



raymond terrace
community church

**CHILD SAFE CHILD FRIENDLY POLICY
and Procedures**

REVISED Dec 2020

Introduction

AT RTCC we honour God's name by providing a Child Safe Child Friendly environment. We want children and young people (Under 18 year olds) who participate in our programs to have a safe and happy experience. We honour God by supporting and respecting our children, young people, staff, volunteers and students.

Title	This policy is called Raymond Terrace Community Church Child Safe Child Friendly Policy.
Introduction	This policy guides staff, volunteers and students on how to behave with children in their supervision. This policy focuses on how we can promote kid's participation in our church and make it safe for them.
Support kids' participation	RTCC supports the active participation of children in our church. We respect and value children and will provide a safe environment where they can learn and develop.
Support Staff, Volunteers and students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We promote respect, fairness and consideration for all staff, volunteers and students. 2. We have appointed a Child Safety Officer who will provide support and advice to our workers. 3. All new staff, volunteers and students will receive a copy of the Child Safe Child Friendly Policy including our Code of Conduct and our How to Deal with Complaints process and then to sign that they have received and understood the policy. 4. All staff, volunteers and students will be trained yearly in our child protection procedures. 5. Our Child Safety Officer is Tim Blatch <p>See Code of Contact (attached)</p>
Recruitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RTCC will appoint staff and volunteers to children related positions if staff and volunteers meet our recruitment and screening requirements. 2. For volunteers & staff these requirements are <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The person must have appropriate skills. b. The person must be cleared by the WWCC. 3. For staff , <ol style="list-style-type: none"> c. The person must have 3 written character / integrity references confirming their suitability to work with children. These references are to be followed up by a verbal inquiry by the recruiting officer. d. The person will be interviewed by the recruiting team / officer for suitability for position. e. A Police Check is also now Required (AS OF 2021)
Child Safe Programs – Risk Management	<p>The Leaders of our children's programs are to provide a safe environment for their planned activities. This will include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having a Risk Management assessment of planned activities and implement strategies to reduce any significant risk. (See Risk Management Assessments located in RTCC Policy folder) 2. Recording of any incidents during the program (Located in Black Admin Forms Folder) 3. Reviewing incidents to ensure procedures are implemented to reduce risk of incident reoccurring. 4. All incidents with Children should be reviewed with Child Safety Officer. (To ensure no patterns are occurring)
Dealing with Complaints	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What we Believe <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Everyone in our Church should be confident that complaints will be dealt with honestly and fairly. b. Everyone in our Church should be confident in reporting inappropriate behaviour around children. c. Everyone in our Church should report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person immediately. 2. All complaints should be reported. This includes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Disclosure of abuse b. Inappropriate behaviour around children

	<p>c. Suspicion of abuse or harm to a child.</p> <p>3. All complaints must be reported to the Child Safety person (as of Dec 2020) Name: Tim Blatch Contact Number: 0414 510 110</p> <p>A child or young person or any staff member, volunteer or student can make a complaint, or raise a concern, directly to the Child Safety Officer.</p> <p>4. The Child Safety Officer will take the following actions:</p> <p>a. Listen to the person making the complaint and make a record of the complaint using the “Complaint Record Form”.</p> <p>b. Assess the complaint and if required report the complaint to Community Services and other appropriate authorities if warranted. (i.e. Police) Inform everyone involved in the complaint of the requirement to make this report.</p> <p>c. If the complaint involves inappropriate behaviour and a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Church Leaders will need to take action in accordance with internal discipline procedures.</p> <p>5. The Church must provide details to the Office of the Children’s Guardian (WWCC people) of any staff, volunteer or student who has been the subject of completed employment proceedings involving;</p> <p>a. Reportable conduct; or</p> <p>b. Acts of violence committed by them in the presence of a child.</p> <p>Reportable conduct is:</p> <p>i. Any sexual offence or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence); or</p> <p>ii. Any assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child; or</p> <p>iii. Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child; whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child.</p> <p>You do not need to report conduct that is reasonable for the discipline, management and care of children or if it was found the conduct did not occur.</p> <p>If you require help in determining what action is required or would like additional help, please contact the CCCAust(NSW) Child Protection Liaison Officer Jim Kelly JDK@owenhodge.com.au or 0417 730 299</p>
Communication	<p>1. RTCC will remind the children’s workers of it’s Child Safe Child Friendly policies and procedures on a yearly basis.</p> <p>2. All new children’s workers, volunteers and students will be taken through the churches Child Safe Child Friendly policies before they commence work.</p> <p>3. Parents and Church community must have all policies available to them upon request.</p> <p>4. A Complaints form is available in the Black Admin folder held in the Admin “pigeon hole” outside the Admin office.</p>
Review	<p>The policy and guidelines will be reviewed min. every two years and incorporate comments and suggestions from staff, volunteers, parents and the leadership team.</p>

Codes of Conduct

Expectations for Staff, Volunteers and Students

As a church we honour God's name by holding values that honour and respect other people. Jesus is the ultimate example of someone who has given of himself for the good of others.

We value the following acceptable practices

- We will treat everyone with respect and honesty.
- We value active listening to children.
- We will be mindful of our responsibility for care. Below are ways in which we are recognising methods that will help us provide appropriate care:
 - We will plan appropriate activities to the age or developmental needs of the children.
 - We will protect ourselves and children by not being alone with them.
 - We will be mindful of the need for appropriate boundaries when comforting or sharing with children and young people.
 - If a child approaches to hug we will turn the child into a sideways hug not a frontal hug;
 - We will sit beside a child when reading a book and not have the child on our knee;
 - We will hold hands for reassurance only, only if required;
 - We will use an open hand on the child's back or shoulder to comfort if the child is hurt or in distress;
 - We will ensure adult supervision at all times, not leaving children unattended, and will call for assistance if we must leave the group.
 - We will use a buddy system if a child needs to leave the group for an appropriate reason.
 - We will only use appropriate forms (natural consequence) of discipline and never use physical discipline on a child.
 - We will use language that honours children (no crude language or jokes).
 - We will only transport children when there is adequate supervision.
 - We will protect children by not having them in our homes without suitable supervision. That is at least 2 adults and 2 children.
 - We will not dispense medication to a child without parent/ guardian guidelines and written consent.
 - We will be sensitive to activities that could be construed as grooming, (showing favouritism, giving gifts to individual children, spending time alone with a child, communicating with individual children via social media).
 - We will be sensitive to bullying or unhealthy dominance within a group.
- We will keep parents / guardians informed and gain permission for activities that are not part of the normal routine of the programmed activity.
- We will be alert and watch for strangers who may enter our programmed areas and act to ensure the safety of the children.
- Alcohol and illegal drugs and those affected by these are not allowed to participate in any of our children's activities.
- We will ensure adequate supervision during programmed activities & are committed to the following ratios

1:3 for 0-1 year olds
1:5 for 2-6 year olds
1:8 for 7-12 year olds
1:15 for 13-17 year olds

There will always be at least **two adults present** when running a child related church activity.

- We will act and report incidents and suspicions of abuse to the Child Safety Officer.
- We will maintain our equipment to ensure it is in good working order.
- We will maintain confidentiality to protect those involved and to stop gossip but will follow policy and legal procedures to ensure the correct outcomes are achieved for the protection of children.

Effective Behaviour Management

This is a general policy outline – to be used in conjunction with specific procedures of individual programs or events. RTCC believes the primary place of discipline remains the responsibility of the parent/guardian and as such any specific discipline outside the general scope outlined below is to be deferred to the Parent/Guardian.

In any children's program, we will need to deal with children who misbehave and disrupt the program for other children. It is not acceptable to use physical force to discipline a child. It is acceptable to use, in dangerous and extreme incidents, reasonable physical force to remove a child causing physical harm to self or another child out of harms way.

Fostering safe and appropriate behaviour begins with positive and appropriate relationships with children and young people. It is important to take the time to outline and reinforce the expectations of safe and respectful participation in activities. This should be done efficiently and without ambiguity.

Positive relationships are those within which children and young people know they are valued and that they will be listened too and if it is required given wise and careful counsel.

Often a child's behaviour is a reflection of their life circumstances. It is important to ensure they have their need to be heard satisfied before a situation is acted upon. Conversations can assist a child to recognise and accept their responsibility within a given situation. If a child acknowledges they have been in error then an apology is usually enough. If a child does not recognise they are in error, a brief timeout session might be in order. Similarly if children behave inappropriately due to excitement a brief time out is also usually effective.

Time out should be in view of others to ensure the child's safety and to monitor their reactions.

If there is a need to address negative behaviour or correct a child try to remain calm and do not personalise the situation. Ensure the safety of others and the appropriateness of the time and place for dealing with the issue.

All corrective behaviour should be conducted sensitively and with the intent for the child to accept responsibility and to then resume an activity or continue positive relationships. Remain calm and in control or call for assistance if you are angry.

Try to outline the desired behaviour and reinforce the benefits of such rather than outline the negative behaviours and threatening consequences.

Should more than one person be involved in a situation, then work only with the facts not past experiences or perceptions.

If a disruption continues or if a child places them or another individual at risk of harm then the child needs to be separated and the parent may need to be contacted and informed without imposing guilt or blame. It is important to maintain positive relationships with parents as much as possible.

Expectations for Children

For Children participating in our programmes we would expect the following behaviours and attitudes

- That they be respectful and friendly to everyone and welcome new children joining the group.
- That they play by the rules.
- That they are free to raise any concerns or worries with the leaders.
- They will not bully others.
- They will not leave the group without approval or supervision from the leaders.

What happens if I break the Code of Conduct?

If an incident brings Children or Young people into a position of “risk of significant harm”, then the incident will be recorded on our Complaint Form by our Child Safety Officer and if deemed reportable, the information will be passed onto Community Services for Investigation and The Children’s Guardian (WWCC managers). The incident may also be reported to the Police if the Child is still in immediate danger. The Church will then act in accordance with actions that ensure the safety of other children and may remove you from that and other ministries as they see fit. If appropriate the church will provide support to help you rectify the offending behaviour which may involve counselling or the like.

If the incident is not reportable, then the church will provide help and assistance to you to modify the offending behaviour. This may mean standing you down from the ministry or other ministries until the Child Safety Officer and church leadership are convinced the inappropriate behaviour has been modified in your life.

Complaints or concerns

Any complaints or concerns need to be completed using the “complaints and concerns” form available in the black forms folder held outside the Admin office.