



NORTHBRIDGE
VINEYARD | CHURCH

“Caring for Our Kids”

Child Protection Policy

Northridge welcomes feedback on this Policy, particularly on the effectiveness of our approach to child safety. Please contact the Church Office with any comments:
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Version March 2019





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Part A – Key information

1. Children* are special

***NOTE: In this Policy ‘child’ includes a young person.**

Children are entitled to be safe and protected. They have the right to be respected, listened to and their needs addressed in all church activities, whether mixed age or child specific.

Ministry involving children requires absolute trustworthiness.

2. The Northridge commitment

“They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.” Isaiah 61:3

Northridge is committed to its Leaders introducing children to Jesus Christ in a safe, secure and loving environment as oaks of righteousness honouring His name. This Child Protection Policy reflects our desire and dedication to:

- promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children during their participation in Activities, including Kids Church, Youth, worship, special events and conferences;
- assist employees, volunteers and others to recognise child abuse; and
- report child abuse and other misconduct to the NSW Police or other authorities in accordance with our legal obligations, or where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting a child is at risk of significant harm.

3. Core responsibilities of Pastors

The Senior Pastors (working in conjunction with the Community Pastors and other Pastors) must ensure:

- proper systems for the safety and welfare of children participating in Activities are implemented and maintained,
- all applicable requirements of the civil authorities and Northridge are complied with, and
- anyone (including Pastors, other employees and volunteers) who works with children in Activities:
 - complies with all legal and Northridge screening and selection requirements,
 - receives regular training in child protection, and
 - is aware of the provisions of this Policy so far as it relates to the Activities in which they are involved.

4. Who must comply with this Policy?

All Pastors, other employees and volunteers who work with children in Activities.



5. Key terminology used in this Policy

Activity:	An activity involving children organised by Northridge, including an Event. Examples are Kids Church, Youth on Sunday mornings, Youth on Friday nights and regular church services attended by children.
Activity Environment:	The environment (including any room or other space) used for an Activity.
adult:	A person aged 18 or over who is NOT a participant (as distinct from a Leader) in Youth Ministry Activities. ¹
Authorised Person:	A person authorised in writing (including a text) by a parent of a child to collect the child from an Activity or otherwise care for the child for a short period (including a person nominated by a parent on a sign-in form to collect their child at the end of an Activity).
Board:	The Board of Northridge Vineyard Christian Fellowship Incorporated (operating under the name Northridge Vineyard Church).
child:	A person who is either: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• under the age of 18, or• aged 18 or over who is a participant (as distinct from a Leader) in Youth Ministry Activities.
child abuse:	An act or omission endangering the physical, emotional or spiritual health or development of a child, as more fully explained in Part I.
Child Protection Officer:	The person so appointed by the Senior Pastors under clause 6.
Children’s Ministry:	A Ministry primarily organised for and attended by children up to and including School Year 5.
Community Pastor:	A person appointed to provide oversight and leadership of a specific Community.
Community:	A regularly meeting group approved by the Board to be a Northridge “Community” (eg Sunday morning in Thornleigh, Sunday evening in Thornleigh and Sunday morning in Hornsby).
Crèche:	A child minding Activity offered to children aged 12-36 months aimed at enabling parents to attend another Activity occurring concurrently.
Coordinator:	In respect of a Ministry or Activity, the person appointed under clause 8 to be the leader of the Ministry or Activity.

¹ The law defines an adult to be a person aged 18 or over. For the purpose of this Policy, we have modified that definition in order to include in the concept of ‘young person’ those aged 18 or over but still at school and participating in Youth Ministry Activities.



employee:	A person employed by Northridge.
Event:	An occasional Activity not being a regular Children's Ministry Activity, a regular Youth Ministry Activity or a regular church service. Examples are Excite and the Storehouse Christmas Party. 'Event' includes an Event (such as Cracker Night) taking place at an activity not organised by Northridge.
FaCS:	NSW Department of Family and Community Services.
First Aid Officer:	A person appointed to provide first aid at an Activity.
guardian:	A person with legal authority and obligation to care for a child.
Leader:	Anyone (including an employee or a volunteer) working with children in an Activity (either in a leadership role or by assisting leaders). 'Leader' includes Coordinators and Supervisors.
Ministry:	One or more Activities (which, if more than one, are linked primarily because of the demographic of the children intended to be involved in them), as determined under clause 7. Examples of Ministries are 'Kids Church' and 'Youth'.
Northridge:	Northridge Vineyard Church.
Parent:	Includes a guardian and any other person (such as a grandparent) who signs a Kids Church Enrolment Form or Youth Permission Form.
Pastor:	An employee whose title includes the word 'Pastor'.
Senior Pastor:	A person appointed to provide oversight and leadership of the whole of Northridge.
Service	A church service provided by Northridge open to both adults and children.
Session:	The period during which an Activity occurs.
Storehouse:	A Ministry focussed on supporting families in crisis primarily by providing clothing to children.
Supervisor:	A person appointed under clause 9 to be the leader of an Activity during the Activity's Session.
volunteer:	A person who assists in Activities but who is not an employee.
young person:	A person in the age brackets covered by students attending School Years 6-12 inclusive, including a person aged 18 or over who is a participant (as distinct from a Leader) in Youth Ministry Activities.
Youth Ministry:	A Ministry primarily organised for and attended by young people.
WWC number:	A NSW Working with Children Check number issued by Service NSW on behalf of the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian.



Part B – Structures required to implement this Policy

6. Child Protection Officer

The Senior Pastors must ensure there is always a Child Protection Officer (and that, if that person is on leave, an acting Child Protection Officer is appointed).

7. Determining Ministries and Activities

The Senior Pastors must ensure there is always clarity about what constitutes:

- the Ministries, and
- the Activities within each Ministry.

This must be determined in relation to each Community and Northridge as a whole. They are to be determined by:

- the Community Pastors of a Community, to the extent the Activity or Activities comprising a Ministry are limited to their Community; or
- the Senior Pastors, to the extent the Activity or Activities comprising a Ministry relate to more than one Community (including the whole of Northridge).

8. Coordinator for all Ministries and Activities

The Senior Pastors, working in conjunction with the Community Pastors, must ensure there is always a leader (to be known as the ‘Coordinator’) for each Ministry and each Activity of each Ministry. Different people can be appointed the Coordinator of different Ministries and Activities.

9. Supervisor for all Sessions

The Coordinator of an Activity must ensure, that, if for any reason, the Coordinator will not be physically present at the Session of the Activity, they appoint a leader for the Session (to be known as the ‘Supervisor’). The Supervisor must be physically present at the Session and is responsible for carrying out the Coordinator’s obligations set out in this Policy applicable to the Session. The Coordinator must notify one of the Pastors responsible for the Ministry under which the Session is occurring of the appointment of the Supervisor. Whenever a Supervisor has been appointed for an Activity, references in this Policy to the Coordinator having a responsibility in connection with the Activity, are to be taken as references to the Supervisor.



Part C – Selection of employees and volunteers

10. Pre-requisites for employees

10.1 All employees

All employees (whether or not involved in Activities) must maintain a valid WWC number and pass a NSW Police Check. If an employee does not have a valid WWC number or has not passed a NSW Police Check at the time this Policy commences, they must obtain a number or pass the check as soon as possible, and until having made such an application must refrain from child-related work.

10.2 New employees

As part of the process of assessing a potential new employee, a Senior Pastor must ensure:

- (a) the applicant has a valid WWC number,
- (b) the applicant passes a NSW Police Check,
- (c) the applicant is assessed by either a Senior Pastor or a Community Pastor in a face to face interview concerning activities involving children in which the applicant has previously participated as a leader, and
- (d) if the applicant has previously participated as a leader in activities involving children:
 - (i) the applicant provides at least two referees with whom they worked in that role (preferably employers),
 - (ii) at least two of those referees are contacted and asked to comment specifically about the suitability of the applicant to be working with children, and
 - (iii) the information obtained in this process is evaluated by a Senior Pastor and at least a Community Pastor (and, if they deem appropriate, the Child Protection Officer and the Coordinator of a Ministry in which the applicant might become involved).

An applicant must not be employed (whether or not they are expected to be assisting in Activities) unless a Senior Pastor and a Community Pastor agree, after evaluating the information obtained through this process, that the applicant would be a person suitable for assisting in Activities. **NOTE:** the process in this clause is not intended to be the complete process for assessing an applicant for an employee role at Northridge.

11. Pre-requisites for volunteers

When assessing the suitability of a person offering to volunteer in Activities, the Child Protection Officer must ensure the applicant:

- (a) has a valid WWC number (or, if they are aged under 18, the prospective volunteer has signed a *“Working with children declaration by volunteer aged under 18 Form”* (see Appendix 6),
- (b) has been a regular attendee at Northridge for at least 6 months (unless otherwise permitted by a relevant Community Pastor), and



- (c) is assessed in a face to face interview by either the Child Protection Officer or the Coordinator of the Ministry in which the applicant would be volunteering.

An applicant to be a volunteer must not be approved unless a Community Pastor and the Coordinator of the Ministry in which the applicant would be volunteering (in consultation with the Child Protection Officer) agree, after evaluating the information obtained through this process, that the applicant would be a person suitable for assisting in Activities.

12. Retention and protection of information

The Child Protection Officer must:

- (a) ensure information obtained in relation to applicants for employee or volunteer positions is held in strictest confidence and not made available to any other person, except as required by law or deemed necessary by a Senior Pastor,
- (b) verify WWC numbers submitted by employees or applicants are valid,
- (c) maintain a register of all WWC numbers and verifications, including:
 - (i) the employee or volunteer's full name and date of birth,
 - (ii) the WWC number of the employee or volunteer's clearance or the application number of the employee or volunteer's current application,
 - (iii) the expiry date for each clearance of the employee or volunteer, being the date on which the clearance ceases to have effect,
- (d) monitor the expiry date of WWC numbers of employees and volunteers participating in Activities and advise them at least 3 months before the expiry date that their continued involvement in the Activities beyond the expiry date is dependent on them obtaining an updated valid WWC number before the expiry date,
- (e) notify applicants of decisions made under clauses 10 and 11 about their suitability for assisting in Activities and maintain a secure record of the decisions. However, if an applicant is deemed unsuitable, the Child Protection Officer must first consult with a Community Pastor about the most appropriate way to communicate this to the applicant, and
- (f) ensure all information obtained in connection with this Part C (including details in connection with obsolete WWC numbers) is kept permanently ie never destroyed.

13. Returning employees or volunteers

The procedures in this Part C must be followed in full as a fresh application for:

- any employee who ceases employment with Northridge but who is later re-employed; and
- any volunteer who ceases being a regular attendee at Northridge but who later re-joins as a regular attendee.



Part D – Training

14. Training requirements

The Child Protection Officer must:

- (a) become familiar, and stay up to date, with:
 - (i) legislation, and best practice policies, procedures and complaint handling, relating to child protection, and
 - (ii) this Policy,
- (b) keep this Policy under review and recommend to the Senior Pastors changes to it in light of developments in the law, best practice or experience in the working of this Policy, and
- (c) facilitate ongoing training in the requirements of this Policy for both employees and volunteers.

15. Initial training

15.1 All employees and volunteers must be trained

Before participating in Activities, all employees and volunteers must successfully complete the Northridge training program for this Policy.

Coordinators of Ministries must not allow an employee or volunteer to participate in the Ministry unless the Child Protection Officer has advised the Coordinator in writing that the employee or volunteer has successfully completed training for the Ministry.

15.2 Training for employees

As soon as practicable after:

- (a) this Policy commences, the Child Protection Officer must organise for all existing employees to attend a face to face training session with a person approved by a Senior Pastor; and
- (b) a new employee commences employment, the Child Protection Officer must organise for them to attend a face to face training session with a person approved by a Senior Pastor.

In each case, the employees must be trained on all aspects of this Policy regardless of the Community they attend or the Ministries in which they expect to be involved.

15.3 Training for volunteers

Volunteers must complete the Northridge online training applicable to the role in which they will be involved by answering all questions correctly in an online test. If their first attempt is unsuccessful, the Child Protection Officer must assist the volunteer with further training and the person is not to be taken to have passed their online training until they answer all questions correctly.

Separate booklets have been prepared for various roles. All the material relevant to volunteers for these roles has been reproduced in the applicable booklet so the volunteer need become familiar only with the applicable booklet. If a volunteer offers to become involved in a different



role from that for which they have been trained, they must complete the training for that different role before being allowed to participate in it².

Volunteers must be trained on the following booklet applicable to their role:

Volunteer role	Booklet
Children’s Ministry Leader	<i>Caring for our Kids – Guidelines for Children’s Ministry Leaders</i>
Youth Ministry Leader	<i>Caring for our Kids – Guidelines for Youth Ministry Leaders</i>
Event Leader	<i>Caring for our Kids – Guidelines for Event Leaders</i>
Service Leader	<i>Caring for our Kids – Guidelines for Service Leaders</i>

15.4 Register to be kept

The Child Protection Officer must keep a permanent and up to date register of people who have completed the Northridge training program. In the case of volunteers, the register must record each role for which they have been trained and the date they completed the training.

16. Refresher training

All employees and volunteers must successfully complete refresher training every 3 years. Refresher training is required to be conducted in the same manner as the original training received but based on the then current version of this Policy.

Refresher training also is required, before a person recommences working with children, for:

- (a) any employee who ceases employment with Northridge but who is later re-employed; and
- (b) any volunteer who ceases being a regular attendee at Northridge but who later re-joins as a regular attendee.

17. Monitoring and feedback

The Coordinator of each Ministry must oversee ongoing monitoring of compliance with this Policy by the employees and volunteers assisting in the Ministry (particularly during their first 6 months of involvement) and provide feedback to them as necessary.

Coordinators must encourage employees and volunteers to ask questions and provide feedback to them.

The Coordinator and the Community Pastor should discuss any concerning observations with the Child Protection Officer and provide feedback to the employee or volunteer as they deem appropriate.

Issues of non-compliance which give rise to an investigation about the behaviour of an employee or volunteer under Part I “Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse” are to be dealt with under Part I. In the case of other issues of non-compliance, the Coordinator must arrange

² Leaders who have successfully completed training as a Children’s Ministry Leader or Youth Ministry Leader are to be taken to have completed training as an Event Leader as the material relevant to Event Leaders is incorporated in the training for those other roles.



to meet with the person involved to explain the issue and seek resolution. If, following this meeting, the issue remains unresolved, another meeting must be arranged with the person at which both the Coordinator and a Community Pastor are present to again explain the issue and seek resolution. Written minutes of each meeting must be prepared and permanently filed by the Child Protection Officer. If the person either refuses to comply with the Policy or non-compliance occurs again, the Community Pastor must require the person to step down from participating in the Ministry (and communicate this to the Board). This must be in writing and permanently filed by the Child Protection Officer.

If a Coordinator, Community Pastor or Senior Pastor has concerns about anyone's behaviour (Leader or otherwise) in or around Activities which behaviour falls short of prompting an investigation under Part I, they should discuss amongst themselves about how best to monitor the person's behaviour and act as they think appropriate to address the concerns.



Part E – General guidelines for Activities

18. Codes of Conduct

Northridge has a general Code of Conduct which establishes standards by which all employees and volunteers of Northridge are expected to conduct themselves. A copy of that Code of Conduct can be found on the General Resources page of the Northridge website <https://northridge.org.au/general-resources/>. Accordingly, all Leaders are expected to comply with that general Code of Conduct.

All Leaders are expected also to comply with the following Child Protection Code of Conduct.

NOTE: In this Policy ‘child’ includes a young person.

Child Protection Code of Conduct

In addition to any other Northridge policy or code of conduct applying to them, Leaders must, in the exercise of their ministry:

- Never engage in child abuse.
- Never groom a child or otherwise cultivate relationships to initiate or conceal child abuse.
- Never be alone with a child away from the presence of other adults during an Activity.
- Never have children to their home or visit children in their home when no other adult is present, and never meet privately with a child outside of Activities, except with the permission of a parent.
- Never touch a child inappropriately³.
- Never provide intimate care to a child (eg toileting or changing clothes).
- Never discipline a child physically.
- Never make available to a child:
 - a substance or product whose supply to, or use by, children is prohibited by law, such as illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco products and gambling products; or
 - without the express approval of a Community Pastor, a publication, film or computer game classified by the Office of Film and Literature Classification as being other than ‘unrestricted’ in the case of publications or ‘G’ in the case of films or computer games.
- Never develop special relationships with children that could be seen as involving favouritism or any form of special treatment.
- Never engage in any form of secretive contact with a child (including physical or electronic contact).

19. The four Golden Rules

There are four Golden Rules applicable to all the guidelines in this Policy:

The Golden Rules

Use common sense

³ See clauses 29.3 and 35.7.



Leaders must always take reasonable care to ensure the safety and welfare of children in their care.

Two or more

There must always be at least two Leaders aged 18 or over present for all Activities.

Never alone

A Leader must not be alone with a child during an Activity, and should make sure, as far as possible, that another Leader is not left alone with a child.

Stranger danger

Leaders should be on the alert for people wandering around – a person unknown to the Leaders or not part of the Activity should not be allowed access to the Activity Environment and should be reported to the Coordinator immediately.

20. Pre- Activity preparations

20.1 Venue assessment

A *Risk Assessment Form* (Appendix 7) must be completed by the Coordinator for every occasional Activity, or annually for a regularly occurring Activity.

20.2 External organization

When partnering with an external organization in an Activity, the Coordinator must obtain and evaluate the external organization’s risk assessment information before the Activity takes place.

20.3 Visit to venue for an occasional Activity

The proposed venue for an occasional Activity must be visited by the Coordinator at least once before the Activity takes place.

20.4 Visit to venue for regular Activities

The proposed venue for a regular Activity must be visited by the Coordinator at least once before the first Activity takes place and assessed at least annually while the Activity continues at the venue.

20.5 Verification of trained instructor

If an Activity requires a trained instructor, the Coordinator must ensure, before the Activity occurs, that the instructor is appropriately qualified and insured and, if necessary, has a WWC Number. If in doubt, the Coordinator must consult a Community Pastor.

20.6 Leader ratio

Before an Activity occurs, the Coordinator must calculate how many Leaders will be required and organise for a sufficient number of Leaders to attend the Activity. The degree of supervision required will vary depending on the nature of the environment and the Activity, the age and maturity of the children and the size of the group.



There must always be at least two adult Leaders in each Activity Environment until all children have left the Activity Environment.

In addition, typically, the ratio of adult Leaders to children should be a minimum of:

- Children 0 - under 3 years: **1:4** (ie 1 adult Leader for every 4 children)
- Children 3- under 5 years: **1:8**
- Children over 5 years: **1:10**.

20.7 Information to parents for an occasional Activity

The Coordinator of an occasional Activity (eg a spring picnic) must ensure written information (which can be by email) is given to parents of the known participants outlining all relevant information including the Session date and time, the location, the intended activities and emergency phone numbers of the Coordinator.

20.8 Document retention

All forms and verifying documents (including qualifications and insurance of instructors) generated in connection with this clause must be provided to the Child Protection Office for retention for at least 7 years.

21. Health and safety during Activities

21.1 Venue safety check before Activity commences

The Coordinator of an Activity must carry out a safety check of the venue for the Activity immediately before the Session commences to check there are no obvious hazards in the venue (eg unsafe furniture, broken glass or liquid on floors which could cause slipping) and take appropriate remedial action.

21.2 Leader ratio

The Coordinator of an Activity must ensure there is an appropriate ratio of adult Leaders to children during the Session of the Activity (see clause 20.6).

All Leaders must monitor, during the Session, whether there is adequate supervision of children in their care. If a Leader ever has concerns about the ratio of adult Leaders to children, they must raise this with the Coordinator immediately.

If a child arrives at an Activity when there is only one adult Leader present, the Leader must ask the person who has brought the child to remain with the child until another adult Leader arrives.

21.3 First aid

The Coordinator of an Activity must ensure:

- a First Aid officer holding a current First Aid Certificate attends the Activity,
- there is an adequate first aid kit at the Activity, and
- the First Aid Officer is made aware of any known medical conditions of the participants (including being given a copy of any letter a parent has provided indicating their child is permitted or required to take prescription medication).



If multiple Activities are taking place concurrently at the same physical location, it is acceptable for a single First Aid Officer to be in attendance covering all the Activities.

21.4 **All Leaders to be aware of safety issues**

All Leaders must:

- be alert to possible physical danger to children such as unsafe furniture, broken glass or liquid on floors which could cause a slip hazard, and take appropriate remedial action;
- be familiar with information parents provide about physical (eg allergies), mental health needs (eg depression) or safety needs of children in their care,
- **NEVER** administer medications to a child unless done by a First Aid Officer in a first aid setting, and
- become familiar with evacuation procedures and the location of fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

21.5 **Incident response and reporting**

If an incident occurs at an Activity resulting in illness or injury to any person (or which created an unsafe environment which could have resulted in illness or injury), the Coordinator must:

- **(Apply first aid and contact parent):** if an illness or injury requiring first aid has occurred, immediately:
 - implement appropriate first aid procedures depending on the severity of the illness or injury, and
 - try to contact a parent of the person who becomes ill or injured. This must be done first by phoning a parent but if that is unsuccessful, leaving a message requesting the parent to call the Coordinator as soon as possible.
- **(Prepare Incident Report):** ensure an *Incident Report* (see Appendix 9) is completed and provided to a Community Pastor and the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible after an incident occurs (preferably within 24 hours of the incident)⁴. Ensure names and contact details of witnesses are obtained at the time of the incident wherever possible.
- **(Consider next steps):** discuss the incident with a Community Pastor and the Child Protection Officer within 24 hours of the incident with a view to determining appropriate steps to be taken, such as whether insurers should be notified.
- **(Review what happened):** within one week of the incident, discuss the incident with other Leaders who were present and a Community Pastor as appropriate with a view to reviewing what led to the incident and what lessons can be learned. The Coordinator must consider whether changes to any policy should be recommended to mitigate against the risk of a similar incident occurring in the future.

⁴ ***If an illness or injury gives rise to an investigation under Part I “Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse”, the process set out in Part I must be followed instead of the process in this sentence.***



The Child Protection Officer must ensure Incident Reports are filed for at least 7 years.

22. Appropriateness of Activities

Coordinators and Leaders must consider thoughtfully what messages children may learn from how Activities are organised or conducted. Games or other activities which could emphasise gender, physical, intellectual or ethnic differences must be assessed for their appropriateness.

To minimise the possibility of children being harmed, Coordinators and Leaders must carefully consider the appropriateness of games or other activities requiring children to act alone or in pairs independent of Leaders.

Coordinators and Leaders must review in their entirety DVDs, videos, computer games, graphics, photographs or lyrics they intend to show children. In assessing whether something is appropriate, Coordinators and Leaders must be governed by the age of the youngest child present. Censorship ratings must be kept to 'G' or 'unrestricted' unless specific permission is granted by a Community Pastor.

23. Photos and moving images

23.1 Recording photos and moving images

Leaders must:

- **ALWAYS** get the approval of the Coordinator or a Community Pastor before taking a photo or moving image (eg a video) of children at an Activity,
- **ALWAYS** be circumspect about taking an image of children at an Activity, and if they do, ensure children are appropriately dressed (eg not in swimsuits or pyjamas) and that the image is not potentially embarrassing, offensive or otherwise inappropriate,
- **GENERALLY**, take images of groups of children rather than individuals,
- **NEVER** take an image against the wishes of a child, and
- subject to clause 23.2, **NEVER** take an image of a child if a parent has indicated on a *“Photo/Moving Image Permission Form”* (see Appendix 3) or another permission form that they do not want images taken of the child.

23.2 Recording images at Events

This Policy recognises it may not be feasible for Leaders to avoid taking images of particular people at an Event. Accordingly, the Coordinator of an Event must consider whether the expected numbers at an Event warrant a “PHOTO PERMISSION NOTICE” sign to be readily seen by all people entering the Event. This sign would state words to the effect that by entering the Event, parents consent to images being taken of them and their children. If the Coordinator considers such a sign is warranted, it must be displayed prominently at each entrance to the Event.

To the extent a Coordinator of an Event knows of parents likely to be attending who do not want images taken of them or their children, the Coordinator should contact the parents at least a week before the Event to discuss how best they can deal with the issue.

23.3 Use of images

Leaders must:



- **NEVER** show others or publish in any way (including on the Internet or in social media) an image of a child taken at an Activity (or identify the child's name in such a showing or publication) without written consent from both:
 - a parent of the child, and
 - a Community Pastor, and
- whether or not any such permission has been granted, **NEVER** upload to the Internet (including on the Northridge website or any social media platform) an image of a child in School Year 6 or under which enables the child to be recognised.

23.4 **Photo permission form**

If the Coordinator intends to authorise Leaders to take images of children attending an Activity, they must consider whether they should ask parents to:

- indicate whether they permit this in respect of their children, and
- if they do, whether they permit the use of any image, and, if so, in what circumstances.

These directions from parents should be obtained on a “*Photo/Moving Image Permission Form*” (see Appendix 3) or incorporated in the annual permission forms referred to in clauses 25 and 33. These forms must be provided to the Child Protection Officer for permanent filing.

24. **Alcohol, tobacco and drugs**

24.1 **Consumption, serving or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs**

The consumption:

- of tobacco or illegal drugs by any person, of any age, must not be allowed or condoned by any Leader in any Activity,
- of alcohol by any child* must not be allowed or condoned by any Leader in any Activity. ***NOTE: In this Policy child includes a young person,**
- or serving of alcohol by any adult is strictly prohibited on church grounds, unless expressly permitted by a Community Pastor for community events or fundraisers.

24.2 **Children affected by alcohol or illegal drugs**

If a child is found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs:

- a parent of the child must be contacted immediately and asked to come and collect their child immediately,
- the child must be removed from the Activity and monitored by at least two Leaders until collected by a parent, and
- the Coordinator must call an ambulance if they believe the child requires urgent medical care.

24.3 **Confiscation**

Leaders may confiscate alcohol or illegal drugs found in the possession of a child on church grounds. Any confiscated goods must be given to a Community Pastor.



24.4 Incident report

The Coordinator must prepare an *Incident Report* (see Appendix 9) of any incident involving the consumption, serving or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs in breach of these requirements. The Incident Report must be sent to a Community Pastor and the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible after an incident occurs. The Child Protection Officer must ensure Incident Reports are filed for at least 7 years.⁵

⁵ ***If circumstances involving the consumption, serving or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs give rise to an investigation under Part I “Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse”, the process set out in Part I must be followed instead of the process in clause 24.4.***



Part F – Children’s Ministry specific guidelines

25. Kids Church Enrolment Form

The Children’s Ministry Pastor must ensure a parent completes the “*Kids Church Enrolment Form*” (see Appendix 1) as soon as practical after a child starts attending Children’s Ministry Activities regularly. The originals of the forms must be given to the Child Protection Officer for permanent filing.

26. Sign-in/sign out procedures

All children attending Crèche or Kids Church must be signed in by a parent or Authorised Person.

An attendance roll must be taken at the beginning of each Kids Church Session. The Coordinator must provide a copy of each attendance roll to the Child Protection Officer for permanent retention.

A child leaving Crèche, or the pre-school or infants groups of Kids Church must be signed out by the person who signed them in or by an Authorised Person. Siblings or adults who have not been nominated for pick-up should not be allowed to collect a child.

Children need not be signed out of primary Kids Church at the end of the Session (ie they are permitted to return to their parents on their own) unless the parent signing them in requests the child be kept in the Session until collected by the parent or an Authorised Person.

If a child is returned to a parent during church, the Coordinator must ensure this is noted on the attendance sheet.

27. Health and safety

27.1 All ages general procedures

Leaders must:

- allow parents to have free access to their children, in consultation with a Leader, at all times during a Session,
- ensure any door to the Activity Environment is kept closed during the Session but windows are kept clear to allow outside observation, and
- not allow a child to leave the Activity Environment during a Session unless:
 - they need to use the toilet, or
 - taken by a Leader directly to one of their parents, or
 - accompanied by a parent.

27.2 Additional Crèche procedures

Leaders must:

- be aware of hygiene issues including:



- if a child vomits or soils an area of the Activity Environment, ensuring the area is cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible, and
- ensuring toys and equipment are cleaned regularly, and
- ensure furniture or other items cannot topple or drop onto a child

28. Toileting

28.1 Crèche

Leaders must ask a parent of a child to change the child's nappy or undertake toileting.

28.2 Pre-schoolers

Leaders must:

- if a child needs to use the toilet and a Leader has confirmed they can do so on their own, ensure a Leader stands at the door of the Activity Environment with a clear view of the child walking to and from the bathroom and in hearing distance of the child. If the Activity Environment is at Thornleigh, pre-schoolers should use only the disabled bathroom on the ground floor of the auditorium. They must be instructed not to lock the bathroom door,
- if a child needs to use the toilet but has told a Leader they need help, a Leader must take the child to their parent, and
- if a child has not returned from the toilet within 5 minutes and:
 - is unresponsive to a knock on the bathroom door, or
 - calls out for help,

arrange for two Leaders of the same gender as the child to enter the bathroom to ensure the child's safety.

28.3 Infants and primary

Leaders must ensure children go to an appropriate bathroom only in pairs of the same gender. If the children have not returned within 5 minutes, a Leader must arrange for two Leaders of the same gender as the child to enter the bathroom to ensure the children's safety.

29. Physical contact

29.1 Crèche

Very young children are highly dependent on touch for their proper development. This means Leaders should be aware of their needs at particular ages and stages.

Physical contact primarily should be used to assist or comfort a child only for a short period. Leaders must not continue physical contact for longer than necessary to achieve this. All physical contact must be in the open and able to be seen by others.

29.2 All ages other than Crèche

While touching a child without their consent is acceptable in cases of physical danger or a medical emergency, generally children in these age groups have the right to refuse being



touched. Generally, physical contact should be initiated by the child or occur with their permission.

29.3 All ages appropriate and inappropriate physical contact

Appropriate and inappropriate physical contact for all age groups in Children’s Ministry (including Crèche)

Appropriate physical contact includes:

- Hand-holding to reassure or guide
- Offering open side hugs (placing one arm around a child’s shoulders) to welcome or comfort a child
- Short periods of carrying to comfort a distressed child
- Sitting beside a child to read a book
- Appropriate touch to administer first aid or assist with personal hygiene eg blowing noses.

Inappropriate physical contact includes:

- Kissing or coaxing a child to kiss a Leader
- Encouraging a child to sit on a Leader’s lap
- Tickling
- Hitting or shaking
- Forceful grabbing or picking up
- Touching any area of the body normally covered by a swimsuit
- Touching that may be offensive given a child’s cultural background.

30. Behaviour management

30.1 Crèche

Northridge wants Crèche to be a positive experience for all involved. To achieve this, it is important for Leaders to be united and consistent in their approach to settling children and behaviour management in Crèche.

• **Settling procedures**

Some children take longer than others to settle in Crèche. Northridge is very comfortable with a parent staying with their child if they wish.

A parent must stay with their child if they are under one year old unless the Coordinator approves otherwise.

Leaders should encourage parents to feel free to ask for assistance from a Leader if they wish to leave their child.

When a parent is leaving Crèche, the Leader should take the child gently and try to distract them in some way such as reading a story. If the child has not settled within 10 minutes, normally the parent should be asked to return to their child.

• **Disruptive behaviour**



As all parents have experienced, very young children can engage in disruptive behaviour. Northridge accepts this as being quite normal! When it occurs, Leaders must attempt to modify what could be causing it. If appropriate, they should gently ask the child what is causing their behaviour, ask them to stop and tell them they risk having a ‘time out’. If the behaviour continues, the child should be asked to take a short time out on a chair away from the group. If the behaviour occurs again after the time out, normally the parent should be asked to return to their child.

Leaders should explain these processes to the parent before they leave. If a Leader is uncomfortable or needs assistance with any of these processes, they should feel free to ask for help from the Coordinator or Community Pastor.

30.2 All ages other than Crèche

Northridge aims to provide a positive experience where children and Leaders enjoy their time together sharing mutual respect.

To achieve this, it is important Leaders are united and consistent in their approach to behaviour management. Northridge expects children to:

- Have FUN!
- Listen to the teacher
- Listen to each other
- Raise their hand to talk
- Keep their hands and feet to themselves
- Speak at a volume appropriate to the space
- Sit only on the floor or chairs
- Stay in the Activity Environment unless instructed or permitted by a Leader to leave.

If a child exceeds these boundaries with consistently disruptive behaviour, then Leaders are expected to warn them twice before sending for a parent of the child. Northridge hopes this does not occur, but if it does Leaders should do it with the message:

O_U_T you're out

Our hearts desire is that
U join in, and
Time out may help you think about this.

While it is hoped more serious situations do not occur, Leaders may contain an aggressive child by means considered reasonably necessary (such as light holding of the wrists) to prevent physical harm to themselves or others until a parent arrives. Other children should be removed from the scene if necessary.

If a Leader is uncomfortable or needs assistance, Leaders should feel free to ask for help from the Coordinator or a Community Pastor.

30.3 Children with special needs

If a child has special needs the Coordinator must discuss and agree with the parents of the child appropriate methods to be used for settling and behaviour management of the child.



31. Communicating with children attending Children’s Ministry Activities

Any communication with a child attending a Children’s Ministry Activity outside the Session of Activities must be done only through a parent of the child.

32. Praying with children

At Northridge we value and believe in, and desire children to experience, the power of prayer. Within Kids Church, Leaders are encouraged to make prayer a priority and pray with children each week.

When praying with children in Kids Church, Leaders must:

- be sensitive to the possibility some children may not want to participate in prayer,
- ensure there are always at least 2 adults within the room where prayer is taking place (it being recognised that sometimes children may break up into small groups to pray and Leaders will not necessarily be a part of each smaller group),
- ask if there is anything the children would like to pray for,
- ask a child's permission before the Leader or another child lays hands on them. If laying a hand on a child:
 - only one hand may be placed on the child,
 - a hand may be placed only on the shoulder, arm, or upper back,
 - if praying for healing, seek permission to place a hand on the infirmed area (and do not place a hand on the infirmed area if to do so would constitute inappropriate touch with reference to clause 29.3), and
 - in all cases hands must remain as still as possible (no stroking or patting),
- ask the children to sit and listen to God for any words or pictures,
- stop praying if a child becomes uncomfortable or wishes to stop,
- not pray one on one with a child unless expressly asked to by the Coordinator, and
- if a child discloses abuse or information that causes a Leader to be concerned for the child’s (or another child’s) safety or welfare, follow the procedures outlined in Part I of this Policy (“Recognising and reporting child abuse”).



Part G - Youth Ministry specific guidelines

33. Youth Ministry parental consents

33.1 Permission forms – regular Activities

The Youth Ministry Pastor must ensure a parent completes the “*Youth Parent Annual Permission Form*” (see Appendix 2):

- as soon as practical after a young person starts attending Youth Ministry Activities regularly; and
- at the beginning of each calendar year, and
- originals of the forms are given to the Child Protection Officer for permanent filing.

33.2 Permission forms – camps and Events

The Youth Ministry Pastor must ensure:

- a parent completes the permission form which will be prepared specifically for an Activity being a camp or an Event before the young person attends the Activity,
- copies of the forms are held by the Activity's First Aid Officer for the duration of the Activity, and
- originals of the forms are given to the Child Protection Officer for filing.

34. Transportation

34.1 Transportation to and from Activities

Parents of young people are responsible for arranging transportation for the young people to and from Activities.

34.2 Driver Certification Forms

The Youth Ministry Pastor must review from time to time the need to have adults (including Youth Ministry Leaders) certified to drive children during Activities. If potential drivers are identified, the Youth Ministry Pastor must:

- ensure the person provides a satisfactorily completed *Driver Certification Form* (see Appendix 8),
- obtain a copy of the person's driver's licence,
- confirm the vehicles nominated on the Driver Certification Form are registered four wheeled vehicles by entering the registration number of the vehicles on the Service NSW 'Check your Registration' website, and otherwise make reasonable enquiries to confirm the vehicles are roadworthy,
- maintain a list of approved drivers and the vehicles they are permitted to drive,
- have this list and copies of the Driver Certification Forms available at the Activity for inspection by Leaders before they permit young people to enter a vehicle,



- ensure all Leaders are aware they may permit a young person to be driven by someone other than a parent of the young person only if both the driver and their vehicle have been approved under these procedures, and
- give the originals of Driver Certification Forms and copies of drivers' licences to the Child Protection Officer for permanent filing.

34.3 Transportation during Activities

The Coordinator must ensure when young people are being driven in cars during the Activity that:

- all drivers and vehicles have been approved under clause 34.2, and
- parental consents have been given for all young people being transported in this way,
- there is at least one other adult in the car in addition to the driver.

35. Youth Ministry guidelines

35.1 Signing in

Young people do not need to be signed into Youth Activities. However, an attendance roll must be taken for meetings of young people during the Thornleigh Morning Community regular Sunday service Session. The Coordinator must provide a copy of each attendance roll to the Child Protection Officer for permanent retention.

35.2 Visitors

The Coordinator must ensure a *Visitor Details Form* (see Appendix 4) is completed when a young person first attends a Youth Activity. The Coordinator must provide a copy of each Visitor Details Form to the Child Protection Officer for permanent retention.

35.3 End of Session procedures

Young people do not need to be signed out at the end of the Session of a Youth Activity and Northridge's responsibility for them ends when they leave the Activity..

35.4 School Years 5 and 6 children

School Year 6 children can attend the Youth Ministry Activity held during the Thornleigh Morning Community meeting from the beginning of School Year 6.

Generally, children in School Year 6 can attend the Youth Ministry Friday nights at Thornleigh Activity from the beginning of Term 4.

Otherwise, children in School Year 6 (and occasionally School Year 5) can attend Youth Activities when approved by a Community Pastor.

When a School Year 5 or 6 child attends a Youth Ministry Activity they are taken to be a young person.

35.5 Health and safety (including toileting)

Leaders must:



- allow parents, in consultation with a Leader, to have access to their young people during a Session,
- ensure windows are kept clear to allow outside observation,
- not allow a young person to leave the Activity Environment during a Session unless:
 - they need to use the toilet, or
 - taken by a Leader directly to one of their parents, or
 - accompanied by a parent, and
- ensure young people are aware of toileting arrangements and emergency evacuation procedures.

After informing a Leader, a young person may visit the bathroom on their own. The young person must be instructed to use the closest available bathroom. If they have not returned after 5 minutes a Leader must arrange for two adult Leaders of the same gender as the young person to enter the bathroom to ensure the young person's safety.

35.6 **Physical contact**

While it is acceptable in cases of physical danger or a medical emergency, generally young people have the right to refuse being touched. Generally, physical contact should be initiated by the young person or occur with their permission.

Appropriate and inappropriate physical contact for Youth Ministry

Appropriate physical contact includes:

- Offering open side hugs (placing one arm around a young person's shoulders) to welcome or comfort a young person
- Light touching on a young person's arms or back

Inappropriate physical contact includes:

- Kissing or coaxing a young person to kiss a Leader
- Encouraging a young person to sit on a Leader's lap
- Tickling
- Hitting or shaking
- Forceful grabbing or picking up
- Touching any area of the body normally covered by a swimsuit
- Touching that may be offensive given a child's cultural background.

35.7 **Behaviour management**

Northridge aims to provide a positive experience where young people and Leaders enjoy their time together sharing mutual respect.

To achieve this, it is important Leaders are united and consistent in their approach to behaviour management.



Northridge believes most young people can develop mature self-reflective responses given a supportive environment for self-development. To this end Leaders should adopt an engaged, conversational approach to behaviour management using the following guidelines:

- If a young person is engaging in inappropriate, dangerous, aggressive or disruptive behaviour, they must be removed as gently as possible from the rest of the group and engaged in a conversation about their behaviour. The hope is that, from this conversation, they will understand why their actions are not acceptable and will address their behaviour, making the choice to learn from the situation and engage appropriately in the group.
- If the young person does not modify their behaviour appropriately, Leaders should engage them in a second conversation to address the situation (involving the Youth Pastor as appropriate).
- After two conversations, if the young person still does not modify their behaviour appropriately, a parent of the young person must be asked to collect them immediately. If a parent cannot be reached immediately, the young person must be removed from the group and supervised separately by two adult Leaders until a parent collects them.
- Northridge may ask for a follow-up meeting or conversation later between the young person, a parent and the Youth Pastor.

While it is hoped more serious situations do not occur, Northridge has the following policies:

- Leaders may contain an aggressive young person by means considered reasonably necessary (eg light holding of the wrists) to prevent physical harm to themselves or others until a parent arrives. Should any containment become necessary, the Coordinator and a Community Pastor or Senior Pastor must be notified immediately.
- If a young person appears to be under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol, a parent must be asked to collect them immediately. If a parent cannot be reached immediately, the young person must be removed from the group and supervised separately by two adult Leaders until a parent collects them.
- If a Leader believes a young person is at risk of injuring themselves or others, this must be treated as an emergency and:
 - If the young person is being physically violent or aggressive, the police may be called (after the Leader confirms this with the Coordinator), or
 - If the young person appears to be under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol and a Leader believes they are medically compromised, an ambulance may be called (after the Leader confirms this with the Coordinator)

If any of these more serious situations occurs, the Leader must complete a written Incident Report (see Appendix 9). The Incident Report must be sent to a Community Pastor and the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible after an incident occurs. The Child Protection Officer must ensure Incident Reports are filed for at least 7 years.⁶

35.8 Communications

⁶ ***If behaviour referred to in this clause 35.8 gives rise to an investigation under Part I “Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse”, the process set out in Part I must be followed instead of the process in this paragraph.***



Northridge expects all communications involving any Youth Leader, young person or parent relating to Youth Ministry Activities to be respectful and transparent.

Leaders must:

- always copy another Leader on any non-face-to-face communication to one or more young people (including ensuring another leader is part of a group messaging system),
- not speak over the phone with a young person without a written consent from a parent of the young person, and
- use only the following forms of communication:
 - Mail (only to parents)
 - Telephone (with parental permission)
 - Email
 - Whatsapp
 - Facebook
 - Group text messages.
- immediately forward, or send a copy, to the Youth Pastor of any non-face-to-face communication they receive which they believe contains sexually suggestive, explicit or offensive language or images, or that would otherwise reasonably be considered inappropriate communication.

If a Leader receives a communication sent other than via a permissible method, they must not respond to it via that method. Instead, if a response is required, respond through a permissible method.

If a Leader receives a private text message from a young person, any reply must have another adult Leader included.

If a special circumstance arises where a non-permissible communication method is proposed, a Leader must not engage in the communication unless a parent has given written consent to the communication which sets out the reason for the method of communication and an expiry date for using the method.

36. Pastoral care

Occasionally, it may be appropriate to offer a young person pastoral care because of an emergency, a personal tragedy or a significant personal issue. Such an offer may be made only by an employee after consultation with a Community Pastor. Written consent must be obtained from a parent specifying:

- the intended location of the meeting (which must be in a public place visible to others (such as a coffee shop or a hospital room with the door open)), and
- the agreed time frame for the meeting.

The same procedure must be used for any follow up meeting.



37. Praying with young people

37.1 Pre-conditions to praying

A Leader must:

- not pray with a young person unless the young person invites the Leader to pray with them or demonstrates they would like a Leader to pray with them by walking to the front of a meeting during a prayer or worship time,
- where appropriate, inform a young person before any discussion between them takes place that it may not be possible for the Leader to keep confidential prayer requests or disclosures made by the young person if the Leader becomes concerned for the young person's safety,
- ensure there are always a minimum two people present when praying with a young person, with at least one person of the same gender as the young person. One of the two people must be a Leader and preferably the other person also is a Leader. However, if the Leader considers it appropriate, the other person can be a mature young person but in those circumstances the Leader must be the same gender as the young person being prayed for,
- not pray one-on-one with a young person unless expressly permitted by the Coordinator of the Activity in which the prayer ministry is occurring,
- before they start praying, ask the young person to describe their prayer request. Listen carefully and do not ask leading questions or more questions than necessary, and
- if a young person discloses abuse or information that gives a Leader cause to be concerned for their (or another child's) safety or welfare, follow the procedures in Part I of this Policy (“Recognising and reporting child abuse”).

Coordinators, service leaders and Community Pastors must monitor whether people praying with children and young people (particularly in Services) are following the requirements of this clause 37. If not, then the Coordinator, service leader or Community Pastor is expected to intervene appropriately to ensure these requirements are followed.

Community Pastors must give regular public instructions during Services about how to pray with people during Services including the requirements of this clause 37.

37.2 Conduct when praying

When praying:

- verbal permission must be obtained from a young person before anyone lays a hand on the young person,
- if laying a hand on a young person:
 - only one hand may be placed on the young person,
 - a hand may be placed only on the shoulder, arm, or upper back,
 - if praying for healing, seek permission to place a hand on the infirmed area (and do not place a hand on the infirmed area if to do so would constitute inappropriate touch with reference to clause 35.7, and
 - in all cases hands must remain as still as possible (no stroking or patting),
- the person praying must:
 - keep their eyes open as much as possible,



- seek permission before ‘praying in tongues’ audibly, and
 - ‘check in’ with the young person at regular intervals and ensure they are comfortable with the process,
- if a young person falls to the floor in prayer (or appears about to fall to the floor):
 - if possible, provide a seat for them before they fall,
 - make sure they are appropriately covered (e.g. if a young person’s clothing has moved during their fall, cover them to ensure they are not exposed), and
 - appropriately clear the space around them and give them room, and
- **DO NOT** share with the young person any word or picture (negative or positive) which predicts or describes future events. Instead, consider sharing it with the Coordinator or a Pastor.

37.3 **When to stop praying**

Some young people may be unfamiliar with prayer ministry or the work of the Holy Spirit. The Leader should explain what is happening and what they are doing, regularly checking the young person feels safe and comfortable. If a young person says they do not feel safe or comfortable (or they appear not to be feeling safe or comfortable), stop praying immediately.

38. **Youth Camps**

Whenever a Youth Ministry Activity involves young people sleeping over (such as at the annual Youth Camp or Soul Survivor) Leaders must:

- ensure (where possible) that sleeping accommodation is segregated between males and females,
- ensure (where possible) that each group of segregated males and females is supervised by more than one Leader of the same gender as the young people being supervised, preferably including a parent of one of the group,
- ensure Leaders do not share a bed or otherwise sleep near a young person, unless they are a parent of the young person,
- ensure a young person does not share a bed with another young person,
- ensure Leaders never share accommodation with only one young person, unless they are a parent of the young person,
- ensure everyone is aware that access to bathrooms, toilets, bunkrooms and tents of the opposite gender is not permitted (except for Leaders in an emergency),
- take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of everyone, particularly when changing clothes, washing and toileting, and
- emphasise to everyone the importance of adhering to health and safety rules of the accommodation provider.



Part H –Services and Events

39. Activities other than regular Children’s Ministry and Youth Ministry Activities

This Policy recognises Activities are not limited to the regular Children’s Ministry and Youth Ministry Activities. This Part H contains guidelines for Services (these are ‘Activities’ because, typically, they involve children) and ‘Events’. An ‘Event’ is defined to include Storehouse and Excite (and other similar one-off activities).

40. Services

40.1 Requirements for volunteers

A volunteer at a Service who serves as a service leader, member of a worship team or a member of a sound/audio visual team:

- (a) must satisfy the pre-requisites for being a volunteer set out in clause 11,
- (b) must satisfactorily complete the training applicable to Services as specified by the Child Protection Officer, and
- (c) is to be taken to be a ‘Leader’ for this Policy.

40.2 Expectations of Leaders

Leaders at Services must:

- (a) comply with the Code of Conduct in clause 18 and the four Golden Rules set out in clause 19,
- (b) become familiar, and comply, with the praying with young people guidelines set out in clause 37,
- (c) ensure children in primary school or below are accompanied by one of their parents when receiving prayer in a Service,
- (d) be alert to possible physical danger to children such as unsafe furniture, broken glass or liquid on floors which could cause a slip hazard, and take appropriate remedial action, and
- (e) become familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and the location of fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

40.3 Unaccompanied children

Each Coordinator of a Service and any Community Pastor present must look out for children who are not accompanied by a parent or an Authorised Person*. **NOTE: an Authorised Person could be a sibling of the child aged over 18.** If:

- (a) unaccompanied children under age 13 are present, a Coordinator or Community Pastor must contact a parent of the child and ask them to either collect the child, come and stay with them for the duration of the service or nominate an adult present at the service who they consent to act as the child’s Authorised Person (to be confirmed by a text). Two adult Leaders must stay with the child until a parent or Authorised Person arrives, and



- (b) unaccompanied children aged 13 or older are present and a Coordinator or Community Pastor believes they are not acting responsibly (for example by staying outside the confines of the church service), then the Coordinator or Community Pastor must treat them as a child referred to in clause 40.3 (a).

40.4 Children taking part in Services

If a child volunteers to assist with a ministry in a church service (eg welcomer or worship) then a Community Pastor must ensure:

- (a) two adult Leaders are part of the team for that ministry, and
- (b) the Leaders taking part in the ministry are aware they are responsible for the care of the child while the ministry is taking place.

41. Events

41.1 Requirements for volunteers for all Events

Anyone who volunteers to lead or otherwise assist in an Event:

- (a) must satisfy the pre-requisites for being a volunteer set out in clause 11,
- (b) must satisfactorily complete the training applicable to the relevant Event as specified by the Child Protection Officer, and
- (c) is to be taken to be a ‘Leader’ for this Policy.

41.2 Expectations of Leaders

Leaders at an Event must:

- (a) comply with the Code of Conduct in clause 18 and the four Golden Rules set out in clause 19,
- (b) be alert to possible physical danger to children such as unsafe furniture, broken glass or liquid on floors which could cause a slip hazard, and take appropriate remedial action,
- (c) become familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and the location of fire extinguishers and first aid kits,
- (d) comply with the expectations of Leaders set out in clause 23 relating to photos and moving images, and
- (e) comply with the expectations of Leaders set out in clause 24 relating to alcohol and drugs.

41.3 Events where Northridge does not take responsibility for children

(a) Northridge not responsible for children

When an Event does not involve Leaders taking formal responsibility for caring for children, the Coordinator must ensure:

- (i) if it is an Event (such as Excite) where children typically arrive with parents or other adult carers, the parents or other adult with whom children arrive (in this clause 41.3 and clause 41.4 such adults are to be taken to be



‘parents’) are informed both verbally and by appropriate signage (usually at the entrance point to the Event) that they will be responsible for their children throughout the Event, including toileting, or

- (ii) if it is an Event (such as Cracker Night) where Northridge is providing services to anyone (including children) who attends the Event (such as face painting or handing out balloons), there is signage (usually at any entrance point to the Event (as distinct from any entrance point of a broader activity within which the Event may be occurring)) stating that Northridge does not take responsibility for children entering the Event.

(b) **Unaccompanied children**

If a child attends an Event referred to in clause 41.3 (a)(i) but is not accompanied by a parent, the Coordinator must contact a parent of the child and ask them to either collect the child, come and stay with them for the duration of the Event or nominate an adult present at the Event who they consent to act as the child's Authorised Person (to be confirmed by a text). Two adult Leaders must stay with the child until a parent or Authorised Person arrives or has been assigned to the child.

41.4 Events where Northridge takes responsibility for children

(a) **Optional children's program**

If a child arrives at an Event where Northridge provides an **optional** program involving Leaders taking formal responsibility for caring for children:

- i. **Unaccompanied children:** and the child is not accompanied by a parent, the Coordinator must contact a parent of the child and ask them to either collect the child, come and stay with them for the duration of the Event or nominate an adult present at the Event who they consent to act as the child's Authorised Person (to be confirmed by a text). Two adult Leaders must stay with the child until a parent or Authorised Person arrives or has been assigned to the child, and
- ii. **Notification to parents:** the Coordinator must ensure parents are informed both verbally and by appropriate signage (usually at the entrance point to the Event) that:
 - if they wish, they can place their children in the children's program, but their children must be both signed in and signed out, and
 - whenever their children are not in the children's program, they will be responsible for the children, including toileting.

(b) **Leader ratio**

Whenever an Event has a children's program (including a program specifically for young people) involving Leaders taking formal responsibility for caring for children, and whether or not the program is optional, then the Leader ratio requirements set out in clause 20.6 and 21.2 apply to that program.

(c) **Children's programs open to children of any age**

If a program involving Leaders taking formal responsibility for caring for children offered at an Event is open to children of any age, then Leaders must:

- ensure all children are signed in and signed out by a parent or Authorised Person and that emergency phone numbers and special dietary requirements are noted on the sign in form,



- if the program involves Leaders taking formal responsibility for caring for ***all*** children at the Event, confirm, when each child arrives, that, if their parent is not intending to stay for the entire Event, the child can use the toilet without help from Leaders. (A child unable to use the toilet without help and whose parent does not stay at such an Event is not permitted to attend the Event),
- take an attendance roll. (The Coordinator must provide a copy of each attendance roll to the Child Protection Officer for permanent retention.),
- allow parents, in consultation with a Leader, to have access to their children during the Session,
- ensure any door to the entrance of the Activity Environment is kept closed during the Session but windows are kept clear to allow outside observation. If the entrance to the Activity Environment does not have a door, the Coordinator must ensure an appropriate barrier or process is established designed to prevent children leaving the Activity Environment without appropriate permission,
- not allow a child to leave the Activity Environment during the Event unless:
 - they need to use the toilet, or
 - taken by a Leader directly to one of their parents, or
 - accompanied by a parent,
- if a child needs to use the toilet and a Leader has confirmed they can do so on their own, ensure a Leader stands with a clear view of the child walking to and from the bathroom and in hearing distance of the child. If the Activity Environment is at Thornleigh, children should use only the disabled bathroom on the ground floor of the auditorium. They must be instructed not to lock the bathroom door,
- if a child needs to use the toilet but has told a Leader they need help, take the child to a parent,
- if a child has not returned from the toilet within 5 minutes and:
 - is unresponsive to a knock on the bathroom door, or
 - calls out for help,

arrange for two Leaders of the same gender as the child to enter the bathroom to ensure the child's safety.

(d) Youth Ministry Events

If an Event is a Youth Ministry Activity involving Leaders taking formal responsibility for all young people attending, then Leaders must:

- take an attendance roll but young people do not need to be signed into or out of the Event. (The Coordinator must provide a copy of each attendance roll to the Child Protection Officer for permanent retention.),
- ensure all young people attending the Event have provided a parent permission form prepared specifically for the Event,



- allow parents, in consultation with a Leader, to have access to their young people during the Event,
- ensure any windows are kept clear to allow outside observation,
- not allow a young person to leave the Activity Environment during the Event unless:
 - they need to use the toilet, or
 - taken by a Leader directly to one of their parents, or
 - accompanied by a parent, and
- ensure young people are aware of toileting arrangements and emergency evacuation procedures. After informing a Leader, a young person may visit the bathroom on their own. The young person must be instructed to use the closest available bathroom. If they have not returned after 5 minutes a Leader must arrange for two adult Leaders of the same gender as the young person to enter the bathroom to ensure the young person's safety.



Part I – Recognising and reporting child abuse⁷

42. What constitutes and how to recognise child abuse

42.1 Core meaning of child* abuse

child abuse means an act or omission endangering the physical, emotional or spiritual health or development of a child, including the following acts or omissions in relation to a child:

- bullying
- emotional abuse
- harassment
- neglect
- physical abuse (including domestic violence)
- sexual abuse, or
- spiritual abuse

***NOTE:** In this Policy ‘child’ includes a young person.

ALSO, note these terms have been listed alphabetically which is not intended to reflect any order of importance or severity. All are important. However, the concepts of sexual abuse and physical abuse are the most common forms of abuse giving rise to meeting the threshold of child abuse reportable to the authorities. Having said that, Leaders must report to a Pastor under clause 44 below any form of suspected child abuse.

42.2 Expanded explanation of child abuse

Set out below is an explanation of each of the terms used in clause 42.1 and potential indicators of each type of child abuse:

BULLYING means behaviour directed to a person which:

- is repeated
- is unreasonable (being behaviour a reasonable person, considering the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening behaviour), and
- creates a risk to their health or safety.

Potential indicators of **bullying**

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics or jewellery
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

⁷ If you are personally emotionally affected in any way by reading this information and would like support, we encourage you to contact one of the pastoral team at Northridge or call Lifeline on 13 11 14.



EMOTIONAL ABUSE means acts or omissions causing, or which could cause, emotional harm or lead to serious behavioural or cognitive disorders. It includes:

- subjecting a person to excessive and repeated personal criticism
- ridiculing a person, including using insulting or derogatory terms to refer to them
- threatening or intimidating behaviour that leaves a person feeling frightened
- ignoring a person openly and pointedly,
- behaving in a hostile manner or in a way that could reasonably result in another person feeling isolated or rejected, and
- isolating a person from normal social experiences and opportunities to develop friendships

Potential indicators of **emotional abuse**

- Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- Extremely low self-esteem
- Compliant, passive, withdrawn, tearful
- Inability to value others
- Serious difficulties with peer or other relations
- Extreme attention seeking behaviour

HARASSEMENT means unwelcome conduct, whether or not intended, in relation to another person where the person feels with good reason in all the circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. This behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes:

- making unwelcome physical contact with a person
- making gestures or using language that could reasonably give offence including continual or unwarranted shouting
- making unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person’s capacities or attributes
- putting on open display pictures, posters, graffiti, or written materials that could reasonably give offence
- making unwelcome communication with a person in any form (eg phone calls, email, texts, social media),
- posting offensive or unauthorised material on computers (including in emails, websites, blogs or social networking sites), and
- stalking a person

Potential indicators of **harassment**

- Symptoms of depression or anxiety
- Anger, fear, frustration, irritability, embarrassment, shame, self-consciousness, low self-esteem, guilt, confusion, self-blame and a tendency to isolate
- Stomach ailments, headaches, insomnia, lethargy, nausea
- Constant nervousness
- Poor appetite, over eating, weight loss, weight gain

NEGLECT means the failure to provide the necessities of life where a child’s health and development are placed at risk of harm. It includes being deprived of:



- food
- clothing
- shelter
- hygiene
- education
- supervision and safety
- attachment to and affection from adults, and
- medical care.

Potential indicators of neglect

- Poor standards in hygiene leading to social isolation
- Medical conditions not being treated adequately or appropriately
- Scavenging or stealing food
- Extended stays at school, public areas, other homes
- Statements from a child that no one is home to care for them
- Being focussed on basic survival
- Extreme longing for adult affection
- A flat and superficial way of relating, lacking a sense of genuine interaction
- Anxiety about being abandoned by others
- Difficulty trusting adults
- Self-comforting behaviours, e.g. rocking, sucking
- Carer presents with bizarre/irrational behaviour or seems indifferent to child's needs

PHYSICAL ABUSE means any intentional or reckless act, use of force or threat to use force causing injury to, or involving unwelcome physical contact with, another person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving, or grabbing. It includes exposing a person to domestic or family violence (either as a witness or as a person on whom it is perpetrated), being violent, and abusive and intimidatory behaviour perpetrated by one person against another in a personal, intimate relationship. It does not include discipline by a parent which is reasonable in the circumstances. (However, physical force to a child's neck or head (unless trivial or negligible in all the circumstances) or which otherwise causes harm for more than a short period is NOT reasonable).

Potential indicators of physical abuse

- Bruises on face neck or head
- Other bruises or marks which may show the shape of the object which caused it
- Lacerations and welts
- Head injuries where the infant may be drowsy or vomiting or have glassy eyes, fixed pupils or pooling of blood in the eyes suggesting the possibility of having been shaken
- Adult bite marks and scratches
- Bone fractures, especially in children under three (3) years of age
- Dislocations, sprains, swelling
- Burns marks and scalds
- Multiple injuries or bruises
- Child or parent's explanation inconsistent with injury
- Abdominal pain (may be caused by internal organ damage)
- Ingestion of poisonous substances, alcohol or drugs
- General indicators of female genital mutilation



SEXUAL ABUSE of a child means the use of a child by another person (including a child) for their own sexual stimulation or gratification or that of others. It includes:

- making sexual advances to a child using any form of communication
- exposing oneself indecently to a child
- having or attempting to have vaginal or anal intercourse with a child
- penetrating or attempting to penetrate a child's vagina or anus with an object or any bodily part
- kissing, touching, holding or fondling or attempting to kiss, touch, hold or fondle a child in a sexual manner
- staring at or secretly watching a child for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification
- making any gesture or action of a sexual nature in a child's presence
- making sexual references or innuendo in a child's presence using any form of communication
- discussing or inquiring about personal matters of a sexual nature with a child
- possessing, creating or exposing children to child exploitation material of a sexual nature
- exposing a child to any form of sexually explicit or suggestive material including clothing with sexually explicit images or messages
- giving goods, money, attention or affection in exchange for:
 - sexual activities with a child, or
 - images of a child for sexual gratification of themselves or others, and
- encouraging, or forcing or attempting to encourage or force a child:
 - to sexually touch or fondle another person
 - to perform oral sex
 - either to masturbate self or others, or to watch others masturbate, or
 - to engage in or watch any other sexual activity.

Potential indicators of sexual abuse

- Direct or indirect disclosure
- Describing sexual acts
- Overtly sexual themes in artwork, play or writing
- Persistent running away from home
- Anorexia or overeating
- Going to bed fully clothed
- Regression in developmental achievements
- Child being in contact with a known offender
- Unexplained accumulation of money and gifts
- Bleeding from vagina, external genitalia or anus
- Injuries such as tears or bruising to the genitals or anus
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen and thighs
- Developmentally inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Persistent habit disorders, e.g. Sucking, biting, rocking
- Self-destructive behaviours, e.g. Suicide attempts, substance abuse, deliberate self-harm.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE means the mistreatment of a person by actions or threats when justified by appeal to God, faith or religion. It includes:

- using a position of spiritual authority to dominate or manipulate another person or group
- using a position of spiritual authority to seek inappropriate deference from others
- isolating a person from friends and family members, and



- using biblical or religious terminology to justify abuse.

Potential indicators of **spiritual abuse**

- Highly compliant, fear-based obedience
- Going along with activities despite obvious discomfort or doubt
- Fear of expressing ideas and beliefs freely
- Excessively idolising leaders
- Disclosure that a person is being prevented from practising their faith or religion
- Disclosure that a person is being forced to act against their spiritual or religious beliefs
- Disclosure that a person is being accused of being too religious or not religious enough
- Disclosure that a person's understanding of religious practices or beliefs is being ridiculed.

43. Reporting of suspected child abuse

Northridge has a moral and legal responsibility to respond to all instances of possible child abuse.

In some instances, Northridge has an obligation to report child abuse offences, as failure not to would constitute a criminal offence pursuant to section 316A of the Crimes Act.

44. Reporting suspected child abuse to a Pastor

If:

- a Leader observes what they believe or suspect to be child abuse or indicators of child abuse,
- another person tells a Leader they suspect or know a child is being subjected to child abuse,
- a child tells a Leader they, or another child, is being subjected to child abuse, or
- a Leader suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk of significant harm,

then the Leader must:

- **GIVE** this information immediately to the Kids Church Pastor, the Youth Pastor, a Community Pastor or a Senior Pastor. In an emergency call 0416 024 244
IMPORTANT:
 - **The obligation of a Leader to report this type of information to a Pastor is not limited to situations where the belief or suspicion arises in connection with Activities. It is irrelevant where the possible child abuse may have taken place or who may have perpetrated it.**
 - **If the perpetrator of the possible child abuse is a Pastor, the Leader must not give the information to that Pastor but instead give it to another Pastor not related by marriage or otherwise to the possible perpetrator.**

IMPORTANT



IF A CHILD TELLS A LEADER THEY, OR ANOTHER CHILD, HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO CHILD ABUSE, THE LEADER MUST:

- Listen to their story carefully
- Comfort them with words if they are distressed
- Let them know they did the right thing and they have the right to both feel, and be, safe
- Let them know the Leader is concerned about what they have told the Leader and the Leader will be getting advice as soon as possible about how best to help them.
- **NOT** promise to keep the information secret
- **NOT** ask more questions than are necessary to understand what has occurred
- **NOT** ask leading questions ie questions which suggest an answer
- **NOT** touch the child inappropriately
- **NOT** suggest the child will need to prove what has been disclosed
- **NOT** promise the abuse will stop, and
- **NOT** notify parents (this issue will be dealt with by the Northridge leadership)

- **NOT GIVE** the information to anyone else other than the Child Protection Officer (ie keep the information **CONFIDENTIAL**)
- **PREPARE** a written report of the information in conjunction with a Pastor and the Child Protection Officer within 24 hours from when the Leader receives it on a *Risk of Harm Report* (see Appendix 10) the Pastor will provide to the Leader.

AFTER the Leader has given a report under this clause to a Pastor, they must not have further interaction with a child:

- the subject of, or
- who disclosed

the possible child abuse unless it is expressly approved by a Pastor. This is because it is important for the protection of all parties for the procedure following receipt of this type of information to be co-ordinated by the Northridge leadership.

45. Emergency reporting or assistance

After a Pastor becomes aware of possible child abuse they must:

- **POLICE:** Immediately consider whether emergency assistance is required because a child is at risk of immediate harm (consulting with a Senior Pastor as they deem appropriate). If so, the Pastor should contact the local police by phoning **000** before making any report to FaCS. In this situation, the Pastor must advise a Senior Pastor and a relevant Community Pastor immediately, and
- **FaCS:** Immediately consider whether to contact FaCS because a child is at risk of immediate harm. **FaCS can be contacted 24/7 by phoning 13 21 11 or 1800 212 936.** If a child is at risk of immediate harm and the matter is reported to FaCS, FaCS will contact the police as they deem necessary.
- Notify the Board promptly if the police or FaCS are contacted.



46. Investigation by Northridge

After a Pastor becomes aware of possible child abuse they must, subject to any advice provided by FaCs or the Police in response to a report made under clause 45:

- involve the Child Protection Officer in assisting the Leader who notifies them of the possible child abuse to prepare a *Risk of Harm Report* (see Appendix 10) within 24 hours of the notification,
- as soon as practicable determine (in discussion with a Senior Pastor) what further information they intend to seek, and
- as soon as practicable seek further information they consider necessary to form a view about whether there are reasonable grounds to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm from child abuse. In doing so they should ensure the child is spoken to only if the Pastor believes it is necessary to do so to form the view.

47. Reporting to FaCS

Following the investigation, the Pastor must:

- a) in consultation with the Child Protection Officer and a Senior Pastor consider whether:
 - i. a report must be made to FaCS or whether failure to make a report to the Police would be an offence. In doing so, the Pastor must:
 - First, use the [NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide](#). If they conclude a mandatory report would be required if any Pastor or Leader were a mandatory reporter under the NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (as amended or replaced from time to time)⁸, then a report **must** be made. This applies whether or not any Pastor or Leader is in fact a mandatory reporter.
 - Second, consider whether the information they hold means they know or believe (or should reasonably know or believe) that a child abuse offence⁹ has been committed and that the information they hold would assist the Police. If so, then a report **must** be made.

In either case, the Pastor must determine in conjunction with a Senior Pastor and the Child Protection Officer who should make the report and ensure it is completed and submitted to FaCS¹⁰ as soon as practicable, or
 - ii. a report to FaCS **should** be made even if it is **not required** to be made under clause 47(a)(i). If it is concluded a report should be made, then the Pastor must determine in conjunction with a Senior Pastor and the Child Protection Officer who should make the report and ensure it is completed and submitted to FaCS¹¹ as soon as practicable.
- b) promptly notify the Board of any report made to FaCS (and the Board must as soon as practicable decide whether the circumstances should be notified to the insurers),
- c) discuss with a Senior Pastor what approach should be taken in relation to the child's parents, and

⁸ The Mandatory Reporter Guide is a tool primarily aimed at determining whether children are currently or potentially at risk of harm.

⁹ 'child abuse offence' is defined in section 319A(9) of the NSW Crimes Act. That section is primarily aimed at ensuring acts of child abuse that have been committed are reported to the police.

¹⁰ If it is concluded that it would be an offence not to make a report, it is acceptable to make the report to FaCS rather than the Police.

¹¹ Such a report would be made under section 24 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW).



- d) decide whether the Leader who reported the possible child abuse should have any contact with a child who disclosed the possible child abuse or the child who is the subject of the possible child abuse, and give directions to the Leader in this respect.

If a Senior Pastor cannot be contacted in a reasonable time in the circumstances requiring involvement of a Senior Pastor under this clause, then the reference to a Senior Pastor is to be replaced with 'Community Pastor'.

All Risk of Harm Reports and copies of all reports made to FaCS or the Police must be provided to the Child Protection Officer and filed permanently ie never destroyed.

48. Risk assessment

A Pastor who receives a report from a Leader under clause 44 must, as soon as practicable, liaise with a Senior Pastor with a view to ensuring a risk assessment is conducted as soon as practicable to identify and minimise any risks to children.

49. Suspension of Leader

Any Pastor or Leader identified as being involved in a plausible allegation of child abuse must be suspended from their responsibilities immediately and not take part in any investigation or reporting of the suspected child abuse other than to answer questions put to them. Employees are to be suspended with pay until the matter is resolved. Both the Northridge Board and the Insurers must be advised as soon as possible after a suspension.



Part J– Oversight by the Board

50. WWC numbers and training

Board members must maintain a valid WWC number and receive training (including refresher training) as if they are an employee.

51. Compliance reports to be provided to Board

The Senior Pastors, working in conjunction with the Child Protection Officer, Community Pastors and Coordinators, must provide a report to the Board within two months following the end of each calendar year containing the following information:

- (a) A description of each Ministry which took place in that year.
- (b) A description of each Activity which took place in that year (if an Activity was a regularly occurring Activity, only that category of Activity need be recorded as distinct from each date on which it occurred).
- (c) Confirmation or otherwise that each employee and Board member held a valid WWC number throughout the year and was up to date in their required training under this Policy. If that confirmation cannot be given, an explanation of each exception.
- (d) Confirmation or otherwise that each person who was a volunteer Leader in an Activity in that year:
 - (i) held a valid WWC number throughout the period in that year when they were a volunteer Leader, and
 - (ii) were up to date in their required training under this Policy for the type of Activity in which they were involved.If that confirmation cannot be given, an explanation of each exception.
- (e) A brief description of each Incident Report prepared in that year.
- (f) A brief description of each mandatory and non-mandatory report provided to FaCS or the Police under clause 47 in that year.
- (g) An assessment (after discussion with the Coordinators) of the degree to which Leaders complied with this Policy during that year. This aspect of the report is expected to provide guidance to the Board on the degree to which a culture of compliance with this Policy exists across all Activities.
- (h) Recommendations, if any, for improvements which could be made to this Policy (including whether the training requirements could be improved). The Board must be advised on the extent to which advice has been sought from, or provided by, external experts in framing the recommendations.

52. Annual review of this Policy

After the Board receives each compliance report under clause 51 (or at other times as the Board considers appropriate), the Board must review this Policy with a view to possibly making changes to the Policy to better promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children during their participation in Activities.



Part K – Resources

This Part K contains the following resources. Separate versions of each Appendix can be accessed by Northridge staff via Google docs. Those marked * are available on the Northridge website under the Resources page – ‘General Resources’ section:

Permission forms

Appendix 1 – Kids Church Enrolment Form*

Appendix 2 – Youth Ministry Annual Permission Form*

Appendix 3 – Image Capture/Use Permission Form*

Visitors

Appendix 4 – Visitor Details Form

Working with Children checks

Appendix 5 – WWC Check Guidelines*

Appendix 6 – WWC declaration by volunteer aged under 18*

Safe environment

Appendix 7 – Risk Assessment Form

Appendix 8 – Driver Certification Form*

Appendix 9 – Incident Report Form

Reporting child abuse

Appendix 10 – Risk of Harm Report



Appendix 1 – Kids Church Enrolment Form

Kids Church Enrolment Form

Privacy

The personal information you provide will be made available **only** to –

- the Northridge leaders involved in running or overseeing the activities in which your children participate and used only in connection with the health and welfare of your children while attending those activities, and
- medical and emergency services if Northridge leaders consider this necessary.

Are you completing this form as a ☐ **Parent** ☐ **Grandparent** ☐ **Legal guardian** ☐ **Other Authorised Person**? If other, please specify _____

Details of person completing this form

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

If you are not a parent of the children, please provide details of a parent of the children

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

Child 1 Details

Name:	Gender:	DOB:
School:	Grade:	
Does this child have any medical condition, special dietary needs, allergies or other needs of which we should be aware?	Yes*	No
Is there anyone who is legally restricted from seeing this child?	Yes*	No
*If you answered YES to any of these questions, please provide further details:		

Child 2 Details

Name:	Gender:	DOB:
School:	Grade:	
Does this child have any medical condition, special dietary needs, allergies or other needs of which we should be aware?	Yes*	No
Is there anyone who is legally restricted from seeing this child?	Yes*	No
*If you answered YES to any of these questions, please provide further details:		



--

Other children – Please copy the Child Details section of this form for other children, complete the extra Details form and attach it to this form.

Photography* authorisations

Please read the Photography section of the Information Sheet before completing this section. By signing this form, you agree to Northridge’s guidelines on taking and using photos and moving images.

- **Taking images:** IF YOU DO NOT want images of the children named in this form to be *taken* at activities organised by Northridge, TICK THIS BOX. ☐
- **Using images:** If you are willing for images of the children named in this form to be *used* by Northridge for one or both of the following purposes, please tick those purposes for which you give permission:
 - ☐ On displays at the physical location of Northridge activities (including digital displays)
 - ☐ In hard copy Northridge publications (eg welcome booklets).

Images will not be used for any purpose other than those ticked above.

Acknowledgements and authorisations

By signing this form, you:

- give permission for the children named in this form to attend all scheduled Kids Church activities (as apply to them), unless you advise the Kids Church Pastor otherwise.
- acknowledge having read the Parents Information Sheet and agree to support the Northridge policies and processes contained in it.
- certify, if you are not a parent or legal guardian of the children named in this form, that the parents or legal guardians of the children are agreeable to you giving us instructions as if you were a parent or legal guardian.
- agree to advise Northridge of any changes to information provided in this form.

Signature

Print full name:	
Sign:	Date:

If you have any questions about this permission form, please contact the Northridge office on 02 8407 9941

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE KIDS CHURCH COORDINATOR AT YOUR COMMUNITY



Appendix 2 – Youth Ministry Annual Permission Form

Youth Ministry Annual Permission Form

Privacy

The personal information you provide will be made available **only** to –

- the Northridge leaders involved in running or overseeing the activities in which your children participate and used only in connection with the health and welfare of your children while attending those activities, and
- medical and emergency services if Northridge leaders consider this necessary.

Are you completing this form as a ☐ **Parent** ☐ **Grandparent** ☐ **Legal guardian** ☐ **Other Authorised Person**? If other, please specify _____

Details of person completing this form

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

If you are not a parent of the children, please provide details of a parent of the children

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

Child 1 Details

Name:	Gender:	DOB:
School:	Grade:	
Does this child have any medical condition, special dietary needs, allergies or other needs of which we should be aware?	Yes*	No
Is there anyone who is legally restricted from seeing this child?	Yes*	No
*If you answered YES to any of these questions, please provide further details:		

Child 2 Details

Name:	Gender:	DOB:
School:	Grade:	
Does this child have any medical condition, special dietary needs, allergies or other needs of which we should be aware?	Yes*	No
Is there anyone who is legally restricted from seeing this child?	Yes*	No
*If you answered YES to any of these questions, please provide further details:		



Other children – Please copy the Child Details section of this form for other children, complete the extra Details form and attach it to this form.

Photography* authorisations

Please read the Photography section of the Information Sheet before completing this section. By signing this form, you agree to Northridge’s guidelines on taking and using photos and moving images.

- **Taking images:** IF YOU DO NOT want images of the children named in this form to be *taken* at activities organised by Northridge, TICK THIS BOX. ☐
- **Using images:** If you are willing for images of the children named in this form to be *used* by Northridge for one of more of the following purposes, please tick those purposes for which you give permission:
 - ☐ On displays at the physical location of Northridge activities (including digital displays)
 - ☐ In hard copy Northridge publications (eg welcome booklets)
 - ☐ On the Northridge website or on social media sites (eg Facebook).

Images will not be used for any purpose other than those ticked above.

Transportation authorisation

YES NO

Do you give permission for the children named in this form to be driven in connection with Northridge activities by a person other than one of their parents if the driver and the vehicle they are driving have been approved by Northridge for transporting young people? (Northridge policy is that in those circumstances there must be at least one other adult in the car in addition to the driver)

Acknowledgements and authorisations

By signing this form, you:

- give permission for the children named in this form to attend all scheduled Youth Ministry activities (as apply to them), unless you advise the Youth Pastor otherwise.
- acknowledge having read the Parents Information Sheet and agree to support the Northridge policies and processes contained in it.
- certify, if you are not a parent or legal guardian of the children named in this form, that the parents or legal guardians of the children are agreeable to you giving us instructions as if you were a parent or legal guardian.
- agree to advise Northridge of any changes to information provided in this form.

Signature

Print full name:

Sign:

Date:

If you have any questions about this permission form, please contact the Northridge office on 02 8407 9941

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE YOUTH PASTOR



Appendix 3 – Image Capture/Use Permission Form

IMAGE CAPTURE/USE PERMISSION FORM

From time to time staff or volunteers may take photos or moving images of children or young people on behalf of Northridge, unless a parent* (****In this form the term ‘parent’ includes a legal guardian***) has indicated they do not want images to be taken of their children. These images may be used to promote Northridge in a variety of ways where permission has been given (see below).

Permission to capture images

NOTE: In some situations, Northridge may not be able to prevent images being taken eg because others at the activity may take images unaware of a parental request not to take images. Also, at larger events we may display a “PHOTO PERMISSION NOTICE” sign at the entrance stating words to the effect that, by entering the event, parents consent to images being taken of them and their children. In those circumstances we may unavoidably take images of your children and we are not responsible for images taken by others. However, if we do take images, our policy on *using* them still applies (see below).

IF YOU DO NOT want images of your children named in this box to be ***taken*** at activities organised by Northridge, **TICK THIS BOX.** ☐ Children’s names: _____

Permission to use images

It is our policy to obtain both a parent’s and a Community Pastor’s written consent before showing others or publishing in any way (including on the Internet or in social media) an image of a child or young person taken by a leader at an activity organised by Northridge.

It is also our policy, even if permission to use images has been granted, never to upload to the Internet (including on the Northridge website or any social media platform) an image of a child in Year 6 or under which enables the young person to be recognised.

IF YOU ARE WILLING for images of your children to be ***used*** by Northridge for one of more of the following purposes, please list the names of those children below and tick those purposes for which you give permission:

Children’s names: _____

- ☐ On displays at the physical location of Northridge activities (including digital displays)
- ☐ In hard copy Northridge publications (eg welcome booklets)
- ☐ On the Northridge website or on social media sites (eg Facebook).

Images will not be used for any purpose other than those ticked above.

Signature of Parent

Print full name: _____

Sign: _____

Date: _____

If you have any questions about this permission form, please contact the office on 02 8407 9941



Please return this form to the Children’s Pastor or Youth Pastor.



Appendix 4 – Visitor Details Form

VISITOR DETAILS FORM

Young Person Details

Name:	Gender:	DOB:
School:	Grade:	
Any medical condition, special dietary needs, allergies or other needs of which we should be aware?	Yes*	No
*If YES provide further details:		

Parent Details

Parent 1

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

Parent 2 (only include detail that differs from above)

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

Emergency Contact (alternative to parent)

Name:	Home Phone:
Relationship to young person:	Mobile:

Form completed by: _____

Date: _____



Appendix 5 – WWC Check Guidelines

WWC CHECK GUIDELINES

STEP ONE: Fill in the online application

Go to www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au and complete the online application and receive an application number.

Please ensure the details you provide match EXACTLY with your identity documents (driver's licence or passport).

STEP TWO: Present your proof of identity

Go to a Service NSW centre or a NSW motor registry with your Application Number and your identity documents.

They will then send you an email showing your WWC number.

STEP THREE: Notify Northridge of your WWC number

Provide the Kids Church Pastor or the Youth Pastor with a copy of the email setting out your WWC number (this can be done by forwarding them the email you received from Service NSW or the motor registry) and details of your DATE OF BIRTH.

NOTE: The Pastor will need to know your WWC NUMBER and your DATE OF BIRTH to verify your acceptance.



Appendix 6 – WWC declaration by volunteer aged under 18

Working with children declaration by volunteer aged under 18

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

Declaration

I have never been accused of, charged with or convicted of sexual abuse of a child or young person.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian to complete:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Appendix 7 – Risk Assessment Form

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of Activity	
Date of Activity	
Activity Coordinator	
Venue	
Venue contact person	
Venue address and phone number	
Date risk assessment conducted	
Describe what activities will take place during the Activity. It is particularly important to describe all activities which might reasonably involve a risk of injury to participants eg outdoor games; abseiling; gymnastics etc	
Will Northridge partner with an external organisation in the Activity?	
If so, has the assessor evaluated that organisation's risk assessment information and incorporated it in the Action Plan below?	
Does the Activity require a trained instructor?	
If so, has the assessor confirmed the instructor is appropriately qualified and insured? * If in doubt consult a Community Pastor.	*Attach to this form a copy of the instructor's certificate/qualification and any certificate of currency of insurance they hold
Will an information sheet be provided to parents before the Activity?	
What Leader ratio will be required for the Activity?	
Has a First Aid Officer been appointed for the Activity?	

Risk assessment and action plan

This risk assessment form must be completed by the Coordinator for every occasional Activity, or annually for a regularly occurring Activity.



The venue for the Activity must be visited before this form is completed. The venue must be assessed for its suitability for the Activity, the safety of the venue (eg heating, electrical sockets, safety of furniture) and first aid and fire safety measures. Observe all areas of potential risk, and document them, including the action plan to remove likelihood of risk occurring. If an activity is proposed which might reasonably involve a risk of injury to participants, explain what steps will be taken to mitigate against the risk eg training and supervision plan for the activity.

Risk Identified	Activity	Problem to be addressed	Action Plan
e.g. <i>Open Fireplace</i>	<i>Lounge room worship time</i>	<i>No protection for younger kids</i>	<i>Bring child proof grill to stop access to the fire</i>

Name of risk assessor: _____

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Public liability and accident insurance assessment

A Senior Pastor must assess whether the proposed Activity requires an endorsement under Northridge's public liability insurance policy ("Policy"). If so, the endorsement must be obtained before this form is signed.

I am satisfied this is an Activity covered by the Policy.

Name of Senior Pastor: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Note:

1. The risk assessor must provide this form to a Senior Pastor at least two weeks before the proposed Activity.
2. This form and all verifying documents (including qualifications and insurance of instructors) must be retained in Northridge files for at least 7 years.



Appendix 8 – Driver Certification Form

Driver Certification Form

Name of driver:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	
Current driver's licence details: Driver's licence number*: _____ Class of licence: _____ Expiry date: _____	[*A copy of the licence must be attached to this form]
Vehicle details: Registration number vehicle 1: _____ Registration number vehicle 2: _____	

Driver's certification:

By signing this form:

1. I certify that:
 - the information above about my current driver's licence and the vehicles I drive is accurate, and
 - I will ensure each vehicle stated above is always comprehensively insured, including having compulsory third party personal injury insurance.
2. I agree that, when driving children and young people during activities organised by Northridge, I will:
 - abide by all applicable road rules,
 - not drive any vehicle other than a vehicle stated above unless expressly agreed by the activity coordinator,
 - drive only to destinations instructed by the activity coordinator,
 - not drive while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs,
 - drive children and young people only after confirming with the activity coordinator that parental consents have been given for the children and young people to be in the vehicle I am driving, and
 - ensure there is always at least one other adult in the vehicle in addition to me as the driver.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

<u>TO BE COMPLETED BY THE COORDINATOR:</u>
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1. Copy of the RMS ‘Check Your Vehicles Registration’ attached: ☐ (tick)

2. Copy of Licence attached: ☐ (tick)

Signed by Ministry Coordinator _____ Date: _____



Appendix 9 – Incident Report Form

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name of Activity	
Coordinator	
Address where incident occurred	
Exact location of incident within that address	
Date and time of incident	

Broad nature of incident (tick relevant box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Injury or illness
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsafe environment which could have led to injury or illness
	<input type="checkbox"/> Possession or consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
	<input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour of child or young person
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe):

Incident details	
What was the nature of the activity at which the incident occurred?	
Describe the incident. Give as much factual detail as possible, including who was there and what occurred. If relevant, describe the site condition and location of relevant objects.	
Was the activity being supervised by a special instructor? If yes, specify name and contact details of the instructor.	
Detail any safety or other instructions given to the group before the incident occurred.	
Were protective equipment or safety devices being used? If Yes, give details.	
Witnesses: State name, work title (if relevant), address, email and phone number of as many witnesses as possible.	
Other people involved in the incident: State name, work title (if relevant), address, email and	



phone number of other people who could provide relevant information about the incident.	
Were the police notified of the incident? If so, provide contact details and police incident number.	
Are there any images (still or moving) of the incident or the site of the incident? If yes, give details.	
Was a parent of any child or young person involved in the incident notified? If so, when?	

If a person was injured or became ill:		
Name of injured or ill person:		Gender:
		DOB:
Home address:		
Phone:		
Role (child, employee, volunteer):		
Body parts affected:		
Nature of injury or illness:		
Cause of injury or illness:		
Who was the injury or illness reported to and when?		
Severity assessment (tick relevant box) NOTE: ** If injury is sustained to eye, back, head, neck, skull or jaw, a visit to the doctor should be automatic. **	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor - First aid – stayed at Activity	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Serious enough to send home -First aid – sent home	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Serious enough to require visit to doctor	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe - required visit to hospital	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Very severe - possible permanent disability	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Fatal	
Initial treatment	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (provide details):	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor (provide details including contact details)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital (Provide details including contact details):	

Signature of Coordinator



Name of Coordinator:

Signature:

Date:

Follow up by Community Pastor

Status of incident:

Name of Community Pastor:

Signature:

Date:

—

Appendix 10 – Risk of Harm Report

RISK OF HARM REPORT

IMPORTANT:

Read the instructions in the 'Recognising and reporting child abuse' section of the Northridge Child Protection Policy before preparing this report.

Reporter's Details

Name:	Home Phone:
Email:	Mobile:
Home Address:	

Details of child about which there are concerns

Name:	Age:
Contact details:	
School attended and class:	

Concerns about the child

Record a full account of your concerns for the safety, well-being or welfare of the child. Include as much detail as possible as well as relevant dates and times when things were seen or heard. Include anything observed or heard including indicators, behavioural changes, safety concerns and verbal comments or conversations:

Signature of reporter:	Date:
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Follow up by Community Pastor

Date discussed with Community Pastor:

Name of Community Pastor:

Signature of Community Pastor:	Date:
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NOTE: THIS REPORT MUST BE FILED IN A SECURE LOCATION