

Specific section of the Code of Conduct

Rules for all employees and volunteers in the Roman Catholic Parish of St Stephen, Karlsruhe

a. Closeness and Distance

When interacting with others, particularly those entrusted to our care, we must strike the right balance between closeness and distance. Respect and kindness are always essential in this regard. No one should be humiliated, hurt or pressured into doing anything they do not wish to do. Personal boundaries and feelings must be respected, and no one should have to feel afraid. Personal relationships and friendships should be based on mutual respect.

b. Physical Contact

Physical contact may form part of our work, but it must always be appropriate and require the consent of the people involved. Unwanted physical contact is never permitted, except in emergencies. If in doubt, permission should always be sought beforehand. Children may be comforted in appropriate situations. During games or exercises involving physical contact, personal boundaries must be respected.

c. Language and behaviour

Our words and behaviour can have a profound impact. We aim to speak to one another respectfully and never use offensive or, indeed, sexualised language. We strive to speak clearly, particularly with children and people who need help. Where others' linguistic boundaries are breached, we aim to intervene and take a stand.

d. Privacy

Everyone has the right to privacy and personal space. This applies particularly in intimate situations such as when showering, using the toilet or receiving medical care. We do not enter such private spaces without good reason. Where necessary, we knock before entering and wait for permission to do so.

e. Gifts and benefits

Gifts and benefits are permitted under certain conditions. In principle, a gift is a tangible expression of gratitude; it is given voluntarily and no consideration is expected in return. It is essential to ensure that the gift is proportionate. Gifts of equal value given to all members of a specific group within our congregation underline this intention. Gifts to individual persons in positions of trust are not permitted if they are not related to the specific assignment in question.

f. Dealing with the media and social networks

Digital media and social media must be used responsibly. We respect the wishes of individuals who do not wish to be photographed or filmed. The privacy of the individuals concerned must always be respected.

g. Correcting inappropriate behaviour

Measures taken to correct inappropriate behaviour must be proportionate. The dignity of the individuals concerned must be upheld under all circumstances. The use of force, coercion or threats is only justifiable in an emergency situation.

h. Overnight stays and similar situations

Activities involving overnight stays present particular challenges. Clear rules of conduct are essential to ensure the safety and privacy of all participants. Our parish always agrees the rules of conduct for each overnight stay in advance with all participants and their legal guardians. This includes, in particular, ensuring there are always a sufficient number of adult supervisors and organising the allocation of bedrooms.

i. Dealing with breaches of the code of conduct

If someone breaches our rules, their behaviour must be addressed and made transparent, as this prevents abuse. Any member of staff may be asked to discuss their behaviour. Only by adhering to all the rules can we ensure that our parish remains a safe and respectful place for everyone.