

## **ST. AUGUSTINE'S SCAYNES HILL**

### **Behaviour Code for Adults Working with Children and Young People**

This Code (itemized overleaf) outlines the expectations of the Parish of St. Augustine's for all those who work or volunteer with children. It reflects our desire to follow Jesus in all we do, reflecting his love to those we minister to. It follows from our determination to ensure that St. Augustine's is a place where children can not only be safe, but feel safe. And, it reflects our unwavering commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding practice.

Following this code will help to protect children from abuse and inappropriate behaviour. It will help them learn how safe adults behave around them. It will also help staff and volunteers maintain the standards of behaviour expected of them, and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

### **Upholding the Code**

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report breaches of this code under the parish whistle-blowing procedure or the parish safeguarding policy.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to disciplinary procedures or asked to leave their role. Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police and / or the local authority children's social services.

Be prepared for your colleagues to remind you should you forget any of the requirements for good practice and be prepared to advise colleagues in return

### **Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers**

When working with children and young people for the Parish of St. Augustine's all staff and volunteers are acting in a position of trust. It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people, and by their parents. They therefore must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

When working with children and young people, it is important to:

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Value the contribution of children and young people, and take their views seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Always work within sight or hearing of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
- Record, in writing, any concerning incidents and give the information to your group leader. Sign and date the record.
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the parish safeguarding coordinator.
- Always maintain appropriate boundaries in working with children and young people
- Maintain a sign in and sign out system

**When working with children and young people, you should not:**

- Initiate physical contact
- Play rough physical games
- Act, speak, or conduct yourself in a sexually provocative or suggestive way, either directly towards children, or with other adults when you are with children, or engage in any sexual behaviour at all with children or young people. It is your responsibility to do everything you can do to avoid any hint of sexually inappropriate behaviour, language, or styles of relating with children or young people.
- Encourage children to behave in sexually provocative or suggestive ways with each other.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abuse peer activities, e.g. Initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children.
- Drink alcohol when responsible for children or young people, or offer to give or buy them alcohol.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children or young people.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members or close family friends) outside organised group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.

### **Acceptable Touch**

Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to 'normalise' physical contact which then becomes abusive. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility

and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to the minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

- Ask permission before you touch someone;
- Allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention);
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive;
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors;
- Touch should be in response to a person's needs and not related to the worker's needs.
- Touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.

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