Code of Conduct for Leaders

For leaders, helpers and youth volunteers in parish youth groups supported by the Carlo Acutis Association

> **Before you sign**
> Please read this code alongside the Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Guidelines. You must complete your enhanced DBS check and the safeguarding training required by the diocese before you start working with children or young people.

1. Introduction

Leaders and helpers in our parish youth group play a vital role in creating a safe, respectful and faith-filled environment for children and young people. This code sets clear expectations for all adult leaders and helpers and for youth volunteers aged 16 to 17.

By signing, you commit to upholding these principles and to keeping your safeguarding training up to date, as the diocese requires.

2. Commitment to safeguarding

All leaders and helpers must:

- put the safety and wellbeing of children and young people first at all times;
- follow the group's Safeguarding Policy and report any concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the relevant group;
- create an inclusive and welcoming environment, treating every young person with respect, kindness and dignity.

3. Personal conduct and boundaries

Leaders and helpers must:

- lead by example, showing honesty, integrity and Catholic values;
- never be alone with a child or young person, and make sure at least two responsible adults are present at every activity;
- keep appropriate boundaries in all communication, with no private messages or personal social media contact with young people;
- communicate through official parish or group channels, and with parents rather than young people directly;
- avoid any discriminatory, aggressive or inappropriate behaviour;
- never use physical discipline, bullying, harassment or abuse of any kind.

4. Respect for young people's rights

Leaders and helpers must:

- listen to children and young people and encourage them to share their views and concerns;

- respect their privacy and personal boundaries, ensuring dignity in every interaction;
- encourage their independence, so they can take a full part in activities and decisions.

5. Safe practice in activities

Leaders and helpers must:

- make sure activities are safely planned, risk assessed and supervised, and that the required adult to child ratios are met;
- be positive, approachable and encouraging, helping young people grow in confidence and faith;
- respond promptly to any concern, accident or incident and record it on the Incident Form;
- follow the guidance on first aid, trips, off-site activities and safe use of technology;
- only take or share photos and videos with written parental consent, using official channels.

Youth volunteers aged 16 to 17

Youth volunteers may assist, but must never be left alone with children or put in charge of a group, and they do not count towards adult ratios.

6. Prohibited conduct

Leaders and helpers must never:

- have sexual conversations or inappropriate physical contact with a child or young person;
- use blasphemous, offensive or discriminatory language;
- drink alcohol, take illegal drugs, smoke or vape during youth group activities;
- invite children or young people into their homes or personal spaces;
- use their position of trust for personal or financial gain.

7. Responding to concerns and breaches

- Breaches of this code are addressed by the Chair of the youth group, with the parish priest.
- Persistent or serious breaches may lead to formal action, including suspension or removal from the group.
- Any concern about how an adult is behaving towards a child or young person is a safeguarding matter. It is reported to the Parish Safeguarding Representative or the diocesan safeguarding office and is not dealt with inside the group.
- All safeguarding concerns are handled in line with diocesan and national safeguarding procedures.

8. Annual agreement

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and the group's Safeguarding Policy. I agree to abide by these principles and to complete and keep up to date the safeguarding training required by the diocese. I will re-sign this code every year.

Name	

Role			
Youth group and parish			
Signature		**Date**	

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