GRACE BIBLE CHURCH THORNLANDS SAFE MINISTRY POLICY

This safe ministry policy applies to:

Pastors, Elders, Deacons, staff, interns, youth and young adult leaders, Sunday School teachers, coordinators, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of *Grace Bible Church Thornlands* with children, youth or vulnerable people[1].

Grace Bible Church Thornlands Safe Ministry Commitment

Background & Governance

This policy outlines the underlying principles that direct our approach to safeguarding vulnerable people involved with *Grace Bible Church Thornlands*.

The board of Elders of *Grace Bible Church Thornlands* take responsibility for ensuring these principles are reviewed regularly and embedded in the organisation culture at all levels.[2][3]

1. Commitment to Safeguard Vulnerable People

We are committed to the Biblical call to care for the vulnerable by actively preventing harm and abuse, and by seeking to provide safe programs.[4] We are also responsible and accountable to fulfil our obligations under State and Federal law to protect children and vulnerable people.

We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable people (including children, families, the disabled and elderly) are informed and involved in decisions that considerably affect them. We recognise the diverse needs of vulnerable people should be taken into account and that their concerns be taken seriously.[5] We are committed to embedding this care into all levels of our leadership and culture.[6]

2. Commitment to Screening and Training Relevant Leaders

We are committed to ensuring all Relevant Leaders are screened, appropriately supported and trained through the process outlined below.[7]

[1] The Australian government defines Vulnerable People in the following way: A vulnerable person means a child, being an individual under the age of 18 or an individual aged 18 years and above who may be unable to take care of themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of an illness, trauma or disability or any other reason.
[2] This policy is in accordance with the Child Protection Act 1999 and Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)
[3] As per Standard 1 of the Child Safe Standards in QLD and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
[4] Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Matthew 18:1-6; Mark 10:13-16
[5] As per Standard 2, 3 & 4 of the Child Safe Standards in QLD and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
[6] In conjunction with the 10 Child Safe Standards & Universal Principle as outlined via the Queensland Family & Child Commission
[7] As per Point 5, 7 & 8 of the Child Safe Standards in QLD and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

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Relevant Leaders are those who work within a ministry either in a coordinator role, leader or as a helper and who oversee or assist the conduct of a specific activity or program.

a. All relevant leaders must be members or at least regular attenders at *Grace Bible Church Thornlands*. They will have their potential roles and responsibilities clearly outlined for them as they start their role.
b. All relevant leaders must provide referees who can confirm the proposed leader is suitable to work with vulnerable people and that there is no reason the proposed leader should not be appointed in such a role.
c. All relevant leaders must complete an approved Safe Ministry Training Course (e.g. www.SafeMinistryCheck.com.au) which outlines appropriate behaviour including how to minimise the chances of harm and abuse, as well as training in how to identify and report cases of abuse.
d. Relevant leaders will have committed to the leader's Code of Conduct and behave as followers of Jesus and be willing to be held accountable for their behaviour.
e. If a relevant leader is working with children and youth, they must have their Blue Card verified.

No-one with a criminal record of child abuse, molestation or similar offences is allowed to be involved in children's or youth ministry at *Grace Bible Church Thornlands.*

3. Commitment to Providing Safe and Accessible Programs

We are committed to ensuring that our programs and events are safe and appropriate for those attending. Careful consideration must be given to the activities chosen, the venue, safe ratios of supervision, appropriate toileting practices, transportation, work health and safety, parental or guardian permission and confidentiality of records kept.

To help maintain appropriate standards, we will give all relevant leaders access to ongoing training and adequate supervision in their roles and responsibilities.

4. Commitment to Appropriately Respond to Concerns and Complaints

We are committed to creating a culture where people feel safe to speak out about inappropriate behaviour without fear of being rejected or ridiculed. We are committed to listening and responding appropriately to concerns and complaints about behaviour and safety at Grace Bible Church Thornlands. Throughout this process we are committed to protecting the confidentiality, dignity, health and well-being of all individuals involved. Any child-related issues will be managed with a focus on the interest of the child and will be reported to the relevant State Child Protection body.[8]

If a relevant leader becomes aware of a reportable incident, the leader must ensure that a Safe Ministry Contact is notified within 48 hours. All reports will be managed by the *Grace Bible Church Thornlands* Safe Ministry Contacts.

Safe Ministry Contacts:

- **Maree Manins** **0412 738 099** **maree.manins@gracebible.org.au**
- **Amy Lang** **0412 164 887** **amy@ablang.net**
- **Brenton Lang** **0411 839 752** **brenton@ablang.net**
- **Vance Manins** **0448 068 938** **vance@hearts1st.com**

[8] As per Standard 6 of the Child Safe Standards in QLD and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and in accordance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme framework.

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The Safe Ministry Contacts will follow a **Safe Ministry Incident Response Process**.[9] This includes reporting any criminal activity to Police, and the possibility of reporting allegations of abuse to the Queensland Family and Child Commission and the insurer of *Grace Bible Church Thornlands*. In certain incidents (as outlined in the Safe Ministry Incident Response Process) the Safe Ministry Contacts will appoint an Independent Ministry Investigator to investigate allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

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Policy Name	Grace Bible Church Thornlands Safe Ministry Policy				
Policy Date	June 2024	**Supersedes**		**Review Date**	May 2026
Version	**Date**	**Approved by**	**Details of Changes**		
1.0	20.06.2024	Combined Elders	Original Document		
1.1	20.12.2024	Combined Elders and Deacons	Added new Safe Ministry Contacts		
1.3	15.01.2026	Combined Elders	Moved definition of vulnerable person to footnotes, added timeframe for incident reporting.		
1.4	01.07.2026	Combined Elders	Footnotes and references changed to remove reference to NSw legislation and processes, reference QLD legislation, the Universal Principle and Child Safe Stndards in QLD, Reportable conduct Scheme and QFCC		

[9] As per Standard 10 of the Child Safe Standards in QLD and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations