

CHILDSAFE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

"Live worthy of the gospel..." Phil 1:27

This code is designed to assist us to minister together in a way that honours Christ, complies with all child safety legislation, and creates a safe environment for all children to flourish. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Diocesan professional standards and Duty of Care requirements.

Staff and volunteers are responsible for maintaining appropriate relationships with children, which means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries that serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings or a violation of the relationship. When we all maintain appropriate boundaries there is less scope for people with negative intent to operate unnoticed, and this keeps all children safer.

The Code of Conduct applies in all church situations, including offsite activities, motor vehicles, private homes and in the use of digital technology and social media. **A "child" is anyone under the age of 18, so this Code applies to all youth activities also.**

Required behaviours

All staff, volunteers and any other member of the church community are personally responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the church's ChildSafe Policy at all times;
- support positive relationships between children and their parents, and recognise that a child's parents have primary responsibility for their spiritual formation and upbringing;
- treating children with respect both within the church environment and outside the church environment as part of normal social and community activities;
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child;
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the church's leadership. The Reporting Concerns form is on our website and available from any member of staff. Oaktree Anglican is committed to meeting all obligations to report abuse to statutory authorities, including the police and/or the Commission for Children and Young People;
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse;
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the children are safe and protected from harm; and
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and those with disabilities.

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff, volunteers, and any other member of the church community must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse;
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues;
- engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or vulnerable adults;
- Encourage secret-keeping from parents or other adults, or act in a way which undermines parental authority or respect. Where serious concerns arise about parental conduct, this should be addressed through the Reporting a Concern process;
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform a staff member first and be as open as possible in my behaviour;
- Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children;
- Tickle, piggyback, kiss, wrestle, give or receive a massage or pick up a child over the age of 3, other than of whom you are the parent or guardian;
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Provide a child with any substance or material prohibited by their age (including cigarettes, adult material or alcohol). It is permitted to serve wine in a public service of Holy Communion, with parental consent;
- develop a relationship with any child that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts without asking the child's parent first);
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with children which may be interpreted as abusive and out of context for the activity in which they are involved;
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards children when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate;
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with children;
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity;
- communicate directly with a child through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except in a team context and related to church activities. Parents and other leaders must be copied when any communication is taking place;
- photograph or video a child in a church environment except with the explicit permission or request of the Staff member responsible for the event, the request of the child's parent or where required for duty of care purposes;
- Smoke in the area of a children's activity or be under the influence of any illicit drugs while in the church environment or at other church events. Consume alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol where children other than your own are under your duty of care;

- Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with a statutory body (eg the Police) or with a Pastor of Oaktree or other parties as designated by them;
- Access any sexually explicit material relating to children (whether children of Oaktree's community or not);
- Drive a child to, from or during an Oaktree event unless a separate Driver Application form has been submitted and approved. Even when approved, a child may never be driven alone with a single adult; and
- The only person authorised to speak to the media in relation to any Oaktree Anglican ministry is the Vicar. No other person should speak to the media without the express, written permission of the Vicar.

I have read this Code of Conduct and the Oaktree ChildSafe Policy and agree to abide by these at all times. I understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of this Code of Conduct.

Name:

Witness Name:

Signature:

Witness Signature:

Date:

Date: