Child safeguarding: Risk Management Procedure

Purpose

This procedure is used to identify child safeguarding risks related to specific Parish-related activities, and to then develop risk controls and record these and other information in a Risk Management Form.

Definitions

Risk: a situation which potentially exposes a child to harm.

Likelihood: the probability of a risk resulting in a child being harmed.

Risk control: anything that will reduce the likelihood of a child being harmed or alarmed.

Risk Management Form: a template document used to list risks, risk controls etc.

Process for managing child safeguarding risks

Stage 1: Decide whether risk management is needed
Stage 2: Select the assessment team and prepare the paperwork
Stage 3: Identify child safeguarding risks
Stage 4: Develop risk controls
Stage 5: Assess the risk
Stage 6: Complete entries in the Risk Management Form
Stage 7: Implement risk controls

Stage 1: Decide whether risk management is needed

Our aim is to address potential risks to children and to minimise risk so that no child is harmed or alarmed at our activities. This procedure should be used if your group's activities involve children under 18 years of age, or if children may be present in the area of your activities (including in private homes).

Stage 2: Select the assessment team and prepare the paperwork

This procedure should be used by a team made up of 2 or 3 (or more) people who are involved in, and therefore are familiar with, the activity which is being risk-assessed. The person responsible for the activity should be involved. If this procedure is being used for the first time, a member of the Safeguarding Committee should also be included to give guidance.

To prepare for the work of this procedure, you will need a copy of the Risk Management Form (preferably on a PC but otherwise printed). Always have a printed copy of the accompanying procedure so you can systematically work through the procedure and the checklists.

If the activity has been assessed in the past, you may either start from scratch or try to improve on the existing Risk Management Form entries.

Stage 3: Identify child safeguarding risks

Fill out one Risk Management Form for each type of activity.

Start by filling out the activity details at top of the first page of the Risk Management Form.

*A **risk** is a situation which potentially exposes a child to harm*. Think systematically through all aspects of the activity(s) you will be managing and identify (and record in the Risk Management Form) all possible child safeguarding risks you can think of (fill out only the first column of the Risk Management Form at this stage).

When identifying risks, think through the activity from start to end. Also look beyond the normal and consider those abnormal or infrequent occurrences that might give rise to child safeguarding risks. **Try to think of situations that a paedophile might take advantage of during your activity**.

Use the following checklist to identify risks (but also think beyond these items for other risks):
- Do leaders/helpers have current Working with Children Checks and received induction training?
- Are they fully vaccinated against COVID-19?
- Are outsiders likely to be present (or could they gain unauthorised access to the premises)?
- Do any contractors have access to children? Will you be requiring proof of current WWCCs?
- Does the activity require/allow an adult to be alone with 1 or 2 children (excl. parent of the child)?
- Can all areas used in the activity be supervised to the extent needed?
- Will children be occupying areas (indoor or outdoor) that are not visible to those supervising?
- Are toilet facilities appropriate and suitably supervised for the safety of children?
- Can children wander away from supervised areas?
- Consider risks related to children leaving the premises after the activity
- Have child special needs been considered (eg. disability, language barriers, medical conditions)?
- If food will be made available or shared, have food allergies or intolerances been considered?
- Is there a significant risk of physical accidents (OHS hazards):
    - Hazards that could cause: fall, trip, slip over, head injury, a crush injury, a burn
    - Moving vehicles which may strike a child or equipment/cupboards that could fall on them
    - Chemicals or other harmful substances they children might get access to
    - Objects that a toddler might pull over on themselves, or fall into or off, sharp edges/corners?

Stage 4: Develop risk controls

*A **risk control** is anything that will reduce the likelihood of a child being harmed or alarmed.* For each risk identified, list in Column 2 any **existing risk controls** that are currently in use. Try to think of ways existing risk controls can be made more effective and also see if you can think of any new risk controls. Record any improvements to existing controls, and any new controls, in Column 2 of the Risk Management Form.

In developing new controls, the following checklist will help.

Note 1: Requirements of the code of conduct do not need to be repeated in the Risk Management Form (though they can be included for emphasis if appropriate).

Note 2: Some "mandatory" risk controls are already listed at the top of Column 2 of the Form.

For each risk (identified in Stage 3) consider the following controls (or others that might work better):
- Eliminate the risk if possible or else reduce the likelihood of that situation leading to harm
- Ensure effective supervision especially in high-risk areas (respecting children's right to privacy)
- Ensure at least two adults are present at the activity at all times
- Be vigilant in watching for grooming behaviour (an adult giving undue attention to a child)
- Implement a 'no closed door' policy for internal doors (unless door fitted with large windows)
- Ensure good lighting in all areas used by children
- If possible, use rooms with large, unobstructed windows with curtains/blinds open
- Conduct random checks of unsupervised areas (eg. toilets, unused rooms, remote areas)
- Use guidelines to clarify expectations if 1:1 interactions between a child and an adult are required
- Provide increased supervision and support for children with special needs
- Monitor who is present at all times, especially outsiders or contractors
- Use guidelines for transport (if needed) including pick-up at the end of an activity
- How will you respond if an incident occurs – what can be prepared in advance (just in case)?
- Will basic first aid facilities be available and preferably a person with a current first-aid certificate?
- Check fire and emergency plans – do these take children into consideration?
- Are registration forms listing relevant personal details, or an attendance sheet, needed?

Record risk controls (in Column 2) for each risk in the Risk Management Form. This checklist will probably lead you to think of new risks; add these to the Form and fill out the other columns for each new risk.

Stage 5: Assess the risk

For each risk you listed in the Risk Management Form, use the scale below to assess the likelihood of a child being exposed to that risk. In making the assessment, assume all the risk controls you listed are effective.

Likelihood scale

L – likely to be exposed to the risk

P – possibly be exposed to the risk

R – remote chance of being exposed to the risk

Record this rating (L, P or R) in Column 3 of the Risk Management Form for each risk.

If your assessment of any risk is "L – likely", further develop your risk controls. If the subsequent assessment is unchanged, seek further advice before proceeding with this activity.

Stage 6: Complete entries in the Risk Management Form

Complete the remaining columns in the Risk Management Form:

- Define who is responsible for managing each group of risk controls (Column 4).
- Define how the risk controls will put in place and maintained (Column 5).

Stage 7: Implement risk controls

Plan implementation and ongoing maintenance of the risk controls and assign implementation tasks.

Everyone involved in running any aspect of the activity must be trained to comply with the risk controls that have been documented.

Also plan how you will monitor the risk controls and assess their effectiveness, who will do this, and how it will be recorded? If this monitoring is not done, you will not know whether the risk control is effective or not.

Send a copy of the completed Risk Management Form to Greensborough@cam.org.au, greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au or diamondcreek@cam.org.au

End of procedure.

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Approved by the Parish Priest (with his signature):	
Date of signing:	
Next review date for Risk Management Procedure and Form:	