

RISK CHECKLIST – CHURCHES SUNDAY SCHOOL / KIDS' CHURCH

A Sunday School or Kids' Church is typically a core component of the family ministry of most churches. Their intent is to introduce children to Jesus Christ in a developmentally appropriate environment.

We have a duty to keep children safe while they are in our care.

This checklist is intended to assist in the identification of risks that might compromise child safety. Risk Management will identify ways of minimising the impacts of those risks to help keep our children safe.

Premises / Venue

- What issues are associated with the set-up of the venue, e.g. manual handling?
- Are there slip, trip or fall hazards, e.g. electrical leads?
- Have electrical hazards been minimised, e.g. test and tag, sockets covered?
- Are hazardous materials (chemicals, gas bottles etc.) protected?
- Consider the impact of technology (social media, sound and video equipment, computer use, electricity) on the activity and participants.
- Is the impact of the physical environment on activities understood? \
- Are items of outside play equipment reviewed for safety on a regular basis?
- What issues are associated with venue clear-up? Are there procedures in place for timely clean-up of breakages and spillages?
- Does the venue have appropriate toilet and washing facilities?
- Have we catered for participants with physical disabilities?
- Are first aid kits available? Are trained first aid practitioners on duty? Is currency of first aid training reviewed?

Leaders / Parents

- What leader induction processes are in place?
- Have all leaders completed "working with children" checks?
- Will proposed numbers of leaders enable an appropriate level of supervision to be maintained? Minimum of 2 leaders for any activity?
- Are leaders adequately trained in child protection concepts? Does the training include guidance regarding "touching" and "toileting" practices?
- Does training provide instruction on inclusive practices for people with disabilities?
- Are parents provided with an "information Sheet" relating to requirements and expectations of Kids' Church?
- What parent / guardian communication channels are proposed?
- Do you have parents' permission to deal with medical emergencies?
- Is there an easily understood complaints process in place?

The information provided is of a general nature only and may not identify all matters that need to be included in the design of effective controls for the subject area. Professional advice should be obtained on individual circumstances.

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Participants

- Have the ages and capabilities of children attending been considered in the design of the curriculum?
- Are planned activities safe and appropriate to the age of participants?
- Has consideration been given to the potential for inappropriate contact / comments between participants and/or leaders?
- Has consideration been given to the potential for psychological harm to participants?
- What policies, training and guidance is provided in relation to bullying?
- What processes are contemplated to managing pre-existing medical conditions (allergies, asthma, diabetes, special needs, other)?

People Movement

- What check-in / check-out procedures are in place? Do pick-up procedures ensure that children are only entrusted to authorised people?
- What are the risks associated with people entering or leaving the venue?
- Do you have appropriate traffic management protocols in place for participants and leaders moving around the venue?
- Do you ensure that all visitors are identified and escorted during their time at the venue?

Off-Site Activities

- Have guidelines been developed for off-site activities? Have these been communicated to all leaders?
- Is it mandatory to obtain parental permission for attendance at any off-site activities, including transport and emergency medical arrangements?
- Are risks associated with off-site venues routinely identified and assessed?

Security

- Is there potential for intruders or outside parties to disrupt the activity?
- What are the implications of conflicts between participants? Between participants and leaders? Between leaders?
- Have incident reporting protocols been developed and are they in use?
- Have emergency management procedures been developed. Are leaders trained in their roles? Have practice evacuations taken place?
- What emergency contact arrangements do you have in place?
- What incident reporting processes do you have in place?

Food

- If food is provided, have associated risks been considered, e.g. food preparation and handling, allergic reactions etc.?

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