Presbyterian
CHURCH IN IRELAND

Code of Conduct for Leaders

Overarching statement

We in Terrace Row Presbyterian Church want to have the highest standards in our behaviour, values and attitudes towards children, young people and adults at risk for all who attend our church.

We adopt the following in line with PCI principles and within the guidance of the denomination's safeguarding procedures.

This Code of Conduct is endorsed and agreed by our church's Kirk Session.

The Code of Conduct applies to all those in leadership positions and adults who come into contact with children, young people and adults at risk. Our leaders occupy a position of trust in our church community; we expect all leaders to act appropriately and in keeping with that trust.

We expect all adults taking part in our activities to display appropriate behaviour. That includes both behaviour that takes places within our ministries and behaviour online. The Code also applies to organisations who use our premises.

A CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH AT ALL TIMES

In our contact and work with children and young people as a congregation we:

- Treat all children equally, listen to and respect them.
- See children as individuals and respect diversity.
- Ensure leaders should lead by example and at all times model good behaviour.
- Respect a child's personal space. Involve children and their parents, as appropriate, in decision-making.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).
- Use appropriate language (verbal and non-verbal).
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere.
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and their parents/carers.
- Offer feedback and challenge inappropriate behaviour and language, when required.
- Encourage feedback from children.
- Consider a group contract at the beginning of each year/session.
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials.
- Be aware of a child's other commitments when scheduling activities, e.g. school or exams.
- Are cognisant of a child's limitations, for example, due to a medical condition.
- Encourage a trusting environment.
- Observe appropriate dress.

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PREVENTNG INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

When working with our young people leaders should

- Avoid being alone with children.
- Do not use or allow language or behaviour that is offensive, abusive or sexually suggestive.
- Do not single out a particular child for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention.
- Do not allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Do not hit or physically chastise children.
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children, e.g. outside of structured organisational activities.
- Do not allow an inappropriate relationship to develop with any child and avoid favouritism.
- Ensure that any contact with children through social/digital media is in line with best practice and our policies.
- Do not allow concerns to go unreported.
- Maintain awareness around your communication, either verbal, written or digital (including social media). If you have said or done something that has caused offence or upset, then try to address it in an apologetic, sensitive and timely manner, with a view to reconciliation.
- Do not let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

In working with children any physical contact

- Should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.
- Should be open and not secretive.
- Should be child initiated.
- Should be appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the child.
- Check with children about their level of comfort when doing activities that might involve physical contact.
- Avoid rough play or inappropriate touch.
- Church personnel who have to administer first-aid should ensure wherever possible that other children or another adult is present and that the administration of any first aid of medication has consent in place.
- Following any incident where an adult thinks that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, every effort should be made to communicate with the offended party to resolve any misunderstandings. All incidents should be recorded, and where there is concern, the person in charge should be informed.

RELATIONSHIPS

In our relational work with children and young people

- Church leaders should ensure that their relationships with children are appropriate and above reproach.
- Our leaders must not allow a romantic/intimate relationship to develop with a child or young person. This could be potentially a criminal offence under abuse of trust provision.

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ADULTS AT RISK

- Leaders working with adults at risk must work within the law and be conversant with Terrace Row's Safeguarding Policy. They must always display appropriate behaviour and consider the welfare of adults to be of paramount importance.
- Leaders should avoid favouritism , work in an open and transparent manner, be mindful of their use of language, ensure safe communication online and know what to do in emergency situations.
- Leaders should not ignore concerns, should not be sarcastic or demeaning, should avoid punitive or humiliating behaviour, avoid use of drugs and alcohol and any kind of sexually inappropriate language or behaviour.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to a member of the congregation's safeguarding team: the minister, the Designated Person Sharon Gilliland or the Adult Safeguarding Champion Gillian Montgomery.

Rev Andrew Brown (Minister) Andrew B

David Brownlee (Clerk of Session) David Brownlee

Date: 8 September 2026