

**Anglican Diocese of Melbourne**

**Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool**

# Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool

## Introduction

This document has been developed in response to the new Child Safe Standards, with particular focus on Standards 2 and 9 and is part of the Diocesan Action Plan. The Diocese has identified the Diocesan wide child abuse risks and has provided mitigation strategies. Some of these mitigation strategies are included in the Professional Standards Uniform Act, Safe Ministry Policy, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing and related Safe Ministry documentation. The Diocese is committed to ongoing review and improvement of these risk mitigation strategies.

Child abuse risk assessment is different to other risk assessments for hazards which we are all aware of. This is specific to mitigating child abuse risks. It has a very different dimension to it and different aspects to consider. When looking at the risk matrix in light of child abuse, the **consequences are always severe**.

## Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management

The Victorian Child Safe Standards aim to reduce the likelihood of harm to children both in the physical and online environments.

Parishes and AACs are expected to implement the Diocesan wide risk mitigation strategies to keep children safe which is part of the Action Plan for meeting the New Victorian Child Safe Standards. **It will also be necessary for Parishes and AACs to identity and mitigate site specific risks at the beginning of each year, as programs/activities commence, and as issues arise.**

This document provides a template to assist Parishes and AACs in assessing and mitigating site-specific risks and with the implementation of the Diocesan wide risk management strategies.

### Assessment

Risk assessment is a crucial part of planning for all activities and programs. It is the systematic process of evaluating all possible risks associated with an activity or program. This process is the way risks are considered and measures put in place to assist in preventing and limiting incidents, accidents, harm and abuse from happening.

When assessing the risks of child abuse, all activities that involve, impact or are offered to children must be identified and the risks analysed. Strategies to limit and prevent harm and abuse need to be developed and implemented.

Risks are assessed by both the likelihood of an incident occurring and the consequences of an incident. The likelihood ratings are rare / unlikely / possible / likely / almost certain. The consequence ratings are insignificant / minor / moderate / major / severe. In the case of a child abuse risk assessment the consequence is always severe.

Child abuse risks need to be assessed through the Situational, Vulnerability, Propensity and Institutional contexts.

Situational risk – consider the environment and nature of the activity. What characteristics of the environments may be manipulated by a motivated perpetrator? What are the opportunities for children to be alone unseen or to form relationships with adults?

Vulnerability risk – consider the circumstances and characteristics of the children/youth participating in the activity that may make them more susceptible to abuse.

Propensity risk – what is the profile of the adults engaging with children/youth. When assessing propensity risk, we operate on the assumption that everyone who works with children can pose some level of risk.

Institutional risks – Consider the characteristics of the organisation, independently of the activities it conducts. What are the organisational characteristics that may give rise to a greater risk of abuse? What organisational factors may impair child abuse prevention measures? What organisational structures may disempower children or be a barrier to them speaking up?

### Management

Risk Management is the process of **identifying**, **evaluating**, **prioritising** and **taking steps to mitigate** likelihood of abuse, harm, incidents and accidents. It is an ongoing and continual process.

This document is to be discussed with Parish Council in partnership with the Diocesan Action Plan for meeting the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

There is always some degree of risk in all things we do. As these are identified, measures must be implemented to manage and minimise risks and the likelihood of abuse happening.

## Using the Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool

How each area of risk is structured in the tool

Key Risk areas are to be identified.

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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **All age regular events** – church services, choirs and music bands, after service morning teas/suppers or similar –  **NB** **All parishes have church services and so need to mitigate against this risk** | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe  Risk level - Likelihood may change. Consequence is always severe. | |
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| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Churches with no children in regular attendance thinking they don’t need to mitigate this risk   Evaluate the sources of risk and possible harm.   * Exposed to Grooming through ‘special relationships’ * Contact with adults in unsupervised or semi-supervised areas (often unintentional) * Children or families feel they can’t speak up due to power imbalance * Spiritual and emotional abuse can occur in power imbalance * Physical environments (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms eg heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves)   Current mitigation strategies to prevent child abuse across the diocese.   * Unknown and potentially unsafe people having access to children * Unclear who has responsibility of care at any given time | | |
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| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All clergy, staff and volunteers must have appropriate clearances and training   + Clearances are required for all choir and music leaders   + Safe Ministry levels 1 & 2 training are required for all choir and music leaders * Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required clearances, references and training * Meeting all requirements of venues and organisations * Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on-site * Assess property annually and modify as possible (e.g. windows in solid doors) * Evacuation areas and plans are displayed and practiced * Child safe posters displayed in areas * PowerPoint slide with commitment to child safety in each service   + Eg. Children invited to the front in services for song/talk then prayed for before kids church   + Eg. Slides with ‘Everyone has a role in child safety’ * Communicate parent’s responsibility of their children, including when ‘duty of care’ is returned * Children to go to toilets in pairs | | Determine additional parish specific risks by considering these areas: Situational risk, Vulnerability risk, Propensity risk, Institutional risks. |
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| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
| Develop additional mitigation strategies for identified parish specific risks and date for implementation. | | |

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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented |
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| Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name] | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **All age regular events** – church services, choirs and music bands, after service morning teas/suppers or similar –  **NB All parishes have church services and so need to mitigate against this risk** | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Churches with no children in regular attendance thinking they don’t need to mitigate this risk * Exposed to Grooming through ‘special relationships’ * Contact with adults in unsupervised or semi-supervised areas (often unintentional) * Children or families feel they can’t speak up due to power imbalance * Spiritual and emotional abuse can occur in power imbalance * Physical environments (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms eg heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) * Unknown and potentially unsafe people having access to children * Unclear who has responsibility of care at any given time | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All clergy, staff and volunteers must have appropriate clearances and training   + Clearances are required for all choir and music leaders   + Safe Ministry levels 1 & 2 training are required for all choir and music leaders * Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required clearances, references and training * Meeting all requirements of venues and organisations * Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on-site * Assess property annually and modify as possible (e.g. windows in solid doors) * Evacuation areas and plans are displayed and practiced * Child safe posters displayed in areas * PowerPoint slide with commitment to child safety in each service   + Eg. Children invited to the front in services for song/talk then prayed for before kids church   + Eg. Slides with ‘*Everyone has a role in child safety’* * Communicate parent’s responsibility of their children, including when ‘duty of care’ is returned * Children to go to toilets in pairs | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Whole church activities with local communities** including fetes, working bees, food pantries, carols by candlelight or similar  **NB** **All parishes have community activities and so need to mitigate against this risk** | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Churches with no children in regular attendance thinking they don’t need to mitigate this risk. * Physical environment (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms e.g. heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) * Activities are less regular and variety of people (both known and unknown) can attend * Due to spread out environment, children and youth could be left unsupervised * Rehearsal rooms and robing rooms * Outside visitors or guests for programs or activities * Contact with adults in unsupervised or semi-supervised areas (often unintentional) * Participation in music bands / choir * Coaching/teaching strategies can be abusive * Unknown/community people (at fetes/food banks) * Scholarships can be connected to performance which can lower the likelihood of a report being made | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required   + clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Roster on staff/volunteer who have been trained/screened * Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on site * Meeting all requirements of venues and organisations * Risk assessments are completed annually and before extra activities with parish council, clergy, staff and volunteers as well as children/youth * First aid / asthma / anaphylaxis training * Child safe & safety briefing for all people at working bees / fetes / etc * Have specific areas for children * Supervision ratios are considered in rostering of adults * CSO and other safe adults wear yellow vests or bright lanyards and name tags so children and other adults know there are safe adults around and are looking out * Ensure leaders are familiar to children being aware of children with disabilities | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Clergy visitations and classes** e.g. hospital visiting, baptism classes, communion visitations, or similar | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Unhealthy coaching/teaching strategies can be abusive * Physical environment (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms e.g. heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) * Power imbalances * Closed spaces add risk * Online risks * Both vicar and parish member/child can be in vulnerable situations | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers involved must complete required   + clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Visit in pairs – if not possible ensure parish council know and give approval * File note/ document all details of visits * Signed parent permission forms for children and youth for classes * Classes in groups * Have second adult involved in baptism/confirmation classes with children and youth where possible | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Home based groups** - including bible study groups, life groups, craft groups, missional communities or similar | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Physical environment   + visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms e.g. heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves   + who lives there, unfamiliar neighbourhood, house not set up in a child safe way * Possible online risks * Events and members can be less regular * Contact with adults in unsupervised or semi-supervised areas (often unintentional) * Mixing with people of all ages and from community members as well as parish members | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required   + clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Hosts and adults in the house are to be known by parish leadership, screened, reference checked and trained prior to starting as small group hosts * Have specific (screened and trained) adults to supervise children if separating from parents for program * Additional parish training for small group leaders * Risk assessments are completed annually by parish council, clergy, staff and volunteers, including for individual homes * Demarcation of spaces in home (e.g., only in open communal spaces) * Ensure physical boundaries are clearly communicated to all people | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name] | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Child specific programs** – includes kids church, playgroups, mainly music, MOPS, Kids Clubs, Kids Hope, holiday programs, offsite activities or similar | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Exposed to grooming through ‘special relationships’ * Adult authority over children * Unhealthy coaching/teaching strategies can be abusive * Supervision * Children not collected by parents/caregivers after activities * Children left unattended / roaming the building/grounds * Outside visitors or guests for programs or activities * Physical environments (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms eg heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) * Old buildings – solid heavy doors, dark hallways and alcoves, separate buildings on-site * Hired buildings – community people able to access areas | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required   + Clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Parish specific training for activities including evacuation plans, record storage, etc * Meeting all requirements of venues and partner organisations (Eg Kids Hope) * Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on-site * Annual risk management processes with parish council, clergy, staff and volunteers as well as children (including safety risks and child abuse risks) * Assess property annually and modify as possible (eg. windows in solid doors) * Child safety and risk management are agenda items at all parish council meetings * Review accident forms and move/modify activities as needed * Move children’s activities to visible spaces * Supervision ratios - always at least 2 leaders * Children signed into programs * Gathering information for new parents early * Provide additional support and supervision when children take the lead on some activities * Ensure children are aware of boundaries and are part of developing these as appropriate * Toileting policies/procedures in place, including children going to the toilet in pairs * Use child safe equipment | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Youth specific programs** – includes bible studies, discipleship groups, mentoring, offsite activities or similar | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Adult authority over children * Unhealthy coaching/teaching strategies can be abusive * Exposed to grooming through ‘special’ relationships * Outside visitors or guests for programs or activities * Physical environment (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms e.g. heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) * Driving   + road safety   + buses/public transport   + carpooling   + licensed drivers * Youth activities at off-site premises * Online communication * Permission forms * Mental health concerns * Injuries in games | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required   + Clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Parish specific training for activities including evacuation plans, record storage, etc * Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on-site * Youth aged leaders screened and trained also in a pastoral support * Leaders are aware of mental health concerns and where to go for support (which can include Mental Health First Aid courses) * Meeting all requirements of venues and organisations * Annual risk management processes with parish council, clergy, staff and volunteers as well as youth (including safety risks and child abuse risks) * Assess property annually and modify as possible (e.g. windows in solid doors) * Risk assessments on venues/activities/games/camps/etc * Ensure drivers are licensed (P2/green P’s as minimum) and fully insured * If hiring a bus, ensure maintenance is up to date * Child safety and risk management are agenda items at all parish council meetings * Review accident forms and move/modify activities as needed * Supervision ratios - always at least 2 leaders * Parents/guardian’s complete permission forms at commencement and then annually * Conversations are had with youth about respect in relationships and appropriate behaviours * Awareness of gender/culture/abilities/etc * Provide additional support and supervision when children take the lead on some activities * Involve youth in discussions about boundaries and are part of developing these as appropriate | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Working with other churches** (both dioceses and denominations) **and third-party organisations** working with children | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Physical environment (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms e.g. heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) * Possible undisclosed clearance concerns * Unknown people being unsupervised onsite while children and youth are present * Workers from other organisations (including other denominations) not being aware of diocesan safe ministry policies and procedures * Workers from other organisations (including other denominations) not being aware/ unaware of commonwealth and state legislation (i.e. conversion legislation, privacy, child safe standards) * Workers from other organisations unknown clearance processes * Third party organisations have different values and agendas to those shared by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * Vicar/nominated (cleared and trained) person to engage and meet outside worker to  1. sign ADOM’s Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing and 2. advise them of the Child Safe policies, procedures and practices  * Outside workers who are serving your parish in an ongoing capacity are to complete diocesan safe ministry training and clearance checks * Outside worker (once off) to be supervised while onsite when children / youth are also onsite. This supervisor must be aware they are responsible for the outside workers compliance with commonwealth and state legislation * Child Safety and Wellbeing policies and procedures to be displayed to be visible for all people. The supervisor knows where these are displayed | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Overnight activities** – church camps, youth camps or similar | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Adult authority over children * Exposure to grooming * Physical environment –   + Parish buildings - visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms e.g. heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves   + check requirements with offsite campsite * Driving   + road safety   + buses/public transport   + carpooling   + licensed drivers * Shared sleeping spaces/dorm rooms * Permission forms * Mental health concerns | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required   + clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on-site * Youth aged leaders screened and trained also have good pastoral support * Meeting all requirements of venues and organisations * Leaders are aware of mental health concerns and where to go for support (which can include Mental Health First Aid courses) * Supervision ratios - always at least 2 leaders * Risk assessments on venues/activities/games/camps/etc * If hiring a bus, ensure drivers are fully licensed and insured * Parents/guardian’s complete permission forms * Conversations are had with youth about respect in relationships and appropriate behaviours * Awareness of gender/culture/etc | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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| **Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool – [Parish/AAC Name]** | | |
| **Key Risk area** | Risk Level | |
| **Online spaces** | Likelihood - possible | |
| Consequence - Severe | |
| Sources of risk and possible harm | | |
| * Opportunities for grooming * Potential for cyberbullying * Risk of exposure to inappropriate content * Inappropriate sharing * Unmonitored one on one contact | | |
| Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name] | | Yes / Not Yet / NA -why |
| * All Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required   + clearances, references and screening   + Diocesan Safe Ministry Training levels * Risk assessments for online spaces and technology used * Parents sign registration forms which include permission for online engagement with children/youth * Detailed in Code of Conduct for Child Safety and training –   + Use for pastoral ministry   + Prior consent from parents/guardians   + Parents are included in online communications   + Another relevant adult is included   + Details of online communications are recorded   + Clear unacceptable behaviours are detailed | |  |
| Current gaps at [parish name] | | |
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| Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name] | Date to be implemented | |
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Date risk management tool submitted to Parish Council: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Signature of Vicar: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Signature of Wardens:

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Next review date (annually or following an incident): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_