seek out opportunities to be alone with a child with no interruptions.
- 4.** Spend most of their spare time with children and have little interest in spending time with people their own age.
- 5.** Solicit invitations to sports, events or parties where a child will be.
- 6.** Frequently arrive uninvited to places where the child or their family will be in a series of 'coincidences'.
- 7.** Spend a lot of time around places like arcades, playgrounds, parks and sports venues to get to know children so they are not seen as strangers.
- 8.** Regularly offer support to the family members of the child such as offering to babysit children for free, transport children to events, and help out at social occasions involving the child or take children on outings alone.
- 9.** Offer to drive children home or collect children from events on a regular basis.
- 10.** Frequently walk in on children in the bathroom or their bedrooms.
- 11.** Treat a particular child or group of children as favoured, making them feel special compared with others in a group.
- 12.** Find out as much as possible about the child and use that information to engage the child and drive a wedge between the child and any protective adults, e.g. parents, teachers or coaches.
- 13.** Purchase gifts or collect items of interest regularly for a specific child or group of children.
- 14.** Tell secrets to a child and encourage the keeping of secrets.
- 15.** Display ambiguous sexual behaviour, e.g. showing the child pictures of other children wearing swimsuits or less.
- 16.** Display clearly inappropriate sexual behaviour, e.g. showing the child pornographic pictures, using explicit sexual language around children.

What to do if Abuse is Suspected

Where grooming is suspected, please advise your designated person who will then take the matter further.

KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

- **Child sexual abuse thrives in secrecy.**
- **People who abuse children may spend up to 12 months 'grooming' a child before they commit a sexual act with them (7). However the period of time spent grooming can also be short, with the impulse occurring not long before the abuse happens.**
- **People do not just 'groom' children, they also 'groom' the adults around them.**
- **Environments that have defined boundaries in regards to appropriate behaviour are less likely to attract sexual abusers (8).**
- **Educators, volunteers and visitors to the service should follow defined protocols for appropriate behaviour or be excluded from the service.**
- **Identification of sexual grooming of children in care centres can be a complex issue. The challenge is to be vigilant without creating a siege mentality.**

References

1 *Understanding the Grooming or Entrapment Process, CPSU briefings*

2 *Wortley and Smallbone 2006*

3 *(ABS, 1996, 2004a)*

4 *Pritchard, 2004*

5 *Wortley and Smallbone 2000*

6 *Understanding the Grooming or Entrapment Process, CPSU briefings*

7 *Child Sexual Abuse in Queensland: Offender Characteristics and Modus Operandi*

8 *Understanding the Grooming or Entrapment Process, CPSU briefings*

Source - Network of Community Activities publication

Schedule 11 - Indicators of Abuse

What is child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse occurs when an adult, stronger child or adolescent uses their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse can cause physical and emotional harm to a child. Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional and can include:

- kissing or holding a child in a sexual manner
- exposing a sexual body part to a child
- having sexual relations with a child
- talking in a sexually explicit way that is not age or developmentally appropriate
- making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child
- sending obscene mobile text messages or emails to a child
- fondling a child in a sexual manner
- persistently intruding on a child's privacy
- penetrating the child's vagina or anus by either the penis, finger or any other object
- oral sex
- rape
- incest
- showing pornographic films, magazines or photographs to a child
- having a child pose or perform in a sexual manner
- forcing a child to watch a sexual act
- child prostitution.

Indicators of sexual abuse

A child may say things, do things or exhibit physical signs that are clues to sexual abuse, even if they do not disclose clear information. Some indicators of child sexual abuse may include:

- displaying greater sexual knowledge than normally expected for their age or developmental level
- inappropriate sexual play and behaviour with themselves, other children or dolls and toys
- hints about sexual activity through actions or comments that are inappropriate to the child's age or developmental level
- excessive masturbation or masturbation in public after kindergarten age
- persistent bedwetting, urinating or soiling in clothes
- persistent sexual themes in their drawings or play time
- running away
- destroying property

- hurting or mutilating animals
- creating stories, poems or artwork about abuse
- difficulty concentrating or being withdrawn or overly obedient
- having unexpected redness, soreness or injury around the penis, vagina, mouth or anus
- having torn, stained or bloody clothing, especially underwear
- recurring themes of power or control in play.

Should any of the above be present, a child may need parents or other adults to take action to keep them safe from any further harm.

Indicators of Neglect

Some indicators of neglect include:

- malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food
- poor hygiene, matted hair, dirty skin or body odour
- unattended physical or medical problems
- comments from a child that no one is home to provide care
- being constantly tired
- frequent lateness or absence from school
- inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter
- frequent illness, infections or sores
- being left unsupervised for long periods.

Information courtesy of Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services