

St Francis Xavier and Our Lady Help of Christians Parishes

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Code of Conduct Declaration

Date of policy: 31 October 2019

Date of last major review:

Date of next major review: 1 October 2020

This Code of Conduct declaration has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at ***St Francis Xavier Montmorency and Our Lady Help of Christians Eltham parishes*** against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement child protection legislation and the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and parish council members at ***St Francis Xavier and Our Lady Help of Christians parishes*** are expected to actively contribute to a parish culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child-safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Clergy, employees and volunteers are required to sign the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Declaration upon their commencement and annually to coincide with the completion of annual child safety training requirements.

The completion of the Child Safety Code of Conduct Declaration is a requirement of a person's engagement within our parishes.

Failure to submit this declaration is a serious matter and may incur disciplinary action.

Parish clergy, employees and volunteers are committed to upholding a duty of care to all children and young people and taking all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse and harm. At the parishes of St Francis Xavier Montmorency and Our Lady Help of Christians Eltham, clergy, employees and volunteers commit to safeguard the health and wellbeing of children and young people by:

Keeping children and young people safe from abuse and harm

- Not engage in any form of child abuse or harm including emotional, physical and sexual abuse or neglect.
- Avoid any form of physical punishment or degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating treatment.
- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate, non-intrusive and not sexual in nature.
- Avoid developing relationships with children and young people that can be construed as favouritism and/or grooming.
- Use respectful language and tone when communicating with children and young people and avoid language that harms, discourages, frightens and humiliates children and young people.
- Avoid language that is sexual, discriminatory and racist in nature including suggestive humour, jokes or innuendo.

Creating a physically and psychologically safe environment

- Ensure that an adult is never alone with a child or young person and they do not seek to make contact with a child or young person that places them at risk of abuse
- Ensure that children and young people in your care are appropriately supervised at all times.
- Use fair, respectful and developmentally appropriate strategies to guide the behaviour of children and young people in a positive manner.
- Ensure that photographs or video of children and young people are taken with the consent of parents or guardians within the context of the parish, agency or entity activity.
- Use social media and digital communication in a manner that does not exploit or place children and young people at risk.
- Act to remove and/or minimise any physical or environmental risks that could adversely impact children and young people.

- Not consume alcohol or illicit drugs before or while engaging in the care of children and young people or being adversely affected by prescription medication.
- Not supply alcohol and drugs to children and young people.
- Immediately notify parish administration if charged or convicted with a criminal offence (if subject to a criminal history record check in relation to your involvement with either parish).

Supporting cultural safety and inclusion

- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people.
- Support the inclusion of children and young people with a disability; from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse children and young people; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Promoting respectful relationships

- Engage in positive and respectful interactions with children and young people that uphold their rights and dignity.
- Listen to and respect the views of children and young people.

Taking action to safeguard children and young people

- Listen to and respond supportively to the concerns of children and young people in relation to their safety.
- Report any child safety concerns, reports or disclosures to relevant statutory child protection authorities (e.g. Child Protection (DHHS), Victoria Police) and the Professional Standards Unit, consistent with the requirements of parish Policy.

I have read, and agree to abide by, the Child Safety Code of Conduct when engaged with children and young people within the parishes of St Francis Xavier Montmorency and Our Lady Help of Christians Eltham.

Declaration		
Name (please print)	Signature	Date
Address:		
Name of witness (please print)	Signature	Date

