

Kew Baptist Church **Code of Conduct**

Introduction

This Code of Conduct was approved by the Kew Baptist Church meeting on 5th July 2020.

We, Kew Baptist Church, commit ourselves to a standard of responsible and ethical behaviour which is expected in our church and will bring honour and glory to God. Our code is underpinned by trust and a belief that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity. The Code of Conduct is not exhaustive and does not foresee every set of circumstances that may arise across the variety of Church events and activities. The Code of Conduct should be viewed as an educational guide to the principles that help inform what appropriate conduct is. The Code of Conduct values the social, relational and interpersonal safety and wellbeing of people of all ages.

The Code of Conduct also values the role of leaders and mentors by prompting transparent, accountable relationships that promote trust and confidence in the Church and its programs. Having a Code of Conduct that everyone adheres to also protects the organisation because opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

Commitment to Child Safety

Kew Baptist Church condemns all forms of child abuse, exploitation of children and discrimination against children. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes safety for people involved in our programs, including all children. All Kew Baptist Church leaders are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children and young people.

Consequences of Breaching the Code of Conduct

All leaders who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions that could include enhanced supervision, appointment to an alternate role, suspension or termination from the organisation. All leaders are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Child Safety Officer, Head of Organisation or Pastoral Staff.

Code of Conduct Guidelines

Physical contact

As a general rule, physical contact by leaders to participants, and especially with children, should be minimised. Appropriate physical contact includes greetings (hand-shakes, high-fives etc.), genuine assistance with activities only as needed, protection of participants from harm (including appropriate restraint of children from danger) or administration of first aid.

Social media and communication

Generally speaking, communication through social media, text messaging, phone calls and emails should not take place between children and leaders. Where leaders need to communicate with young people electronically, this should be done on publicly available

platforms (e.g. “groups” and “pages”), rather than as private communication. Where individual communication is required, parents should be “copied in” to all emails for accountability and transparency.

Photographing or filming children

A high degree of caution is required when photographing or filming children, including when publishing image-based material or using it for marketing purposes. Kew Baptist Church leaders should strictly follow consent given on Permission Forms regarding photography and filming of children. If no consent has been provided, children and young people should not be filmed or photographed.

Code of Conduct Agreement

Personal Conduct

We, Kew Baptist Church value: Love, Respect, Humility, Faith and Integrity. We commit ourselves to living out these values in all areas of our lives. As leaders in Kew Baptist Church, we agree that we will:

- acknowledge the Lordship and authority of Jesus Christ,
- pray for fellow leaders, church participants and the Church,
- join regularly in the life and ministry of the Church; study the Scriptures in private and in groups, and pray regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church.
- treat adults, children and young people with respect and value, without favouritism,
- behave appropriately, being faithful to our appointed tasks, being examples to others, and being careful in how we physically interact with others,
- uphold confidential information, not disclosing to anyone (including spouse), any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information,
- not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright), and not make false, misleading or deceptive statements,
- not seek personal advantage or financial gain from our position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions,
- commit to ensuring that the spaces and activities we’re responsible for are safe and do not put people at risk of significant harm,
- not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse of any person, including family members,
- actively promote a safe environment where abuse, bullying or harassment of any nature is neither tolerated nor able to take place,
- commit to encouraging openness by listening to people’s concerns with a willingness to support them and help them, and
- submit to disciplinary steps if we are found to violate these commitments or act in an otherwise inappropriate or illegal manner at Kew Baptist Church.

Care for children and vulnerable people

All Kew Baptist Church leaders are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable people. We Will:

- adhere to all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation, the Kew Baptist Church Child Safe Policy and other organisational policies,

- comply with Kew Baptist Church Code of Conduct guidelines on physical contact, social media and communication and photographing or filming children (above),
- conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with the online Safe Ministry Training “Leadership Training Course” when serving at Kew Baptist Church,
- raise concerns with management if risks to child safety are identified in any of the activities, facilities, structures, procedures or staffing practices at Kew Baptist Church,
- take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse,
- respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information regarding Child Protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with the relevant people to follow reporting procedure,
- treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, culture, property, disability or other status,
- listen to and value children and young people’s ideas and opinions,
- act transparently, as far as possible, ensuring that another adult is present or within eyesight when we are with a vulnerable person (including children),
- submit to the Kew Baptist Church leader screening process to ensure we are suitable to work with vulnerable people,
- include vulnerable people (and/or their carers or significant others) in discussions about decisions that will significantly affect them,
- welcome all children and their families and carers by being inclusive,
- actively promote cultural safety and inclusion,
- listen to children and respond to them appropriately,
- conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with the values of Kew Baptist Church,
- work with children in an open and transparent way,
- observe professional boundaries with children at all times, including when seeing a child from Kew Baptist Church outside church activities,
- report and act on any behavioural complaints, concerns or observed breaches regarding this Code of Conduct,
- report any concern, allegation, disclosure or observation of child abuse to the relevant person or authority as outlined in Kew Baptist Church reporting procedure (Child Safe Policy) and in line with mandatory reporting requirements, including the Reportable Conduct Scheme, and
- report any concerns or suspicions about harmful behaviours and significant risks to the Child Safety Person without bias or partiality.

We Will Not:

- condone or participate in behaviour with children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive,
- seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults,
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse,
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues,
- use hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with children,
- use physical punishment or abusive language, even as a form of discipline,
- engage in rough physical games,
- discriminate on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, culture or sexual orientation,
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes,
- develop ‘special’ relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention,

- exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking details or email addresses with children,
- have unauthorised contact with children and young people online, on social media or by phone, or
- use any computer, mobile phone, or video or digital camera to exploit or harass children.

Definitions

Definition of a child

Section 3 of the [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005](#) (Vic.) defines a child as:

‘(a) in the case of a person who is alleged to have committed an offence, a person who at the time of the alleged commission of the offence was under the age of 18 years but of or about the age of 10 years but does not include any person who is of or above the age of 19 years when a proceeding for the offence is commenced in the Court’ and

‘(b) in any other case, a person who is under the age of 17 years or, if a protection order, a child protection order within the meaning of Schedule 1 or an interim order within the meaning of that Schedule continues in force in respect of him or her, a person who is under the age of 18 years’

For further information on how the definition of child may be applied, please refer section 3(a).

Reference: www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/children-youth-and-families-act-2005/121

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Other relevant policies: Child Safety Policy