



RCDG Youth Code of Conduct for Youth involved in Activities

We seek to offer a positive experience for children and young people where they can learn and grow in faithfulness in a safe and positive environment. The Diocese of Galloway Youth Office, hereafter RCDG Youth, is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all its members.

Everybody associated with the group should, always, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Members and their parents/ carers are encouraged to be open always and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the group with either:

- Fr Kevin Rennie (Youth Chaplain) – youth@rcdg.org.uk / 01563 521832
- Margaret McGrath (Safeguarding & Wellbeing Coordinator) – margaret.mcgrath@rcdg.org.uk

As a member of RCDG Youth, you are expected to abide by the following code of conduct:

Children and young people are expected to:

- **General Conduct**
 - Be friendly and welcoming to all members;
 - Make your group a fun place to be;
 - Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of age, gender, ability, social class, race, cultural background, religious beliefs or sexual identity;
 - Be respectful, helpful and trustworthy;
 - Refrain from the use of bad/ inappropriate language, racial or sectarian references;
 - Refrain from bullying; this includes bullying in all types: physical, verbal, or cyber;
 - Not get involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do;
 - Keep yourself safe and do not engage in any risky or dangerous behaviour;
 - Not be violent and aggressive towards leaders or other young people;
 - Behave and listen to all instructions from the leaders and helpers and stick to the rules;
 - Listen attentively and respectfully when instructions are being given by Adult or Junior Leaders;
 - Not smoke, vape, drink alcohol or take non-prescribed or illegal drugs on Church premises or at any event connected to Church activities. **If you are found in possession of or using any of these at an RCDG Youth event your parent/ carer will immediately be called and you will be sent home. There are no second chances in this regard.**
- **Respecting Leaders**
 - Respect adult and junior leaders and accept decisions;
While our Junior Leaders may be from your school, they are taking part in events as leaders and should be respected as such. If you have an issue with the decision of a Junior Leader, you can speak to an Adult Leader about this, but you cannot challenge a Junior Leader directly. To do so is grounds for immediately being sent home.
- **Mobile Phones**
 - Only take photos with friends and not larger group photos.
 - **Under no circumstances** may you record videos, TikTok's, or other media at events.
 - Phones may be used at the following times during events:
 - **At Youth Evenings** only use your phone during the break.

- **At All Day Events** hand your phone in to a designated Adult Leader. It will be returned to you at lunch and collected in again after lunch, and returned at the end of the day. It may be used during lunchtime.
- **At Residential Events** use your phone in the common areas, and only use your phone in your room if your roommates are not disturbed by it.
- **Reporting Concerns**
 - Report inappropriate behaviour or risky situations to an Adult Leader at the first available opportunity.

Children / Young People have the right to:

- Be safe and happy in their chosen activity.
- Be respected and treated fairly.
- Take part as an equal to other children and young people in the group.
- Be protected from abuse by other members or outside sources.
- Ask for help.
- Be listened to.
- Be believed.
- Have any concerns taken seriously and acted on.
- Be referred to professional help if needed.
- Privacy.

Leaders

At many of our events, we have two different groups of Leaders supporting our activities:

- **Junior Leaders** – these are volunteer students in S3/4 who have been invited to join our team as Leaders. They are responsible for organising and running games and activities at Youth Evenings and All-Day events, they also work closely with our Adult Leaders in planning and running events. **The Junior Leaders should be respected as leaders at all times but do not have a safeguarding/ disciplinary role, for any safeguarding/ discipline concerns, please speak to an Adult Leader.**
- **Adult Leaders** – all of our Adult Leaders are aged 18 and over and have completed Safe Recruitment and Safeguarding Training to ensure that they are suitable for the role they are completing. **If you have any concerns during an event, you should approach an adult leader in the first instance.**
- **Diocesan Leads** – all of the activities of the Youth Office are overseen by Fr Kevin Rennie and Mrs Margaret McGrath, if you have any concerns outside of an event, or wish to make a complaint concerning an Adult Leader, you can contact them using the details on page one.

Disciplinary Procedures

In the event that a young person is found to have broken this Code of Conduct:

- **For a Serious Offence**
This includes but is not limited to racism, physical or verbal threats, violence, serious misuse of a mobile device: the young person will immediately be removed from the event, and their parent/ carer will be contacted and asked to collect their child. A report will be made to the Diocesan Leads (*if it is not one of them already dealing with the incident*) and a decision made on any longer suspension/ permanent barring from activities.

In the event of a serious offence, the victim(s) parent/ carer will be immediately notified that the incident has taken place.

- **For a First Offence**

The Adult Leaders in charge of the event will speak to the young person involved and explain the problem(s) with their behaviour. The young person has a right to respond to any allegations, with the Adult Leader then taking appropriate action. This could include:

- Restorative conversations with the victim(s).
- A verbal behaviour agreement with the young person that they will not repeat the behaviour.

If the young person is not willing to accept the decision of the Adult Leader, then their parent/ carer will be contacted, and they will be removed from the event.

- **For subsequent Offences**

Should a particular behaviour be repeated, the young person's parent/ carer will be contacted and asked to collect them. The Diocesan Leads will be notified, and they will work with the Adult Leader(s) involved and parents/ carers to discuss the issue with possible penalties including a temporary or permanent suspension. Returning to events after a suspension would be with the agreement of all parties and subject to a behaviour contract highlighting the inappropriateness of past behaviours.

For all incidents, a report will be made to the Diocesan Leads, and this will be recorded in the Safeguarding file held by the Youth Office to allow for any recurrent behaviours to be identified and addressed.

Should a child be removed from an event the Youth Office has no responsibility for reimbursing parents/ carers for the cost of collecting their child from the event, or for the repayment of any fees paid in relation to their child's participation in the event.