

Code of Conduct

Recommended Good Practice for Clergy and Volunteers Working with Children

Children should always be viewed, whether in a social or ministerial situation, as vulnerable people. Wherever they are and whatever they do should be with the explicit knowledge of the parent or guardian. They are not adults and are not permitted independent decisions. Any and all involvement should be approached from this premise. All volunteers working with children should be 18 years or over.

Ministry to Children

1. Pastoral ministry to a child should only take place in a publicly accessible place.
2. The designated office or room should have a clear glass window and the door should always be left open.
3. If possible, another volunteer should be in close proximity during the session.
4. You should never plan to be alone in the building or in a closed room with a child.
5. Unless the subject matter precludes their presence, parents or guardians should be present or aware of the session.
6. Children should be permitted to work in the church buildings only when there is one other volunteer present.
7. Parents or guardians should be informed of the exact nature of any meeting or activity, and their consent obtained.
8. You should never arrange an overnight trip with a child alone.
9. A child should never stay overnight in the same room as you, even if there are two beds.
10. When working with children you should take care to avoid the trap of becoming a “parental figure”. This tends to create an excessive emotional attachment for all parties.
11. You should always be aware of the “power of your role/position. This can be a very seductive force.
12. Topics or vocabulary, which could not be comfortably used in the presence of parents or another adult, should not be employed with children.