



# DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA CODE OF CONDUCT- WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## PREAMBLE

The opportunity to work with children and young people in the ministry of Special Religious Education (SRE) is a privilege. As you will be representing your Parish community there are commitments to care for children and young people, yourself and the communities you represent.

This Code will assist to clarify the parameters of appropriate conduct for those who work in child and youth related ministry. It is anticipated that the general principles expressed in this Code may be applied to circumstances not referred to in this document when required.

Because SRE Catechists work in public schools they are also bound by the NSW Department of Education Code of Conduct.

[To view the NSW Department of Education Code of Conduct please click here.](#)

## 1. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1.1 In attending to compliance matters it is expected that you will:

- Comply with lawful instructions and policies presented by the Diocese, Parish Priest or his delegate.
- Comply with legislative and industrial requirements and any policies and procedures implemented by the parish
- Demonstrate a duty of care to children and young people by being punctual, diligent and sensitive to their needs
- Take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from foreseeable risk of injury and to protect their own health and safety at all times
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the workplace is free of all forms of harassment and unlawful discrimination
- Be aware of and apply the Privacy policies of the parish and the Diocese
- Complete your duties in accordance with the directions provided by the Parish
- Consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks.

### 1.2 In matters relating to professional standards it is expected that you will:

- Support the core values of the Diocese
- Adhere to an appropriate standard of dress when engaged in ministry
- Use language that is appropriate and non-threatening
- Be cautious about the responsible storage of medications
- Respect the privacy and dignity of all Parish and Diocesan personnel
- Maintain the security of all official and confidential information at the parish relating to your ministry

## 2. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### 21 Acceptable Behaviour:

- \* Be caring, respectful, compassionate and take an interest in the children and young people in your care
- \* Avoid as far as possible being alone with a child and young person and if required discuss strategies with supervisor prior to being alone.
- \* Respect a child and young person's cultural diversity.
- \* Avoid favouring individual children and young people and treat them all equally
- \* Be equally available to all children and young people
- \* Avoid offering or receiving gifts to or from individual children and young people
- \* Avoid any contact with a child or young person that is not part of an approved activity by the parish
- \* Remain removed from personal relationships with children and young people
- \* Restrict the transportation of children and young people in your personal car to circumstances that are in accordance with prescribed policy
- \* Ensure that physical contact with children and young people is reasonable for the purpose of their management or care:
  - \* assessing a child or young person who is injured or ill
  - \* comforting an upset child
  - \* guiding a child or young person in a non-threatening manner
  - \* protecting a child or young person from imminent danger to himself/herself or to others
  - \* demonstrating or guiding a particular action or skill a part of drama or other activities within the lesson
- \* Physical intervention (including physical restraint, removals or escorts) should be avoided and used only as a last resort to ensure safety and protection of children and others. Physical intervention may be regarded as appropriate when a child or young person is causing or at risk of causing injury or harm to self or others or when it is part of an approved behaviour management plan.

### 22 Unacceptable Behaviour:

The following practices are inconsistent with the values of the parish you represent and are therefore not permitted:

- \* The application of corporal punishment or physical force to punish or correct a child or young person
- \* Using an object, such as a book to gain a child's attention in a hostile or inappropriate physical manner
- \* Hitting, kicking, shaking, pulling, shoving, grabbing, pinching, poking or pushing a child or young person
- \* Holding or restraining a child or young person other than to prevent injury or harm to them or others
- \* Intimidating, humiliating or swearing at a child or young person
- \* Locking a child or young person in a confined space
- \* Refusing biological needs or basic necessities
- \* Using practices which instill fear or cause a child to feel alienated
- \* Making any kind of drug, alcohol or cigarettes available to children and young people, or consuming and/or being under the influence of any substance while working or volunteering with children and young people
- \* Engaging in conduct of a sexual nature that is improper including inappropriate touching, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, suggestive remarks or innuendo, obscene gestures, sexual exhibitionism. Personal correspondence, exposure of children or young people to sexual behaviour
- \* Exposing a child or young person to material that contains violent, inappropriate sexual messages or adult concepts and themes that are inappropriate given their age and level of maturity.

### 3. REPORTABLE CONDUCT

From 1 March 2020 the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* defines Reportable Conduct<sup>1</sup>, as:

A sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child

Sexual misconduct with, towards or in the presence of a child

Ill-treatment of a child

Neglect of a child

An assault against a child

An offence under section 43B (failure to protect a child at risk of harm) or 316A (failure to report a child at risk of harm) of the Crimes Act 1900

Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU?

#### **Steps in reporting the unacceptable conduct of an adult.**

As a WWCC Holder, you have an obligation to report the conduct of other WWCC Holders who work with children if you think it may be Reportable Conduct.

You must report to the Head of CCD and remember that the information is confidential. Do not inform others of this information.

If you are a WWCC Holder and an allegation of Reportable Conduct is made about your behaviour towards children, the Diocese must report to the Children's Guardian and conduct an investigation.

Reportable Allegations or Reportable Convictions regarding WWCC Holders may be received by the Head of CCD who in turn will report the concern to the Office for Safeguarding (Chancery) and inform the Parish Priest. Alternatively, you can report directly to the Office for Safeguarding (Chancery) at [safeguarding@parracatholic.org](mailto:safeguarding@parracatholic.org) or phone 8838 3419.

#### **NOTE:**

*Evidence supporting the use of inappropriate practices may result in the termination of your involvement in this and other ministries that involve children and young people.*