BROOKSIDE
Muswellbrook Baptist Church

Procedure for Staff and Volunteers

Adopted by Safe Church Team on 11/2/2024

Purpose

The *Procedure for Staff and Volunteers* (the **Procedure**) sets out a procedure for the thorough recruitment, screening, induction, training and resourcing of all staff and volunteers, particularly those engaged in child-related work within the meaning of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* (NSW) or a regulated activity within the meaning of the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011* (ACT).

Scope

This Procedure applies to all Church staff and volunteers.

This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Safe Church Policy and:

- *Screening Check Questionnaires*
- *Safe Church Register*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Privacy Policy*

Part 1 – Recruitment and Screening

Please note there may be additional recruitment and screening requirements in the Church's constitution.

Category 1 a - Pastoral staff and staff in leadership roles and/or engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults

The recruitment and screening process for this category applies:

- to any staff member, who undertakes pastoral work in or on behalf of the Church (this typically includes any role that includes the word 'Pastor' or 'Minister' but may include other roles - noted as category 1 a(i) in summary table at the end of Part 1 of this document);
- to any staff member in a leadership role (i.e., considered a 'spiritual officer' of the Church - noted as category 1 a(ii) in summary table at the end of Part 1 of this document); and
- to any staff member engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable people (or in the ACT, work in a regulated activity - noted as category 1 a(ii) in summary table at the end of Part 1 of this document); and
- in addition to any requirements of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT Affirmation Oversight Team.

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Recruitment and screening requirements	

Step 1	**Advertising for the role**
	
	The position will be advertised appropriately, and the Church will ensure:
	• the position description is up to date;
	• that any offer will be made subject to:
	  ○ the applicant satisfactorily completing further screening requirements, including completing a screening questionnaire, obtaining a working with children check [or working with vulnerable people clearance], satisfactorily completing a national police criminal check, and agreeing to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct; and
	  ○ for pastoral staff:
	  ▪ providing evidence of Accreditation or Recognition by the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT (or express a willingness to apply for this); and
	  ▪ agreeing to abide by and uphold the *Code of Ethics and Conduct; and*
	• applicants are required to submit a resume that includes relevant experience.

Step 2	**Consideration of the Applicant** Preferred applicants will: • be invited to complete a *Screening Questionnaire*; • sign and agree to the *Code of Conduct;* • if pastoral staff, provide evidence of Accreditation or Recognition by the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT (or express a willingness to apply for this). Note the Church Leadership may choose to exempt some pastors from this requirement in exceptional circumstances after considering recommendations from the Baptist Association – see document 17 of the Safe Church Package entitled *"Letter to Churches regarding the use of the title "Pastor""*; • if pastoral staff, provide evidence of agreeing to abide by and uphold the *Code of Ethics and Conduct;* • attend an interview with Church Leadership or a committee appointed by Church members; • undertake a National Police Criminal Record Check to be provided to the Church; • provide evidence of a working with children check [or working with vulnerable people clearance]; and • provide a minimum of two referees.

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Recruitment and screening requirements	
	Prior to the staff member commencing in the role, the Safe Church Team (or Church Leadership) will: • review the responses given in the *Screening Questionnaire,* including consideration of any 'yes' responses and the suitability of the applicant for that role, and/or any appropriate risk management steps required. The questionnaire and any records of consideration will be included in the individual's personnel file; • review the National Police Criminal Record Check and consider any disclosures and the suitability of the applicant for that role; • include a copy of the *Code of Conduct* agreement in the individual's personnel file; • verify the WWCC number (if in NSW and over 18 years of age) and: i. input the WWCC number, verification status, verification date and expiry date in the Safe Church Register; ii. include a copy of the WWCC verification confirmation in the individual's personnel file; • contact referees provided and document feedback given in the individual's personnel file; • ensure that an interview has been conducted with the applicant and interview notes have been included in the individual's personnel file; and • ensure that the applicant is endorsed by the Church Leadership or governance group.
Step 3	**Appointment** Successful applicants will: • be provided a written employment contract for them to sign; • provide appropriate payroll and financial details; • be provided with an induction appropriate to the role (as outlined in part 2); and • complete Creating Safe Spaces training (as outlined in part 3).

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Category 1 b - Staff who are not in leadership roles or engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults

The recruitment and screening process for this category applies to **Church staff to whom the screening process in category 1 a does not apply.**

Recruitment and screening requirements	
Step 1	**Advertising for the role** The position will be advertised appropriately and the Church will ensure: • the position description is up to date; • that any offer will be made subject to the applicant satisfactorily completing further screening requirements, including completing a screening questionnaire, and agreeing to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct; and • applicants are required to submit a resume that includes relevant experience.
Step 2	**Consideration of the Applicant** Preferred applicants will: • be invited to complete a *Screening Questionnaire*; • sign and agree to the *Code of Conduct;* • attend an interview with Church Leadership or a committee appointed by Church members; and • provide a minimum of two referees. Prior to the staff member commencing in the role, the Safe Church Team (or Ministry Leader) will: • review the responses given in the *Screening Questionnaire,* including consideration of any 'yes' responses and the suitability of the applicant for that role, and/or any appropriate risk management steps required. The questionnaire and any records of consideration will be included in the individual's personnel file; • include a copy of the *Code of Conduct* agreement in the individual's personnel file; • contact referees provided and document feedback given in the individual's personnel file; • ensure that an interview has been conducted with the applicant and interview notes have been included in the individual's personnel file; and • ensure that the volunteer applicant is endorsed by a member of pastoral staff, Church Leadership (or governance group) or Safe Church Team.

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Recruitment and screening requirements	
Step 3	**Appointment** Successful applicants will: • be provided a written employment contract for them to sign; • provide appropriate payroll and financial details; and • be provided with an induction appropriate to the role (as outlined in Part 2).

Category 2 a - Volunteers in leadership roles, engaged in child-related work and/or engaged in work with vulnerable adults (or in the ACT a regulated activity)

The recruitment and screening process for this category applies to**:**

- any Church leader, deacon or elder (i.e., 'spiritual officer');
- any person in a role of significant authority in a Church service (including regular preachers, and worship/service leaders);
- any volunteer involved in ministry to children and/or young people (this may include children's ministry, playgroup, creche, youth ministry or families' ministry);
- any volunteer engaged in a role that includes leadership of a ministry area in which children or young people are also part of the ministry team (this may include band leader, sound/AV coordinator, discipleship coordinator, outreach coordinator, café, or cleaning roster); and
- any volunteer engaged in ministry to vulnerable adults (this may include seniors ministry, ministry to persons with disabilities, pastoral care team, or prayer ministry team). *

Volunteers in this category would usually be over 18 years of age, or in some limited cases 16 or 17 years of age. In the case of those who are 16 or 17 years of age, where possible, the Church should obtain written parent/guardian consent for the volunteer to undertake the role. Generally, applicants for volunteer roles in this category will only be considered after the potential volunteer has regularly attended the Church for at least 6 months.

*In NSW, the WWCC clearance is only required if the person is engaged in 'child-related work'. In religious organisations, this includes leadership roles (those considered to be spiritual officers) but does not include roles involving ministry to vulnerable adults. A volunteer who is involved in ministry to vulnerable adults but not considered a 'spiritual officer' or involved in child-related work should not be required to obtain a WWCC clearance but should still complete CSS training.

Recruitment and screening requirements	
Step 1	**Planning for the role** The Church will ensure:

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Recruitment and screening requirements	
	• the position description is up to date; and • that any offer will be made subject to the applicant satisfactorily completing further screening requirements, including completing a screening questionnaire, obtaining a working with children check [or working with vulnerable people clearance], and agreeing to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.
Step 2	**Consideration of the Applicant** Potential volunteers will: • be invited to complete a *Screening Questionnaire*; • sign and agree to the *Code of Conduct;* • provide a minimum of two referees; and • provide evidence that they hold a current clearance in accordance with WWCC Legislation (unless the volunteer is aged under 18) or WWVP Legislation (unless the volunteer is aged under 16). Prior to the volunteer commencing in the role, the Safe Church Team (or Ministry Leader) will: • review the responses given in the *Screening Questionnaire,* including consideration of any yes responses and the suitability of the applicant for that role, and/or any appropriate risk management steps required. The questionnaire and any records of consideration will be included in the individual's personnel file; • include a copy of the *Code of Conduct* agreement in the individual's personnel file; • verify the WWCC number (if in NSW and over 18 years of age) and: i. input the WWCC number, verification status, verification date and expiry date in the Safe Church Register; ii. include a copy of the WWCC verification confirmation in the individual's personnel file; • contact referees provided and document feedback given in the individual's personnel file; • ensure that an interview has been conducted with the applicant and interview notes have been included in the individual's personnel file; and • will ensure that the volunteer applicant is endorsed by a member of pastoral staff, Church Leadership (or governance group) or Safe Church Team.
Step 3	**Appointment** Successful applicants will:

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Recruitment and screening requirements	
	• be provided with an induction appropriate to the role (as outlined in part 2); and • complete Creating Safe Spaces training (as outlined in Part 3).

Category 2 b - Volunteers not in leadership roles or engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults

The recruitment and screening process for this category applies to any volunteer to whom the processes in category 2 a or 3 do not apply. This category includes volunteers who are **not** a Church leader, Ministry Leader, engaged in child related work or engaged in work with vulnerable adults. This may include for example volunteers on the flower, morning tea, cleaning or maintenance rosters.

Volunteers in this category would usually be over 18 years of age, or in some limited cases teenagers aged under 18 years of age (for further information see category 3).

Recruitment and screening requirements	
Step 1	**Planning for the role** The Church will ensure: • the position description is up to date; and • that any offer will be made subject to the applicant satisfactorily completing further screening requirements, including completing a screening questionnaire, and agreeing to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.
Step 2	**Consideration of the Applicant** Potential volunteers will: • be invited to complete a *Screening Questionnaire*; • sign and agree to the *Code of Conduct;* • provide a minimum of two referees; and • be interviewed by the Ministry Leader. Prior to the volunteer commencing in the role, the Safe Church Team (or Ministry Leader) will: • review the responses given in the *Screening Questionnaire,* including consideration of any 'yes' responses and the suitability of the applicant for that role, and/or any appropriate risk management steps required. The questionnaire and any records of consideration will be included in the individual's personnel file;

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Recruitment and screening requirements	
	• include a copy of the *Code of Conduct* agreement in the individual's personnel file; • contact referees provided and document feedback given in the individual's personnel file; • ensure that an interview has been conducted with the applicant and interview notes have been included in the individual's personnel file; and • ensure that the volunteer applicant is endorsed by a member of pastoral staff, governance group or Safe Church Team.
Step 3	**Appointment** Successful applicants will be provided with an induction appropriate to the role (as outlined in Part 2).

Category 3 – Supervised volunteers aged under 18

The recruitment and screening process for this category applies to any volunteer who is under 18 years of age and engaged in a junior leader, trainee leader, support or helping role which requires that the volunteer is supervised at all times.

Where a volunteer is engaged in a junior leader, trainee leader, support or helping role but is aged over 18 they will need to be screened in accordance with category 2 as appropriate in order to meet legal requirements.

The Church may determine that specific teenagers aged under 18 have sufficient maturity to volunteer without direct supervision, despite being under 18 years of age. These volunteers will be screened and trained in accordance with category 2a or 2b, including if category 2 a, Creating Safe Spaces training. ***However, note that there should always be at least one adult leader on-site and participating in the activity or program.***

Please see the *Guidelines for Activities with Children and Young People* for more details on the differences between junior/trainee leaders volunteers and other volunteers.

Recruitment and screening requirements	
Step 1	**Planning for the role** The Church will ensure: • the position description is up to date; and • that any offer will be made subject to the applicant satisfactorily completing further screening requirements, including completing a screening questionnaire, and agreeing to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.
Step 2	**Consideration of the Applicant**

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Recruitment and screening requirements	
	Potential volunteers will: • be invited to complete the *Screening Questionnaire (under 18 version)*; • sign and agree to the *Code of Conduct;* • provide a minimum of two referees; • if in the ACT and over 16 years of age, provide evidence that they hold a current clearance in accordance with WWVP Legislation; and • be interviewed by the Ministry Leader. Prior to the volunteer commencing in the role, the Safe Church Team (or Ministry Leader) will: • review the responses given in the *Screening Questionnaire,* including consideration of any 'yes' responses and the suitability of the applicant for that role, and/or any appropriate risk management steps required. The questionnaire and any records of consideration will be included in the individual's personnel file; • include a copy of the *Code of Conduct* agreement in the individual's personnel file; • contact referees provided and document feedback given in the individual's personnel file; • ensure that an interview has been conducted with the applicant and interview notes have been included in the individual's personnel file; and • ensure that the volunteer applicant is endorsed by a member of pastoral staff, Church Leadership (or governance group) or Safe Church Team.
Step 3	**Appointment** Successful applicants will: • be provided with an induction appropriate to the role (as outlined in part 2); • if they are under 16 years of age, provide written parental/guardian consent to undertake the role; and • be provided with an additional briefing on child protection responsibilities and practices, including the procedures and guidelines relevant to their area of ministry.

Category 4 – Process for visiting ministry guest/s (including any contractors engaged in child related work)

The recruitment and screening process for this category applies to any person/s the Church invites from outside the Church context to engage in short term (less than 5 days

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per calendar year) ministry or child related roles (including guest speakers/preachers, visiting music ministry guests, other ministry guests engaged in ministry or child related roles, or contractors engaged in child related roles).

Screening and risk management requirements	
Step 1	**Planning for the engagement** The Church will ensure: • the scope of the engagement is documented (e.g., short position description) and communicated to the ministry guest/s including informing the ministry guest that the Church has a *Code of Conduct.* • that any ministry guest/s comply with the documented risk management process for that activity; and • ministry guest/s are supervised by an endorsed category 1a staff member or 2a volunteer from the Church when engaging in any direct interaction with children or young people.
Step 2	**Consideration of the Ministry Guest/s** If the ministry guest/s represents or belongs to another organisation (e.g., local Church, denomination, mission or parachurch organisation), then they will be required to have an appropriate representative of that organisation declare in writing that the ministry guest/s are a person of good standing and have met the requirements of the screening and child protection processes of that sponsoring organisation. This should usually include the organisation verifying a WWCC (or holding a WWVP), signing a Code of Conduct, a ministry screening process, reference checks and child protection training. These requirements can be fulfilled by a referring organisation completing a *Declaration for Ministry Guests* form, or alternatively, by a sponsoring organisation providing a *Letter of Authorisation for Endorsed Representative*. If the ministry guest/s has not fulfilled appropriate screening and child protection processes in another organisation, then the Church will complete all necessary processes outlined in the relevant category above. The Church will consider the suitability of any child safe requirements completed by ministry guests from interstate or overseas jurisdictions. Prior to the ministry guest/s commencing in the role, the Safe Church Team (or Ministry Leader) will: • review the *Declaration for Ministry Guests* form, or *letter of declaration*, and ensure that the ministry guest/s are a suitable person for the ministry role; • will ensure that the ministry guest/s is/are endorsed by a member of pastoral staff or governance group; and • ensure that relevant documents are stored in the Church's records.
Step 3	**Appointment** The Church will:

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Screening and risk management requirements	
	• communicate with the ministry guest/s to confirm their appointment for the short-term role; and • communicate to the ministry guest/s any risk assessment that pertains to their engagement.

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Summary table of screening and training								
Please see category definitions above for further detail	**Application & Screening questionnaire**	**BA Code of Ethics and Conduct**	**Accreditation or Recognised Minister**	**Interview, reference checks, induction**	**Code of Conduct**	**WWCC/ WWVP**	**CSS**	**Police Check**
1a(i): Pastoral Staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1a(ii): Staff engaged in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1b: Other Staff (not engaged in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Maybe at Church discretion
2a: Volunteers in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (if over 18)	Yes	No

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Summary table of screening and training								
Please see category definitions above for further detail	**Application & Screening questionnaire**	**BA Code of Ethics and Conduct**	**Accreditation or Recognised Minister**	**Interview, reference checks, induction**	**Code of Conduct**	**WWCC/ WWVP**	**CSS**	**Police Check**
2b: Other Volunteers (not engaged in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
3: Supervised volunteers under 18	Yes (use under 18 screening)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
4: Visiting Ministry Guest/s	Will provide endorsement from an external organisation (e.g., church, mission agency etc)							

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Part 2 – Induction

2.1 All staff and volunteers will be provided with an induction appropriate to their role. This induction will include:

a) an overview of general site workplace health and safety expectations;
b) operating procedures that apply to relevant equipment;
c) the content of the *Code of Conduct* and expectations and appropriate behaviours for staff and volunteers as set out in the *Safe Church Policy*;
d) the role description and any reporting structure;
e) expectations regarding Creating Safe Spaces training, if appropriate;
f) an overview of the *Procedure for Handling Complaints against Staff and Volunteers*, *Procedure for Conflict Resolution*, and the *Procedure for Responding to Child Protection Concerns*;
g) who to contact in the event of any conflict, concerns or complaints; and
h) any guidelines appropriate to their ministry area.

2.2 A record of the induction will be kept in the individual's personnel file (including the name of the person giving the induction, the date of the induction and the topics covered).

Part 3 – Ongoing Support for Staff and Volunteers

3.1 Creating Safe Spaces Training

a) All staff and volunteers engaged in leadership and/or child-related work and/or work with vulnerable adults (see Part 1 category 1a and category 2a) will:

- attend Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT Creating Safe Spaces training at least once every 4 years (the Church will also recognise other safe church training offered by Training Providers or Partners of the Safe Church Program of the National Council of Churches of Australia – see: https://www.ncca.org.au/safe-church-program/scp-members); or
- if they have not attended such training prior to appointment, will complete the online component of Creating Safe Spaces training prior to commencement and commit to attend the face-to-face workshop (in person or via Zoom) within 3 months of commencement.

b) The Safe Church Team will ensure that information about staff and volunteer attendance at Creating Safe Spaces training is recorded in the *Safe Church Register*.

3.2 Other training

Church Leadership (or Ministry Leaders) will arrange ongoing staff and volunteer training as required. This may include in-house training, attendance at conferences such as Connect Training Days, Activate Children's Ministry Conference or Baptist Youth Ministries State Conference and/or attendance at external training opportunities.

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3.3 Resourcing

Church Leadership will ensure that Church programs are adequately resourced with staff and volunteers and have the required equipment for the safe and effective running of the program.

3.4 Staff and Volunteer Support and Supervision

Church Leadership will provide ongoing support and supervision for all staff and volunteers, to ensure they feel valued, respected and fairly treated, including:

a) providing them up to date *Safe Church Policy*, guidelines and procedures;
b) formal or informal support mechanisms, so that staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of who to go to for support and what type of support is available to them (for example, team meetings, counselling, prayer, and pastoral supervision for pastoral staff); and
c) an annual process of position review to provide an opportunity for mutual feedback and encouragement.

Part 4 – Recordkeeping and Review

4.1 Recordkeeping

Records are to be kept for a minimum of 45 years (preferably 100 years) and in accordance with the *Safe Church Policy and Privacy Policy.*

For each staff member or volunteer, the following items should be recorded:

a) personal information such as full name, date of birth and residential address;
b) their written application for the position (if applicable);
c) their completed *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
d) all notes relating to the interview and reference checks (if applicable);
e) notes confirming the content and date of their induction;
f) signed *Code of Conduct;*
g) signed *Code of Ethics and Conduct* (if required);
h) a copy of the *National Police Criminal Record Check* (if required);
i) evidence of their WWCC clearance and any verifications undertaken (or if in the ACT the WWVP) (if required);
j) evidence of the date/dates of completion of Creating Safe Spaces training (or approved equivalent training – see part 3.1) (if required);
k) evidence of Baptist Insurance Services WHS training (if required); and
l) records of all other relevant training, incidents, annual reviews, etc.

4.2 Safe Church Register

The Church must maintain a *Safe Church Register* which records a summary of all necessary screening and training for all staff and volunteers as outlined in section 4.1 above, as well as positions undertaken and start and end date for these roles.

The Safe Church Team will regularly review the Safe Church Register to ensure that WWCC/WWVP clearances are renewed and verified when required for relevant staff and volunteers.

4.3 Review

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a) Pastoral Staff should participate in pastoral or professional supervision in addition to other review processes.

b) Staff should participate in a formal review process each year. This process should:

- review the position description and make any necessary amendments;
- provide an opportunity for mutual feedback and encouragement;
- identify opportunities for training and development in the following twelve months; and
- consider involving a committee comprising members of the governance body and any other Church members who may be appropriate.

c) Volunteer positions should be reviewed at least annually to identify areas for support or development and to amend role descriptions where appropriate.

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