

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Randwick
St Margaret Mary's Randwick North

**Handbook for Volunteers,
Working with children, young
people and vulnerable adults.**

Policy Dated 25092013; Reviewed November 2015

(Edited May 2016)

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed in 2018.

Administered by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the dual parishes of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and St Margaret Mary's serve the Catholic communities of Randwick and Randwick North. Essential to the life of the parish is the committed work of volunteers in many different ministries.

As parishes we are committed to the principles and standards of *Integrity in the Service of the Church* (A resource document of principles and standards for lay workers). As such we are committed to:

1. Justice and equity
2. Upholding the dignity of all people and their right to respect
3. Safe and supportive relationships
4. Reaching out to those who are poor, alienated or marginalised
5. Striving for excellence in all their work

This document has been produced to assist volunteers to understand their obligations as ministers of Church activities and assisting the parish to maintain its status as a safe and supportive environment. Key areas to be addressed in this document are:

- A code of conduct for volunteers
- A safe environment for Children
- Risk management and hazard identification
- The specific needs of ministries that are involved with children and vulnerable persons
- New legal requirements for Working with Children

The role of the lay volunteer is essential to the life of the modern church and your efforts in ministry are much valued and appreciated.

So you would like to volunteer?

The parish has many areas where volunteers are active:

- Readers, Bible Study convenors, Tuesdays at Ventnor discussion group organisers
- Eucharistic Ministers
- Church and Sacristy Cleaners, Gardeners, Car park cleaners
- Catechists
- Sacramental preparation
- RCIA leaders and Sponsors
- Visitations to the elderly (Home visits and nursing homes, Hospital, Matt Talbot and Prison Visitation)
- Acolytes and Senior Servers
- Youth Group supervisors
- Counters
- Liturgy volunteers – choir, welcomers, Children's liturgy

If you are interested in joining one or more of these groups, the Parish Office will give you the necessary contact details to join the group of your choice.

To be a volunteer you need to complete some necessary documentation and participate in an induction process:

- A Volunteer's Registration and Acceptance Form
- Commit to reading the Volunteer's Code of Conduct documentation
- An Induction presentation
- In the instance of ministries that work directly with children and young people complete a Working With Children Check (Children's Liturgy, Acolytes and Servers, Youth Group Supervision and Sacramental Preparation)

Code of Conduct for Volunteers

Relationships among people are the foundation of Catholic ministry and are central to the life of the Church. Defining expectations, behaviours and practices allows the parish to demonstrate its commitment to the community and in particular children, young people and other vulnerable persons.

At all times volunteers represent the parish and as such should be mindful of the following:

1. Professional Behaviour of volunteers

- 1.1 Standard of dress should be commensurate with the activity undertaken
- 1.2 Language should be appropriate at all times
- 1.3 The need to maintain a professional relationship at all times
- 1.4 Physical contact must only be professional
- 1.5 No alcohol or drugs are to be consumed while volunteering
- 1.6 All staff have a responsibility to comply with legislation including Child Protection and Workplace Health and Safety Acts

2. Working with children, young people and vulnerable persons

- 2.1 At least two adults should be involved in the conduct of any activity involving children, young people and vulnerable persons
- 2.2 Records of attendance of participants and all supervisors should be kept for all activities
- 2.3 Transportation in private vehicles should be used in emergency situations only

3. The need to keep safety at the forefront of all activities

- 3.1 Identification of risks and hazards is an important function of the volunteer
- 3.2 The need to take reasonable care with their own health and safety
- 3.3 The need to take reasonable care that a volunteer's acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons

Breaches of the Code of Conduct of Volunteers are to be reported to the Parish Priest and may result in the need for the volunteer to be counselled or their involvement to be terminated.

Procedures relating to Youth Groups in the Parish

1. Youth Groups

- 1.1 A minimum of two adults should be supervising any youth activities
- 1.2 Preferably there will be a gender balance in supervision.
- 1.3 Supervisors must have the WWC and be over 18.
- 1.4 Illness procedures
 - 1.4.1 In the case of illness a parent will be called
 - 1.4.2 No medication is to be distributed by supervisors
 - 1.4.3 In an emergency situation an ambulance will be called.
Both parents and the Parish Priest must be notified of this immediately.
- 1.5 Use of private vehicles
 - 1.5.1 No transport of children under 16 in private vehicles (parents responsibility for transport)
 - 1.5.2 Where practicable, no adult in a supervisory role should be alone with a child in a private vehicle

- 1.5.3 Private vehicle transport may be used in an emergency. In this instance records must be kept and submitted to the Parish Priest
- 1.5.4 Any transport in private vehicles, eg: to attend a youth event in another location must have a signed parental consent form prior to the event**
- 1.6 Two adult supervisors must remain on duty until all children are collected from the venue
- 1.7 Youth group/ weekend sleepovers are for children over 16
- 1.8 Attendance records of attendees and supervisors are to be kept of all parish youth activities.

Procedures relating to Sacramental Preparation and Liturgy groups

2. Sacramental Preparation and Altar Servers

- 2.1 A minimum of two adults should be involved in the activity
- 2.2 Servers should be accompanied by parent/s to the sacristy and vested at the beginning and end of liturgies
- 2.3 Altar servers should register with the parish office.
- 2.4 Sacramental home groups require parent/ guardian attendance with child
- 2.5 Sacramental preparation held on church premises require attendance records of participants and supervisors
- 2.6 No transportation of children in private vehicles by supervisors

Procedures Relating to Home Visits and Aged Care Facilities Visits to the Elderly

3. Visitations

- 3.1 Visits should only occur if you are in good health
- 3.2 Visits should ideally be arranged in advance – phone the day before
- 3.3 On arrival at a Facility, go to reception. Introduce yourself and inform the receptionist the purpose of your visit and who you wish to visit
- 3.4 Follow the visitor's rules for the Facility.
- 3.5 Be mindful of hygiene. Wash your hands before and after your visitation
- 3.6 **Your visitation is strictly confidential at all times**
- 3.7 Do not lift or attend nursing care duties
- 3.8 Assign one person in your team to write a brief report per visit. Please include date and time, the name of resident. Lodge the report with your co-ordinator.

Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures for Volunteers

All volunteers conducting activities in parishes should be aware of the need to manage risk and hazards.

Volunteers have the responsibility of:

1. Taking reasonable care with their own health and safety
2. Taking reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons
3. Complying with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Parish Priest in relation to WHS
4. Reporting any identifiable risks or hazards and bringing them to the attention of the Parish Priest

Events and Activities Procedures

1. All parish activities that are organised must include a *Holding an Event Checklist* and *Risk Assessment*. These documents are available at the Parish office and must be submitted to the Parish Priest (or delegate) prior to the event taking place. The purpose of this is to identify potential hazards and risks that participants may be exposed to.
2. If an accident/ incident occurs on Church property it must be reported to the Parish Priest (or delegate) and an *Incident Report Form A and B* (Parish WHS Management System) must be completed.
3. The Parish Priest (or delegate) will consult with the *Agencies on Parish Grounds Incident Reporting Chart* to determine the nature of the incident and the correct reporting process.
4. If a hazard is identified by a volunteer without incident it must be reported to the Parish Priest (or delegate). They must complete the *Managing Risk Part C2 Hazard Report Form*
5. After an activity has been held, the organising volunteer must report any hazard or safety incident back to the Parish Priest (or delegate)

The Working with Children Check

All parish volunteers involved in the ministries that involve working with children and young people will be required to obtain a WWC number. Specifically in our parish this is those volunteers involved in children's liturgy, youth groups, catechists, senior altar servers and acolytes.

This check involves a national criminal history check and review of reported workplace misconduct findings. The result of a

Check is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and any relevant new records which appear against a cleared applicant's name may lead to the Check being revoked.

Applying for a WWC Check

STEP 1: Fill in an online application form

Go to www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au and fill in the online application form. If you do not have access to the internet, please call (02) 9286 7219 for assistance.

Please make sure the details you provide are EXACTLY THE SAME as the details on your identity documents. If you have submitted the form with a mistake, please redo the form to avoid problems with the proof of identity requirement at step two.

Once you have submitted the form, you will receive an application number that looks like this: APP1234567V

STEP 2: Present proof of your identity

Go to a NSW Roads and Maritime Services with your application number **AND** proof of your identity (same as for a NSW driver's license). You must have **BOTH** of these items for your application to proceed.

If you are in child related **paid work**, you will also be required to pay an \$80 fee for a five year clearance. **If you are a volunteer this will be free.** You will not be required to prove that you are a volunteer or paid worker. Your application

number will tell the Customer Service Operator at the NSW Roads and Maritime Services desk what you have applied for.

You will receive your outcome and Working With Children Check number by email (or post if you do not have an email address). If you have not received your results within four weeks, please email your details and application number to newcheck@kids.nsw.gov.au.

Once you receive your WWC check number you present it to the Parish Office together with your date of birth where they will process your application and record your number and its expiry date. You will be required to renew this every 5 years.