

Saint Seraphim Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia

Child-Safe Child-Friendly Policy

Policy number

Version

Version 1.0

Drafted by

NJ

Approved by Rector on

21/08/2016

Responsibility

Parish Council

Scheduled review date

<<insert date>>



**Introduction**

This policy focuses on the participation of children and young people in the life of our St Seraphim ROCOR and on making the St Seraphim ROCOR a safe environment for them.

It supplements the *Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behavior* and the *Child-Safe, Child-Friendly Policy* of the Australian and New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia and provides guidance to St Seraphim ROCOR clergy, officials, volunteers, members and all involved in St Seraphim ROCOR life.

**Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, 'children' are aged 0-12, and 'young people' are aged 13-18.

**Child-safe** means taking active measures to keep children and young people safe from physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

**Child-friendly** means creating a trusting environment that values, respects and welcomes children and young people. This means children and young people feel confident to raise any problem or concern and know they will be listened to. Experience shows that abuse most often occurs when children lack that confidence and trust.

All references to the 'parish' and 'parish life' are to St Seraphim ROCOR and its activities. References to 'the Diocese' and to 'Diocesan policy' are to the Australian and New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia and its policies.

**The participation of children and young people in parish life**

Our wants children and young people involved in the life of the parish to have a safe, happy and spiritually beneficial experience.

To this end, we welcome the appropriate participation of children and young people in parish life, and will plan ways that they can be involved.

We will take into account the views of children and young people when making decisions that affect them.

**A positive environment for children and young people**

We will ensure that the parish church, hall and grounds are places in which sources of physical harm to all are eliminated or positively managed.

We will ensure that it is understood that in all parish and Diocesan activities inappropriate behavior towards children and young people is unacceptable. This includes the conduct of children and young people towards one another.

**Supporting our people who work with children and young people**

We promote respect, fairness and consideration for parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, and volunteers who work with children.

All new parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, volunteers, and members will receive a copy of this policy, the Diocesan *Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behavior* and Code of Conduct.

**Clergy and volunteers**

Our parish is committed to ensuring that our clergy and our volunteers who work with children and young people are suitable to do so.

To this end, we will comply with State law and with Diocesan policy concerning *Working with Children Checks* and *National Criminal History Checks*.

## Dealing with complaints

Each year the parish Annual General Meeting will appoint two Child Safety Contact Persons, one male and one female, to receive and manage any complaints that a child or young person is at risk or has been treated inappropriately.

The Child Safety Contact Persons should be trusted parish members who have a demonstrated rapport with children and young people and who have received appropriate training.

Complaints will be managed in accordance with the *Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behavior*, with the parish Child Safety Contact Personnel providing an intermediate step for dealing with complaints about harm or inappropriate behavior towards children or young people. The parish priest must be immediately notified of the complaint.

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## Communication

This policy will be discussed with all new parish, parish officials, church workers, volunteers, and parish members.

A logo will be displayed on the notice board in front of the parish church and hall that clearly communicates the fact that the parish has a child-safe child-friendly policy.

Copies of the Diocesan *Policy and Procedure for Addressing Inappropriate Behavior* and *Child-safe, Child-friendly Policy* will be readily available.

We will hold information sessions for children and young people twice-yearly. These information sessions will be organised and facilitated by the Child Safety Contact Personnel.

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## Review

With the assistance of the Child Safety Contact Personnel, this policy will be reviewed by the Parish Council on an annual basis. Review of the policy will take into account comments and suggestions from children and young people, parish clergy, parish officials, church workers, volunteers, and members, with a copy forwarded to the Diocesan office.

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## Authorisation



Church Rector

St Seraphim ROCOR

Date 21/08/2016