

Child Safety Policy

Rev No. 20250529

1.1. Child-Safety Policy

Introduction

All children who attend the Christus Rex Pilgrimage have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun.

This policy was developed in collaboration with our volunteers and the children who use our services and their parents. It applies to all volunteers, children and individuals involved in our organisation.

Children's rights to safety and participation

The Christus Rex Society and its volunteers encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

Valuing diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation; and
- seek appropriate volunteers and members of the society from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Recruiting volunteers

The Christus Rex Society applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of volunteers. We interview all volunteers and require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.

Supporting volunteers

The Christus Rex Society seeks to attract and retain the best members and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our members and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Paul Brazier (President) and Jessica Brazier (Secretary) have been appointed as Child Safety Persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by volunteers, parents or children.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, and volunteers.

1.2. Child Safety Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children.

The Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps volunteers by providing them with guidance on how to best support children and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. All Christus Rex Society members and volunteers are required to comply.

All Christus Rex Society members and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- adhering to our Child Safe Policy, and other policies
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions
- welcoming all children and their families and carers and being inclusive
- respecting cultural, religious and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way
- modelling appropriate adult behaviour
- listening to children and responding to them appropriately
- reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns
- complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children
- working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children
- respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know.

Christus Rex Society members and volunteers must NOT:

- seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language with children
- engage in rough physical games
- discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses with children
- have unauthorised contact with children and young people online or by phone