

WELLINGTON SOUTH BAPTIST CHURCH

CHILD SAFETY POLICY



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Wellington South Baptist Church Child Safety Policy

To be reviewed March 2026

This policy exists to ensure the safety and well-being of all the children and youth in our church community. The policy is also designed to protect leaders, and increase awareness and safety practices for the whole congregation.

References to children and young people (unless otherwise stated) are those 17 years old and under.

This is a working document, which needs regular review and input, primarily from the pastor, administrator, elders, children's caregivers, and leaders of the Children's Ministry and Unite Youth groups.

Registration and Attendance at programs/activities policy

A registration must be completed for every child who attends a Children's Ministry or young person who attends Unite Youth group session. This will contain necessary information about the person and their caregiver(s). Caregivers may remove their child's registration form at the end of the programme if they wish, but regular attendees are encouraged to keep their forms on record.

See also:

Enrolment form p4

Attendance form p5

Completed and blank forms are to be kept at the back of the Programme Leaders' Folder. Programme leaders are responsible for making sure there is a registration form in the book for each child in the programme.

An attendance record is to be marked for each session, and kept at the back of the Programme Leaders' Folder. Programme leaders are responsible for this.

Registration form

Registration form for Children's Ministry and Unite Youth group attendees. One form per child or family.

1. Name of child/ren

2. Name of caregiver/s

3. Contact details (postal, email, phone)

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

4. Instructions regarding health issues, allergies, medications, special needs, any concerns, or anything else relevant to child's session attendance, including person(s) who may **not** collect your child/ren:

(For regular attendees: please ask programme leader to make a note next to child's name on attendance sheet if there is information leaders need to be aware of.)

5. Permission to be photographed or videoed for use within church context (eg reporting on activities in church services). Any use outside immediate church context (e.g. email, website, noticeboards) will be cleared with child and caregiver on case by case basis.

Yes No

(Regular attendees: if answer is no, please ask programme leader to make a note next to child's name on attendance sheet.)

6. I understand that my permission will be sought for any trip away from the building, and that if an upcoming trip is advertised I need to make sure I have signed a permission slip for my child.

Yes

7. I undertake to discuss with my child what to do in the event of an emergency while attending a programme (see 'Emergencies' pages 12-13, also printed in Children's Ministry Folder).

Yes

Signed by caregiver:

Date:

Guidelines for supervision and protection of children during church services, and Children's Ministry and Unite Youth Group sessions

These guidelines are for leaders of programme sessions, and also apply to the whole congregation

- 1) No one adult to be out of sight with one child at any time.
- 2) No adult to touch a child on any part of their body that would normally be covered by swimming togs.
- 3) No adult to kiss, tickle a child, or do anything that could be interpreted as sexual.
- 4) During session times, access to the hall is for leaders, children and caregivers.
- 5) During off-site, social outings with children, there need to be at least two leaders present, and caregivers need to be informed of the names of those leaders.
- 6) Permission slips must be obtained for every trip.
- 7) Any one-on-one discussions with a child (behavioural, pastoral) must be in public spaces where other adults are present.
- 8) Children are not permitted to play unsupervised in the hall. If there are no organised sessions, children must remain in the main church, or caregivers must agree among themselves who will supervise the children.
- 9) Unless requested by children or parents there is no need to assist school aged children with toileting. If the situation arises ensure that other staff know you are toileting a child/young person, and that parents are informed.
 - a) If assisting a child, check the bathroom is empty first before allowing the child to enter. Where possible, wait at the door until the child requires assistance or has finished.
- 10) Where possible, arrange for a parent/caregiver to assist with toileting of pre-school aged children. Use the mobile phone provided.
 - a) We acknowledge this is not always possible. Therefore, when helping pre-school aged children with toileting, ensure another leader is aware that assistance is being given.
 - b) Utilise the toilet with the change table in it to ensure nobody else enters whilst assistance is being given.
- 11) During sessions, the side door into the lounge is to be locked to prevent people entering through it from The Parade, and to prevent children from exiting to The Parade.
- 12) Incident / accident forms to be filled out when necessary (p21)
- 13) In the case of children with special needs individual supervision guidelines suited to the child will be worked out in partnership with caregivers.
- 14) Programme leaders can contact caregivers using the Children's Ministry phone via the contact person who will have a mobile phone in the service. The phone number is 021 182 0075 and is stored in the Children's Ministry phone.

Identification of child abuse guidelines

If you are concerned about a child, ask yourself the question: "Is the child safe?"

If you answer "No", report the suspected abuse immediately to Oranga Tamariki (0508 FAMILY or 0508 326 459). If the person is in immediate danger, contact the Police, by phoning 111.

If you're not sure, you can call Oranga Tamariki on 0508 326 459 for advice. If the social worker thinks the child is in immediate danger they will act on it within 24 hours.

Other resources:

Family Violence Information Line, *It's Not OK*, 0800 456 450, www.areyouok.org.nz
<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/worried-about-a-child-tell-us/>
www.childmatters.org.nz

Reporting of child abuse

- We must protect our children.
- Section 15 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 Section 15 provides that: "Any person who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived may report the matter to a Social Worker or a member of the Police."
- When harm is suspected take action immediately.
- Consult with someone experienced, like management staff or outside agencies ('Oranga Tamariki' or 'Child Matters').
- Record details of what you saw, heard and what the child or someone else told you. Include times and dates. **You must not interrogate the child.** If your suspicions are not confirmed as significant, continue to monitor the situation closely in consultation with others.
- If your concerns are confirmed, report the suspected abuse to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and if there is an immediate danger, report immediately.
- Inform the pastor and/or elders of your actions.
- If the concern or disclosure involves the pastor, report it to the elders immediately.

Responding to suspicions and/or allegations against a person in a church.

- a) If any suspicions of abuse occur, leaders and staff are to first and foremost act in the best interest of the child concerned.
- b) Do not protect the church, its "reputation", or any person at the expense of the child.
- c) All suspicions and/or allegations are to be treated with confidentiality towards all parties.
- d) The accused person will be advised to seek independent legal advice.
- e) The accused person will be supported and treated with respect. Pastoral care will be offered to all parties concerned.
- f) See the Baptist Union Administrator's Manual for a full description of these procedures.

Steps in responding to a child's disclosure.

When a child does share with you that something has happened to them, show your care and concern by:

- a) Listening carefully.
- b) Tell the child you believe them.
- c) Tell the child it's not their fault, they are not responsible for the abuse.
- d) Tell the child you are pleased they told you (abusers threaten or manipulate children to prevent disclosure).
- e) Acknowledge it is hard to talk about these things.
- f) Do not press for details. Just listen and record the information the child volunteers.
- g) Assure the child you will support them.
- h) Do not make promises you are not able to keep, i.e. confidentiality.

- i) Tell the child certain adults need to be informed who can protect them so the abuse can stop.
- j) Do not attempt any form of counselling.
- k) As soon as is practical, record details of your conversation and contact the pastor and/or elders.
- l) For confidentiality reasons, a leader is only to report their findings to the pastor and elders, and the Police or Oranga Tamariki.
 - a. Where the disclosure involves the pastor, the findings are to be reported to the elders, and where appropriate to the Police or Oranga Tamariki.
 - b. Again, do not protect the church, its "reputation", or any person at the expense of the child.

Leaders policy

Any adult who wishes to lead in the Children's Ministry or Unite Youth group sessions must have been attending the church regularly for six months. They must apply to the minister for permission to become a leader, and have a discussion based on application form (pp10-11) and must have a police check. Any concerns about leaders will be brought to the minister and/or the elders, so that they can decide how to proceed.

Leaders, paid and voluntary, and anyone with additional access to children, must have a police check every two years. Anyone with any convictions or background that put children at risk will not be allowed to work with children. Police forms will be destroyed after being returned.

Leaders, paid and voluntary, and anyone with additional access to children, must sign the ethics statement. The signed statements are to be kept in the Session Leaders Folder.

Application form for Children's Ministry and Unite Youth group leaders

In the case of volunteers, a discussion with the minister, police vetting and signed ethics form is sufficient. Notes of discussion can be taken and kept by minister. In the case of a paid employee, this form will be revised to create an official application form, the minister and at least one other person from the church leadership will be involved in the appointment (and depending on the position, a church members' vote of approval may be required). In the case of volunteers, these questions are to allow a conversation to occur. Police vetting and ethics forms must also be completed as part of an application. A job description will be created.

Role interested in:

Name:

Contact details:

How long have you been attending this church?

Occupation :

Previous Experience (with children or other experience relevant to the position you are applying for):

Please give some key descriptors of your faith/faith journey so far, and how you would relate this to teaching/discipling children:

Why do you wish to participate in leadership with children?

What strengths would you bring to this role?

Do you foresee the need for any specific support if you are in this role?

Personal Situation:

1. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded to a crime? Yes / No
2. Have you ever been addicted to drugs, alcohol, pornography or any other addiction?
Yes / No
3. Do you have health issues that would impact on this role?
Yes / No
4. Have you ever abused a child or been accused of abuse?
Yes / No
5. Have you ever been challenged about or disciplined for your behaviour with children?
Yes / No

Please provide the name, address and phone number of two contactable references (Not relatives):

Disclosure Consent:

I give permission for Wellington South Baptist Church to make such enquiries of such people as it considers necessary to assess my suitability for appointment to the position I am requesting.

Signed:

Date:

The information I have provided (in writing or in discussion) is true and correct.

Signed:

Date:

Emergencies

- 1) General safety measures:
 - a. All exits are clearly marked by a green and white 'EXIT' sign.
 - b. Evacuation notices are displayed around the building.
 - c. All exits (including the main corridor) are to be kept free from obstructions at all times.
 - d. Fire alarms and fire extinguishers are placed throughout the building.
 - e. Church does two fire drills a year, one during Sunday services. Leaders are requested to pay special attention to the procedures at those times (even if they are not running a session).
 - f. The evacuation assembly area is on the corner of The Parade and Humber Street (outside Tricia's Pies). Hall users exit via the rear doors and, if safe, proceed to the assembly area. If it is unsafe to walk past the south side of the church building, the assembly area will be on the footpath outside the church manse at 111 Derwent Street; proceed through the gate, past the house and on to the road
 - g. Registration forms ask caregivers to discuss emergency procedures with their child.

- 2) In the event of a fire:
 - a. On hearing the fire alarm, leaders are to move children in an orderly fashion to the assembly area on the corner of The Parade and Humber Street Street (outside Tricia's Pies) via the nearest safe exit.
 - b. Take Programme Leaders' Folder with the day's attendance record so that roll can be checked.
 - c. A leader to check rooms off hall, including toilets, if they are able to without compromising the safety of the group. Fire wardens have designated areas and the whole building will be checked by fire wardens during the evacuation process.
 - d. Caregivers meet their children at the assembly area, not in the hall. (Caregivers remain with the group of children and leaders rather than remove child so that the attendance role can be checked.)
 - e. The programme leader/s take the Programme Leaders folder with them to assembly area, and use the attendance sheet to systematically check that all are present.
 - f. One leader is to stay with the children at all times at the assembly area.
 - g. Children and leaders may return to the hall once the all clear is given.

- 3) In the event of an earthquake:
 - a. Take cover beneath a strong desk or table – drop, cover, hold.
 - b. Leaders remain calm and give reassurance.
 - c. Evacuate the area only when instructed to do so or if the building is obviously structurally unsafe.
 - d. Proceed to assembly area.
 - e. If outside, instruct children to move clear of buildings, power poles, power lines and trees.
 - f. Leaders are to stay with children at all times at the assembly area.

- 4) In the event of a tsunami warning:
 - a. If you feel an earthquake that is either longer than a minute OR strong enough
 - b. that it's hard to stand up THEN get to high ground, as soon as shaking stops.
 - i. If an earthquake is "Long or Strong, be Gone"
 - c. Leaders remain calm and give reassurance
 - d. Evacuate the building, out the back doors and proceed past the church manse, turn right on to Derwent Street and then turn left onto Ribble Street, to the closest evacuation zone, which is outside 30 Ribble Street, or further up the hill.

- 5) In the event of an unsafe person in the building:
- a. Leader to check all rooms, including toilets, and keep all children together.
 - b. Leaders stay with the children in the hall, or evacuate the group to the back lawn behind the church.
 - c. All caregivers are to be notified so that caregivers collect their children, or increase the ratio of adults to children in the hall, or on the back lawn.
 - d. Leader/s to use attendance sheet to systematically check that all children are present and returned to their caregivers.
 - e. Normal activity can recommence only after the all clear is given.

OSH policy and procedures relevant to children

This is a summary of key OSH considerations relevant to children. Refer to the church OSH manual for more information.

Blood and bodily fluids

Burns

Electrical extension cords

Hygiene, personal

Same level – slip trip fall

Ladders

Storage

Waste management / disposal

Nappies and toileting for young children

Chemicals and chemical storage

Solvents

Hygiene, kitchen

First aid

First aid kit is located in the kitchen on top of the fridge. For a minor injury, session leader can provide sticky plaster etc. For more serious injury, caregiver to be notified via data projector, so they can tend to their child.

People in the church who hold up to date first aid certificates as of March 2021:

Phone the contact person in the service, on 021 182 0075 to request further assistance.

Building Safety

Congregation encouraged to notice and respond to safety issues. Deal with something on the spot, or notify the pastor, administrator or elders.

Hall

- Safety plugs in place as necessary
- Floor coverings – attached and clean
- Electrical cords safely stored
- Lights adequate and operational
- Children's toys/equipment clean and in good condition

Children's Area in Auditorium

- No small objects in room/on floor
- Safety plugs in place as necessary
- Heaters and fans are secure, out of reach of children, unplugged when not in use
- Electrical cords safely stored
- Lights adequate and operational
- Children's toys/equipment clean and in good condition
- Blind/curtain cords hooked up

Back Lawn

- Gates closed
- Rubbish removed

Toilets

- Soap, toilet paper and paper towels available
- Nappy changing facility
- Hot water at 40 degrees or less

Kitchen

- Kitchen out of bounds to small children.
 - The exception to this is if a cooking activity has been planned and has been prepared utilising all risk management processes (pp 21-22; 25-26).
- Rubbish removed at least once a week
- Cleaning equipment out of reach

Emergency

- Evacuation procedures clearly displayed
- Exit signs are visible to all
- Exits and fire doors unobstructed
- Cell phone with programme leader/s

Food hygiene and safety

- Children wash hands before eating
- Adults wash hands before handling food
- Food table clean or covered
- Hot drinks kept away from children
- Hand sanitizer is provided and used

Trips policy

Permission slips must be obtained for each child who goes on any trip away from the building. Even a spontaneous trip must have permission slips (Permission slips p18.). They can be collated via email at office@wsbc.org.nz.

Leaders must have an attendance list with them (either compiled or the permission slips if there are only a few children), a cell phone, and contact details for caregivers.

Leaders need to have planned out the trip before taking children, including visiting prior if necessary, and considering risk management (pp 21-22; 25-26).

When driving:

- 1) Any driver must have been previously approved and listed on the 'Approved Drivers' list.
- 2) Any driver must have their full license before transporting children. This must be carried with them as required by law.
- 3) The law for seatbelts and child restraints must be observed.
- 4) When borrowing or hiring vehicles for an event, the leader driving must obey the set policies concerning the use of that vehicle. This may include being over 25 years of age.
- 5) Any driver of a vehicle must accept full responsibility for any accident or incident and pay the required insurance excess and/or other costs involved.
- 6) This policy applies to every driver including those not in a leadership role.
- 7) The vehicles must be registered, road-worthy and have a current Warrant of Fitness.

When walking:

- 1) Leader/s must have children in sight at all times.

Permission forms for trips

Wellington South Baptist Church Trip permission form (<u>Leader</u> please fill out grey shading, <u>caregiver</u> please fill out other details and return to leader)	
Trip venue /activity	
Trip date	
Trip time-frame	
Leader's name	
Name/s of child/ren	
Caregiver's name, mobile number and signature giving permission for child to attend	
Relevant information for leaders (illness, allergies, concerns)	

Extra information:

Risk analysis and management considerations

Things to consider when planning any activity or event - this might be making a mural, baking cakes or going on a trip to the museum. Taking a bit of time to think through potential risks means the activity/event will be safer and more fun for everyone. If consideration of these questions raises issues of concern, fill out a Risk Assessment and Management Form (pp23-4) for the event/activity.

1) People

- a. Leaders qualifications, training and experience:
 - i. Have they previously led or accompanied groups of children in the activity?
 - ii. How often? Where? When? What age groups?
 - iii. How much experience do the helpers have?
 - iv. Have other groups conducted this activity? Where did they go? How did they organise it? Did anything go wrong? What advice can they offer?
 - v. Can the leaders identify foreseeable risks?
 - vi. Is the activity, such as high-risk activities (e.g. abseiling, whitewater rafting, etc.) being led by a trained professional instructor?
 - vii. Does the leader or a member of the group hold a current First Aid certificate that is applicable for the environment in which the activity/event is to take place?
- b. Participants requirements and issues:
 - i. Is the activity/event appropriate to the ages and maturity of the children?
 - ii. Have the children done anything similar before?
 - iii. How closely do the children need to be supervised? Will constant supervision be maintained? If not, can this be justified? How far away will leaders / helpers be?
 - iv. How much individual attention do these children need for the activity/event?
 - v. If a child is in difficulty, can other children immediately stop what they are doing while leaders or helpers help the child?
 - vi. If the children encounter difficulty, has the activity/event been organised in such a way that leaders and helpers can provide immediate assistance?
 - vii. How will the children be organised while participating in the programme/event?
 - viii. What is the area/distance over which the children will be spread?
 - ix. How familiar are the children with the emergency procedures relating to the activity/event?
 - x. What are the preparatory activities that have been undertaken?
 - xi. Have the children been assessed for any prerequisite skills (e.g. swimming)?
 - xii. What plans have been made to deal with incidents/accidents if they occur and what risk management plans have been made?
 - xiii. What will the children gain from participation in the programme/event and its activities?
 - xiv. How remote is the activity/event from sources of assistance (e.g. tramps/camps)?
 - xv. How long would it take to get help after an incident/accident?
 - xvi. How would help be called?
 - xvii. Have other factors been taken into account, like voluntary participation in activities/events and phobias?

2) Equipment

- a. Does the activity/event require any special equipment?
- b. Is the equipment appropriate for the ages of the children?
- c. Does the equipment to be used meet safety standards?
- d. What can go wrong with the equipment and can this be dealt with?
- e. Are there any relevant safety checks that can be carried out on the equipment? Have they been done? Are they current?
- f. Are there requirements for any protective clothing? (e.g. bike helmets, flotation devices)

- g. Is training required to use any specialised equipment?
- 3) Environment
- a. Sun safety
 - i. Leaders of activities/events that operate outdoors must consider how they will protect children from the sun. Being sun smart in New Zealand is crucial.
 - b. Cold weather safety
 - i. Very cold temperatures, like very hot ones, can be a health hazard. Proper dress and some sensible practices can prevent a lot of the problems associated with cold weather.
 - c. Site safety
 - i. All sites and site facilities, including accommodation, food, hygiene and sanitation for all activities/events are required to meet minimum standards and regulations, and include the provision of fire safety equipment. Leaders and organisers must familiarise themselves with the basics of these requirements and check that any site complies and is appropriate and safe. Consideration needs to be given to both environmental and human dangers associated with the use of the site. The safety of a site should be reviewed regularly.
 - ii. Location:
 - Where is it and how regularly is it used for the programme/event?
 - Is it for beginner participants?
 - How familiar is the leader with the location and the expected weather conditions for the time of the year?
 - Has advice or permission been sought or gained from the local authorities, if necessary?
 - d. Off-Site Activities
 - i. How long will the group be gone for?
 - ii. Who is in charge and how they can be contacted?
 - iii. Is there a list of children in attendance?
 - iv. Are there contact details for caregivers?
 - v. Are there permission slips signed for every child?

Accidents and Incidents

Procedure to be followed in the event of an accident or incident:

- a) Ensure the physical needs of the child have been met.
- b) Speak with caregivers regarding the incident.
- c) Complete an Accident and Incident Reporting form.
- d) Decide whether changes need to be made to prevent this from happening again.
- e) Debrief with all leaders and helpers involved.

Form on p23.

Accident / Incident Report Form

An incident that requires reporting is any event that involves any of the following:

- Accident – moderate or serious injuries
- Moderate or significant damage to property or equipment
- ‘Near misses’ which may have caused any of the above
- Serious or ongoing breach by leaders of Standard of Conduct
- Misbehaviour or circumstances which threaten the safety of leaders or children
- Complaints
- Unresolved disputes
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by leaders

Name of person reporting:

Date reported: Date of incident:

Person receiving report (minster, chairperson or administrator as appropriate):

Date received:

Type of incident (circle)

Accident Personal Injury Safety Concerns Complaint Abuse Other

Description of Events - include who, where, what and witnesses:

Give details of follow-up with caregivers/leaders:

Analysis

Is this type of incident? (circle) new old one-off on-going

Has this type of incident been increasing? Yes / No

Have appropriate steps been taken to address this incident? Yes / No

If “no” what needs to be done?

Contact Details

Pastor

Steven Goulstone
021 533 401
steven@wsbc.org.nz

Elders

Heather Miller
021 719340
heatherdmiller1@gmail.com

Jane Bertschinger
021 061 4579
jane.bertschinger17@gmail.com

Peter Noble
022 026 9559
pm_noble@yahoo.co.nz

Risk Assessment Management (RAM) Form

Leaders (or appropriate person) to fill out RAM when activity/event seems to require extra consideration.

Activity/Event:		Date/s:	
Prepared by:		Checked by:	
Risk	Risk Evaluation	Prevention	Emergency Plans
Consider physical, emotional, mental and spiritual events that may occur	Low/Medium/High (Refer Risk Matrix, on next page)	The plan to eliminate the risk	The plan if risk eventuates
People Risks			
Equipment Risks			
Environment Risks			

Steps taken to minimise risk: (Contingency plans, actions, recommendations etc.)
Skills required by staff:
Safety equipment required:

		Consequences		
		Minor	Moderate	Major
Likelihood	Unlikely	1	2	3
	Possible	2	3	4
	Likely	3	4	5