

# Code of Conduct – Church of The Ascension

Staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping a professional role with children. This means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries which serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings.

This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour which Church of The Ascension expects from all people associated with or representing it.

## Purpose

Following this code will help to protect children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them. Having a Code of Conduct that everyone adheres to also protects the organisation because opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

## Upholding this Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Chairperson of the Child safe Committee under the Child Safe policies and procedures put in place by The Church of the Ascension.

Staff and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures. This also includes any breaches involving external workers or volunteers.

All allegations of child abuse will be reported to statutory authorities, such as police or child protection. A report may/will also be made to the faith communities professional standards unit - but this will not replace or negate the obligation to report to statutory authorities.

All staff and volunteers will complete a Working With Children Check and Police Check as required.

Church of The Ascension condemns all forms of child abuse, discrimination and sexual exploitation. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety for people involved in our programs including all children, people with a disability, people from a Culturally And Linguistically Diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read and understand the Church of The Ascension Child Safe Policy, and agree with that in the course of my association with Church of The Ascension.

## **I WILL:**

- o Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of the Church of The Ascension
- o Treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- o Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers
- o Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with the Church of the Ascension's child protection policy and procedures
- o Keep all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures
- o Respect cultural differences
- o 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
- o Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts
- o Take responsibility for being accountable and not placing 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 with or near children
- o Self-assess my behaviour, actions, language and relationships with children.
- o Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by a fellow worker, volunteer, contractor or visitor, via child protection reporting procedures
- o Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation
- o Immediately disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. This includes disclosing any charges or convictions made against oneself or others
- o Avoid favouritism
- o Ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in the parameters of the program or event
- o Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
- o Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities
- o Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
- o Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like

o Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people

## **I WILL NOT:**

o Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or young people, in person or on social media

o Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person

o Allow allegations, suspected abuse, risk of harm or disclosures to go unreported

o 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

o Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children

o Develop inappropriate relationships with children or young people

o Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person

o Seek to make contact and/or spend time with any child that I come into contact with in my role as a representative of the Church of The Ascension outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of the Church of the Ascension without appropriate consent from guardian/parent.

o Condone or participate in behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive

o Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children and young people

o Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Child Safe Concerns Person and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures

o Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children

o Let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number or address) without appropriate consent from guardian/parent.

o Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures

o Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive

o Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality

o Jump to conclusions about others

o Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues

o Rely on my reputation or that of the organisation to protect me

I understand my commitments as set out in this Code of Conduct.

I am responsible for my own actions and utilise Child Safe standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviours that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Child Safe policies of Church of The Ascension.

I have read the Church of the Ascension Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct and if required discussed its contents with the Chairperson of the Child Safe Committee. I am aware that the Church of The Ascension expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct above.

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 that report, Church of The Ascension may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner to meet obligations under Australian law.

Name:

Witness Name:

Signature:

Witness Signature:

Date            /        /

Witness Date            /        /