

Staff and volunteers are responsible for maintaining a professional role with children, which means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries that serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings or a violation of the relationship.

This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour with OurChurch expects from all people associated with or representing it.

PURPOSE

Primarily, this code will help to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults / people in leadership. It will also help staff and volunteers understand and maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them.

Secondly, this will also work to reduce the possibility of allegations of abuse being made against leaders and people in authority and provide possible victims a pathway for voicing their concerns.

And thirdly, this will also work to reduce the possibility of allegations of abuse being made against our organisation.

UPHOLDING THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Senior Pastor or Safety Management Officer (Pastor Kevin Thomas or Cameron Markham) under the child protection policies and safeguarding procedures put in place by OurChurch.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of conduct will be subject to the OurChurch's disciplinary procedures.

Any breach of the code involving external workers/volunteers may result in them being asked to leave OurChurch and any associated programs/events/ministries.

Serious breaches may also result in a report being made to authorities as the police, the local statutory child protection authorities.

OurChurch condemns all forms of child abuse and sexual exploitation, and is committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety and inclusiveness for children. Child abuse occurs when adults or other children hurt children or young people under the age of 18, either physically, emotionally, sexually, through neglect or in some other way.

OurChurch is committed to and will provide a safe environment for all people.

I, _____ acknowledge that I have read and understood the OurChurch Safe Church Policy, and agree that in the course of my association with OurChurch,

I WILL:

- Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of OurChurch.
- Treat all children and young people with respect.
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with the OurChurch's child protection policy and procedures.
- Keep confidential all information that I am party to regarding child protection cases, disclosing and discussion information only with the Safe Church Concerns Person or other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures.
- Respect cultural differences.
- Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, and allow children and young people to participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts.
- Take responsibility for ensuring I am accountable and do not place myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made. Wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working in the proximity of children. I will discuss other measures as necessary with the OurChurch Safe Church Concerns Person.
- Mindful of my behaviours, actions, language and relationships with children.
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by a fellow worker, volunteer, contractor or visitor, via OurChurch child protection reporting mechanism unless they are thought to be the perpetrator.
- Comply with all relevant Australian and State/Territory legislation.
- Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- Avoid favouritism to particular children.
- Ensure any contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults is appropriate and in the parameters of the program/event/ministry as stated.
- Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive.

- Ensure programs are made accessible for people with a disability, and to make changes where needed to assist any specific needs that may arise.
- Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.

I WILL NOT:

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning ,culturally inappropriate language when speaking with a child or young person.
- Allow allegations/suspected abuse/risk of harm or disclosures go unreported.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability I will inform my supervisor first and be as open as possible in my behaviour.
- Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining for physical punishment or discipline of children.
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
- Seek to make contact and or spend time with any child that I come into contact with in my role as a representative of OurChurch outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of OurChurch without parent consent.
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children, young people with vulnerable adults.
- Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Safe Church Concerns Person and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures.
- Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children.

- Let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number or address) without parent consent/knowledge.
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.
- Jump to conclusions about others.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Rely on your reputation or that of the organisation to protect you.

I am responsible for my own actions and utilise safe church standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviours that could be in breach of this code of conduct and the safe church/child protection policies of OurChurch.

I have read the OurChurch Safe Church Policy and Code of Conduct and discussed its contents with my team leader/pastor. I am aware that OurChurch expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct policy. I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. I understand that in making this report, OurChurch may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner and only if necessary for the safety of the child, the staff member, or the agency, or to meet obligations under Australian Law.

Name:

Witness Name:

Signature:

Witness Signature:

Date: ____/____/____

Witness Date: ____/____/____