



## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Rationale

Volunteers have an integral part to play in providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young people. Therefore, all volunteers of Chinmaya Mission are bound by a set of values and principles that should guide their behaviour and interactions when engaging in regular study class sessions and volunteering in programs or at events.

### Expectations

Volunteers are expected to follow the principles of:

- safety
- respect
- support
- ethical and appropriate communication
- ethical conduct
- maintain data privacy and confidentiality.

Volunteers should:

- behave honestly and with integrity
- act with care and diligence.

Volunteers should think and act safely by:

- putting safety first in all activities
- following the safety procedures outlined in the Guidelines, to the best of their ability
- seek advice from and working with the coordinators when faced with a situation which they are unable to contend with or is beyond their roles and responsibility.

Volunteers should treat children and peers with respect and:

- respect the rights of individuals and maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality
- treat everyone with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility
- assist in the creation of an environment free of fear, harassment, racism and exploitation
- respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of others although you may not always agree
- immediately escalate any issues of concern or uncertainty to the coordinator.

Volunteers should use appropriate communication skills when engaging with children and young people and:

- acknowledge the needs and concerns of the individual
- practice effective listening (For example, ask open questions; be alert to non-verbal communication; stay calm and relaxed)
- not use foul language
- be aware of the young person's physical space
- be aware of their own body language
- be judicious in making physical contact with young people and at all times seek the young person's permission to do so
- stay calm and relaxed
- be clear and consistent.

- use non-discriminatory respectful and non-judgmental language
- seek advice whenever appropriate
- not engage in messaging communication directly with children or young people unless approved by the parent
- refrain from taking photos and using on their social media unless permission from the child or young person's parents has been obtained
- do not conduct any activities or gatherings outside the class environment without prior permission

### **Appropriate Conduct Guidelines**

If a volunteer's behaviour is deemed inappropriate, Chinmaya Mission will follow steps to ensure the children under their care are safe.

#### **Volunteers**

The following behavior is deemed inappropriate:

- joining WhatsApp groups with those under 18 years or being included in a WhatsApp conversation
- using a young person's photo on a personal social media account without parent's permission
- take photos without parent's permission
- become 'friends' with those under 18 in any social media channel or tag in personal social media posts
- use of offensive or inappropriate language
- consuming drugs or alcohol
- meeting or arranging to meet with the young person outside the class environment unless written permission is obtained from the parents
- unnecessary communication, by any means such as phone or email with young person without the knowledge of young person's parents.

The consequences of such behavior will be as follows:

- communication of incident to event/program coordinator and the Acharya/Committee member
- discuss with volunteer and seek a resolution.

#### **Class Attendees**

The following behavior is deemed inappropriate:

- disrespectful or aggressive behavior to others in the class and to their teachers
- use of foul, offensive or inappropriate language
- consuming drugs or alcohol
- excessive display of personal affection deemed inappropriate or behavior involving physical intimacy/contact during class
- not cooperating with volunteers in charge.

The consequences of such behavior will be as follows:

- a warning will be given in the first instance
- ongoing behaviour will result in a discussion with senior volunteer or Acharya

- if no effort is made to change or stop the behaviour, class attendees will be asked to take a break from the class.