Sisters of Saint Joseph
of the Sacred Heart

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Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Policy Name	Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct		
Version	v.1.0	Approved by the Congregational Leadership Team on	February 2021
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Scheduled review date	February 2024

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Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Mission Statement

The Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart continue God's mission by immersing themselves in the midst of life to empower others and bring hope.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart (**SOSJ**) are actively committed to fostering a culture of safeguarding that recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children.

1.2 SOSJ has a zero tolerance for child abuse. SOSJ will be guided by its Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement and broader values and strategic vision.

1.3 SOSJ commits to establishing a safe environment and supportive relationships for all with whom we have contact. This Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (**Code**) is one strategy used to achieve our following objectives:

(a) the safety of children during all engagement and / or interaction with SOSJ;

(b) the recruitment of suitable Workplace Participants for direct contact with children; and

(c) clear expectations for all people associated with or representing SOSJ in their physical and online interactions with children.

1.4 This Code should be read in conjunction with SOSJ's Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement. The terms used in this Code are defined in the Child Safeguarding Policy.

2. Scope

2.1 Everyone is responsible for creating and maintaining a child safe culture.

2.2 This Code of Conduct applies to every person in relationship with SOSJ including Congregational Leadership, Sisters in nominated roles, lay employees, clergy in nominated roles, and formal volunteers (**Workplace Participants**), Sisters, Josephite Affiliates, Advisory committee members, and Child Safeguarding Committee members.

3. Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

3.1 As part of SOSJ's commitment to child safeguarding, we believe that all persons associated with SOSJ are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all children with whom we engage.

3.2 We particularly recognise children who identify as First Nations Children, and children with particular vulnerabilities, for example, children from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, and children who cannot live with their birth family.

3.3 As such, this Code sets out the behaviour which SOSJ expects from all persons listed at 2.2 of this policy. All are expected to sign it and adhere to the following within the context of their representation and relationship with SOSJ: -

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must:

a) Adhere to all SOSJ's child safeguarding policies, procedures, and guidelines.

b) Behave in a manner consistent with the Gospel values of SOSJ.

c) Behave respectfully, justly, honestly and with integrity towards children and their carers and / or families, regardless of ethnicity, language, religion, disability or children with diverse sexuality.

d) Be compassionate, hospitable, inclusive and respect the individuality of each child.

e) Be a positive role model to children.

f) Be responsible with alcohol at any SOSJ organised event and ensure there is a nominated adult who is not consuming alcohol, who shall be responsible for children in the event of an emergency.

g) Comply with their legal obligations in relation to the safety of children.

h) Comply with any direction provided to them as a result of an allegation and / or investigation and cooperate with any internal or external investigation.

i) Respond to any child disclosures, concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse, promptly and in accordance with national and state or territory legislation and SOSJ's Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure.

j) Immediately speak up and advise their supervisor and SOSJ's Safeguarding Co-ordinator if they observe any concerns of exploitation, abuse, harassment, or breach of this Code or any SOSJ safeguarding policy or procedure or legal obligation.

k) Inform their supervisor and SOSJ's Safeguarding Co-ordinator, if they are the subject of a Police or Statutory Child Protection agency investigation, including in relation to sexual misconduct or child safety concerns.

l) Ensure they have a valid state-based child compliance check as needed and notify the Safeguarding Co-ordinator immediately if this has been or is likely to be suspended or revoked.

m) Create a supportive, safe and caring environment which promotes and empowers children and their carers' and / or families' participation in decisions which affect them and is inclusive of all children and their carers and / or families, regardless of ethnicity, language, religion, disability or children with diverse sexuality.

n) Seek to increase their cultural awareness especially when working with children and their carers and / or families who identify as First Nations, or who are from a different country of origin.

o) Use age-appropriate language when their work involves engaging with children.

p) Listen respectfully to children.

q) Identify themselves by name, position, and role when their work involves engaging with children.

r) Maintain personal and professional boundaries in their interactions with children.

s) Make every effort to ensure that they are not alone with a child. If they are alone with a child, ensure that they have the child's parent or guardian's consent to do so, and the interaction is open to observation.

t) Obtain informed consent from the child and the parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child or obtaining their story, when using the photograph or film for SOSJ purposes. An explanation of how the photograph, film or story will be used will be provided.

u) Protect the privacy of children by only sharing confidential information as absolutely required in accordance with their role at SOSJ (or in accordance with legal obligations).

v) Plan, organise and review all activities with children, be committed to identifying and mitigating risk to children's safety, and comply with SOSJ's Risk Management Policy and Framework.

All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy must not:

a) Behave or act in a manner which may be physically, sexually, emotionally or psychologically harmful towards a child or constitute abuse.

b) Use language towards a child which is abusive, harassing, sexual, shameful, demeaning, culturally inappropriate, discriminating, racist or sexist, or intended to threaten or be harmful.

c) Use inappropriate language in the presence of children, or show, or provide children access to inappropriate and / or pornographic images or material.

d) Engage in bullying or harassing behaviour towards children.

e) Exploit, abuse, corrupt or manipulate a child.

f) Discriminate against a child on any basis including (however not limited to), that of disability, culture, religion, ethnicity, or sexual diversity.

g) Consciously expose a child to person/s whom they know to be unsafe, or situations which they assess to be unsafe and have not implemented safeguarding measures to reduce the identified risk.

h) Engage in unnecessary physical contact with children / young people or utilise any form of physical discipline.

i) Visit a child's home without their parent or guardian being home.

j) Invite children into their own home or accommodation without the child's parent and / or guardian unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.

k) Initiate physical touch with a child unless it is a legitimate occupational requirement.

l) Communicate with children via email, text messages, phone calls, social networking, gaming or instant messaging sites, unless with the consent and knowledge of their parent or guardian, and for the purpose of issues directly associated with their representation of SOSJ and in adherence with the SOSJ's Communications Policy.

m) Become 'friends' or 'follow' a child on social media platforms unless they have a relationship that is external to SOSJ and has notified the Congregational Safeguarding Co-ordinator of this.

n) Transport children alone without parental approval, unless in the event of an emergency. Wherever possible, Workplace Participants shall obtain written parental approval prior to transporting children.

o) Give personal gifts or favour children or develop a 'special relationship' with a child or their parent or carer that could be seen as favouritism.

p) Initiate 'secrets' with children.

q) Share a tent or bed with a child.

r) Share a room with a child without anyone else present.

s) Supply alcohol or illicit drug/s to a child.

t) Be negatively affected by the influence of alcohol or drug/s, or over the legal alcohol limit, when in the presence of a child.

u) Take photos of children visiting SOSJ ministry and / or pilgrimage and / or historical sites unless asked to take a group photo by an accompanying teacher / carer using the teacher / carers / child's phone or camera.

4. Consequences for breaching the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

4.1 A breach of this Code will constitute misconduct and SOSJ may take appropriate disciplinary action which may include (however is not limited to), guidance or specialised help, education or training, transfer to other duties, counselling, and / or suspension, termination or dismissal from employment, service or involvement with SOSJ.

4.2 Suspected breaches of this Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct which constitute child abuse or harm, must be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator via email: to [childsafeguarding@sosj.org.au], via telephone: (+61) 0488 041 015 or in person at: 9 Mount Street North Sydney NSW.

4.3 Any person who in good faith, raises a complaint or discloses an allegation of child abuse will not be disadvantaged or prejudiced and will be protected from victimisation.

4.4 Allegations that a person listed at 2.2 of this policy has breached this Code, will be dealt with in accordance with the Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure. Reports may also be made to external regulatory authorities or the police.

4.5 SOSJ has full discretion to put in place safety management plans or take disciplinary action where it forms a reasonable belief that doing so is necessary for it to ensure the health and safety of persons listed at 2.2 of this policy, or children in its care, or the general public.

5. Record keeping

5.1 The Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct is to be acknowledged, read, and signed by all persons listed at 2.2 of this policy.

5.2 The Manager, People and Culture, shall be responsible for ensuring SOSJ lay employees have signed the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct upon commencement and this is recorded on the staff database.

5.3 The Regional Leader or her delegate shall be responsible for completing the register in relation to Sisters and Affiliates in the Regions and forwarding any changes,

updates, additions, or amendments to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator via email: to [childsafeguarding@sosj.org.au]. These records shall be retained for fifty (50) years and then destroyed, as aligned with the Safeguarding Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy.

5.4 The Leader or Manager or Director of each SOSJ ministry shall be responsible for completing the register in relation to all volunteers, Clergy and / or other people who are associated or representing SOSJ and forwarding any changes, updates, additions, and amendments to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator via email: to [childsafeguarding@sosj.org.au]. These records shall be retained for fifty (50) years and then destroyed, as aligned with the Safeguarding Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy.

5.5 All persons listed at 2.2 of this policy, shall be required to renew their signature to the Code every three years and / or when the policy document is revised and renewed.

6. Review

6.1 This Code should be reviewed every three (3) years or as needed.

6.2 The Congregational Leader or her delegate will be responsible for ensuring the reviewing and approval of this Code.

7. Related policies, procedures, documents and legislation

7.1 This Code should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

(a) Child Safeguarding Policy

(b) Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement

(c) Risk Management Policy and Framework

(d) Safeguarding Complaints Handling Policy and Reporting Procedure

(e) Safeguarding Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy

(f) Privacy Policy

(g) Recruitment and Induction Policy and Procedure

(h) Social Media Policy

(i) Managing Underperformance and Disciplinary Policy

(j) Integrity in the Service of the Church

(k) Integrity in Ministry

Policy Name:	Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
Responsible person	Safeguarding Co-ordinator
Approval Authority:	Congregational Leadership Team
Approval Date:	February 2021
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CLT approval date: 24 / 2 / 2021

Signature: M M Cavanagh

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship with SOSJ: _____

Date: _____