

Church of Christ

Loving God, living life, reaching out for Jesus

14 Douglas Avenue Tuncurry
ABN 22 137 829 211

www.ftchurchofchrist.com
ftcoc@live.com.au

FORSTER TUNCURRY CHURCH OF CHRIST (FTCOC) CHILD SAFE POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

Our commitment to child safety

All children at Forster Tuncurry Church of Christ (FTOC) have a right to feel safe, protected and included.

This policy is part of our organisation's ongoing commitment to protecting the children in our care from harm and abuse. It:

- outlines the child safe practices FTCOC has put in place to minimise the risks to child safety; and
- sets out what is required from staff, including volunteers and others who interact with FTCOC, so they know what is expected from them to keep children safe.

2. SCOPE AND AUDIENCE FOR THIS POLICY

The policy describes what is required from all staff and volunteers at FTCOC when taking part in any activities, services and events that involve children.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILDREN'S SAFETY

All staff, elders and volunteers for the Generations Ministry at FTCOC are expected to carry out the requirements specific to their role to keep children safe. This includes:

- upholding our organisation's commitment to child safety, aligned with the 10 Child Safe Standards;
- reading, signing and upholding the behaviours set out in our FTCOC Code of Conduct;
- meeting requirements across all other child safe policies and procedures, including Child Safe Recruitment practices and Risk Management;
- taking part in our regular reviews of our child safe documents;
- reporting all breaches of our policies or any allegations of child harm or abuse, and meeting all external reporting obligations; and
- completing all child safe training.

At FTCOC we also require all new members of the congregation to sign and agree to our Commitment to Child Safety Statement when they take part in the New Members Meeting held at various times during the year.

Please contact our Safe Ministry administrator, Patricia Pilgrim with any of your child-safety related questions or concerns.

4. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

All our child-related policies and procedures are easily accessible on our website and offline for everyone who accesses our services and events, including children, parents, carers and community members. The policies are located in the main church office at 14 Douglas Avenue Tuncurry 2428.

Children, parents and carers from diverse backgrounds and circumstances are encouraged to provide feedback on our child-related policies and procedures, including our Child Safe Code of Conduct that describes acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours and our Child Safe Risk Management Plan.

We provide opportunities for children to provide feedback to our management, board or committee on what makes them feel safe, supported and included.

5. TERMS

Please see Glossary of Terms for Definitions.

General Terms

Psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse)
Physical abuse
Sexual abuse
Grooming
Misconduct
Lack of appropriate care
Reportable allegation
Reportable conduct

6. WHAT THE POLICY COVERS

Toileting procedure

If a child needs to use the toilet, the outside toilets are for Sunday School (Generations Ministry) usage. The keys are located on the wall in the kitchen space. It is highly recommended that the disabled toilet be used.

The policy is for one person (helper) to take the child out to the toilet and stand outside the building so that the teacher inside can have visual line of sight of the helper. Communication can happen with the child through the door.

If child requests assistance, the helper may enter the bathroom while leaving the door fully open and maintaining visual line of sight as much as possible with inside teacher. At no time should the door be closed with teacher/helper and child in the room alone. It is best to teach the child as best as possible how to do things themselves from the doorway unless permission has been given by the parent/caregiver on the permission note to assist with toileting.

WHS procedure

It is important that each child in attendance is written on the 'attendance sheet'. If a child is being dropped off without the parent/caregiver staying in attendance, the child **MUST** be signed in by that parent/caregiver, not the teacher. The same needs to happen on pick up also. These attendance Sheets are filed online in a shared Excel Spreadsheet.

Generations Registration forms need to be signed for each child at the start of each year. These forms indicate parent consent for our activities, first aid care, toileting permissions, allergies and diverse needs, photography permissions and emergency contacts.

Transporting children

Best practice is to always have two adults travelling with children. If this is not possible, a suitable arrangement must be made between the organisation and the parents of the children. If a child is alone with an adult in a car they must sit on the back seat. Every child should be accounted for at the end of a journey. For further detail please see our "Transport policy" in our policy handbook.

Social media use and online communication

Staff and volunteers must never communicate privately with children online or on social media. Any necessary online communication should include the child's parent or carer in the correspondence.

Photography and the use of images

Photos and videos of children can only be taken with the permission of parents or carers. Parents and carers must also approve any images used on our social media channels. It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to take photos or videos of children, other than their own, on personal devices, or to share images without permission. All parents who bring their children to partake in the Generations Ministry at FTCOC are required to complete a "Generations Registration Form" where permissions about photography and use of images are required.

Physical contact

Physical contact with children should be kept to a minimum. Everyone involved in the organisation is expected to have healthy physical boundaries with children. All staff and volunteers are required to undertake "Safe Touch" training every 3-5 years in line with the Safe Spaces Training course renewal.

Gifts and benefits

Staff and volunteers must never give gifts to children, or bestow benefits of any kind to a child, unless they have direct permission from the child's parents or carers. In the case that gifts are given to children from staff parental consent is required.

Illness and injury management

Injuries must be reported to the first aid officer on duty and first aid administered in a safe space within lines of sight of other adults. Current qualified first aid officers (August 2025) are:

- Tamara Clarke
- Priscilla Ravesteyn

7. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONCERNS OR INCIDENTS

Child Safe Reporting Policy

Our Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure sets out requirements and procedures for complaints, allegations, disclosures and reports, and external reporting obligations. It can be accessed at <https://www.ftchurchofchrist.com/> or found in the policy handbook at FTCOC.

8. OTHER RELATED CHILD SAFE DOCUMENTS

FTCOC has a range of other key documents that relate to child safety. These can be accessed at <https://www.ftchurchofchrist.com/>, and include:

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Our public commitment to prioritising child safety across our organisation

Forster Tuncurry Church of Christ Code of Conduct

Guides the day-to-day behaviours of adults interacting with children at the organisation.

Child Safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy

Sets out what is involved in the recruitment process and the procedures to be followed before a person is considered for a role at the organisation. This includes the verification of their Working with Children Check. It also outlines what is involved in the induction process for new recruits and any further training requirements.

Child Safe Risk Management Plan

Describes the specific risks at the service that could affect children's safety and identifies the protective strategies used to lower each risk.

Publication, communication and engagement

Our Child Safe Policy and other child safe documents can be found on our website at <https://www.ftchurchofchrist.com/>. We also send out a printed copy with all new registrations. Anyone involved in our community can request a copy via email at any time. We endeavor to make safety a priority in our monthly newsletters with a Child Safe focus in each edition. We welcome feedback and review from the broader church community when our Policies are up for revision.

Child Safe Standards are a priority at each Generations Meeting throughout the year- all staff and volunteers are given training on the standards and what is required of them in their paid or unpaid role. Children are given the opportunity at these meetings to give input as to how we can best support and keep them safe at Forster Tuncurry Church of Christ.

Safe ministry contacts

Bret Clarke	Pastor	ftcoc@live.com.au
Priscilla Ravesteyn	Generations Co-ordinator	pravesteyn.teach@gmail.com
Patricia Pilgrim	Safe Church Team Leader	cofchub@gmail.com

Related legislation, regulations and standards

FTCOC has to understand and comply with a number of NSW child protection laws and schemes. These include:

- NSW Child Safe Scheme
- Children's Guardian Act 2019
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

9. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Approval and Review	Details
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Approval Responsibilities	Elders
Next Review Date	September 2026

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Date	13 October 2025

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