

Template for Code of Conduct for Children and Young People participating in Church Activities

Context

It is essential that children and young people are made aware of their boundaries in terms of their own behaviour while participating in church activities. Likewise, leaders working with children and young people should be extended the courtesy and respect which their leadership role deserves.

The following template for a “Code of Conduct “ for all children and young people engaged in church led activities is designed to assist group leaders in the development of a specific Code of Conduct which is age appropriate.

The best codes are those which are developed through consultation with participants. Such a process gives ownership to any eventual code and ensures its success in meeting its objectives. The following may assist in developing such a process.

1. Invite all participants to come up with suggestions for and agree on a **name for the group**.
2. Invite all to come up with some suggestions about how they will behave in the group. Following discussion and some compromising with the children a list of rules/a Code of Conduct is drawn up. The following sample outlines the issues which might emerge from leaders and participants coming together to develop and participants coming together to develop **an age appropriate** Code of Conduct.

As a group and in order that young people will enjoy, benefit from and feel safe while participating in church activities the group will –

1. Be kind to and treat each other with **respect** regardless of ability, ethnic origin, and cultural background.
2. Respect all church **property** and the property of others as well as taking care of our own.
3. Not engage in **bullying** of any kind and report any such behaviour if we become aware of it.
4. Be **fair and honest** in all our dealings with other children and leaders so as not to hurt any others by what we say or do.
5. **Report** any behaviour that makes us feel uncomfortable to the person in charge or **someone designated for this purpose**.
6. **Actively engage in the activity** and contribute to the best of our ability in an age appropriate manner.
7. **Follow the instructions** and directions of the activity leader.

8. Arrive on **time** and **depart at the appropriate time** from the church activity.
9. **Remain in a supervised area** at all times during the church activity.
10. **Not have in our possession** any substances or materials that may pose harm to any member of the group, the group leaders or the property in which the activity is held.
11. **Not take audio or visual recording of anyone** present at the church activity without the approval and monitoring of group leaders. (See Photography and Mobile Phone Policy(ies).
12. Keep **mobile phones on silent** or switched off and left in a box designated for that purpose by the group leader.

The group should also be encouraged to draw up an agreed set of sanctions in the event of the code being breached. Such sanctions might include:

1. Issuing an apology.
2. Loss of privilege.
3. Speak to parents/guardian.
4. Leaving the activity for a time/for good.

While the age appropriate Code of Conduct has been drafted it is important that all members of the group and their parents/guardians sign the document to show they understand and accept its contents.

Signed:..... Signed:.....
 Child/participant Parent/Guardian

Date:.....