The Uniting Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

SAFEMINISTRY withchildren

Statement of commitment

The Uniting Church in Australia is committed to the safety and well-being of all people, including those who use our services. Our statement of commitment to safe ministry aims to provide safe ministry for all children, and vulnerable adults (young people, children and adults with disabilities, the elderly, children and adults experiencing domestic and family violence, and other vulnerable people) in the church, and keep them safe from harm.

We believe that every person is precious to God, and in following Jesus' example we aim to provide safe ministry with children, vulnerable adults, and their families.

We will provide safe places where people of all ages, gender, ability and economic situations are cared for, nurtured and sustained. We will treat all people with respect; understanding and we will address their concerns at all times.

The conduct of all the people in our safe ministry team shall be free from abuse including neglect, emotional, psychological and spiritual abuse, grooming behaviour and sexual abuse. All members of our safe ministry team are required to interrupt and report any breaches of the boundaries outlined. This includes All paid employees, leaders, team members and volunteers, all of whom are screened, training, and appointed by the church council prior to commencing in any role.

All members of our safe ministry team personally commit to upholding the stated physical, emotional, behavioural and spiritual boundaries that support the maintenance of safe ministry environments. All persons are required to complete Safe Ministry with Children Training prior to them commencing in a child-related role, and to attend ongoing Safe Ministry with training on a bi-annual basis.

Our congregation has adopted the safe Ministry with Children: Providing Safe Ministry Policy. This Policy encourages all members of our congregations to interrupt and report all violations of these boundaries, in order to maintain the safety of our ministry with children and vulnerable adults.

Range of acceptable behaviours

All paid employees, leaders, team members and volunteers will:

Physical boundaries

Be mindful of the imbalance of power that exists in relationships with children and vulnerable adults including adult-child relationships, and build appropriate, transparent and accountable relationships with children, vulnerable adults and their families

Use only appropriate physical contact i.e. responsive to the person or child's needs, initiated by the person or child, in full view and non- sexual

Refrain from the use of physical restraint unless in circumstances where there is a clear risk of danger or physical harm

Ensure a minimum of two leaders is present in all child-related activities and that the leadership ratio is achieved for all activities with children: a ratio of one worker for every six children in an activity for participants aged five years and over and one worker for every four children aged below five years. Regarding transportation for children: a minimum of two adult helpers or leaders present with children during any transporting.

Emotional boundaries

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person, regardless of the person's abilities, gender, religion or cultural background, without favouritism or prejudice

Behave in a way that is a positive example, ensuring that their attitude and language affirms dignity and self-worth

Avoid activities that may cause embarrassment, show disrespect or cause isolation.

Behavioural boundaries

Be accountable to leaders within the church, and work as part of a team, adhering to the Safe Ministry Code of Conduct, and maintain group behaviour by positive strategies such as restating behavioural expectations and consequences, use of diversion techniques, maintaining a safe distance and retaining line of sight, supervised time-out, and providing opportunities to discuss issues and problems.

Communicate with respect, ensuring others are not subject to inappropriate images/material (including pornographic material) or invasive use of any type of technology; and direct all correspondence (especially electronic or social media) to parents rather than directly with the child or children

You are invited to share your feedback and/or concerns with:

Church council chairperson:	Scott McDonald	email:	office@thegapuca.org.au
Minister:	Rev Rod Fisher	email:	rfisher@thegapuca.org.au
Presbytery chairperson:	Rev Linda Hason	email:	office@mrpres.org.au

Synod Support Services:

Complaints and allegations	phone: 1800 586 591
Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer	phone: 07 3377 9833