
Child Safety and Protection

Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers shall assume the full burden of maintaining appropriate boundaries in all interactions with children under our care, for the prevention of child maltreatment. Any report of suspected maltreatment will trigger the Child Safety and Protection Response Process in accordance with the Policy and Procedures.

The expectations include, but are not limited to, the following:

Two Adult Rule

The single most effective way to protect children, staff and volunteers is by observing the 'Two Adult Rule'.

One adult should not be alone with one child out of the view of others anywhere at any time for any reason and will do so in the following ways:

- Two unrelated (non-family) adults must be present at all times when a child is present.
- In a classroom or event that encompasses a group of children, one adult shall never be alone with fewer than three children except in approved school classrooms or work space located in high traffic areas where many people regularly walk past, and there is clear visibility from the exterior, i.e. window in the entry door. This includes but is not limited to counseling, language or instrumental music lessons, mentoring, tutoring or learning support assistance.
- Staff or volunteers should not be alone with a child in any isolated area, indoors or outdoors, nor in a vehicle or on video communication.
- In an emergency where a child's life or personal safety is at risk, any two adults should be involved with the child. If that is not possible, secure the child's safety, then contact your supervisor, Head of School, or Director ASAP as well as the parent/guardian.

No student should be in your private residence in the role of a student (this does not apply to students coming in the role of spending time with your child). If a student group event is planned in this location, prior permission is required from your supervisor and Head of School (or Director), and a permission form signed by parents. The Two Adult Rule applies.

Safe touch

- Touch should always be open, not secretive.
- Touch must be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child, not the adult. It is wise for an adult to ask permission before touching a child, even in offering a celebratory hug.
- Children always have the right to decide how much physical contact they receive from others, except in exceptional circumstances where they need medical attention.
- Any physical activity/game that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child should not take place.
- Staff/volunteers will not use physical punishment with a child.
- Touch must always communicate respect for the child.

Appropriate touch

- Side hugs or age-appropriate hugs when others are present.
- Pats on the shoulder, back or head.
- Shoulder to shoulder hugs.

Inappropriate touch

- Touching buttocks, chest, breasts, genitals or thighs.
- Showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child.
- Sleeping/lying down in a bed with a child.
- Exposing private body parts.
- Playing sexually suggestive games.

Communication

- Any communication by any means between you and a child under our care must never be personal in nature and must always be open to public scrutiny.
- No secret activities or private communication through any form of social media is acceptable with any child in our care.
- No use of language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or knowingly culturally inappropriate.

- Electronic communication with an individual child will only be through approved school applications such as PowerSchool, Canvas, and/or your LifePlus email account. Any other means will be considered inappropriate unless pre-approved by the appropriate Head of School for a specific purpose. Approval is dependent on approved strategies being in place that address relevant risks.
- Mobile phone, WeChat or WhatsApp contact with an individual child under our care is only to occur in the context of excursions/field trips where it is normally necessary to ensure student safety and communicate informative messages. In all cases a second staff member must be included in any communication and the group must be set up by sharing a QR code *not* by becoming personal contacts the students. Any exceptions must be with the awareness and agreement of the appropriate Head of School for a specific limited purpose or context.
- If phone or social media contact is initiated by a child in our care to you, you are advised to defer the question to email or request to speak in person the next school day.
- Never post photos of children in our care without written permission of the parent/guardian and the child's awareness.
- Avoid joining online groups with children under our care. In public social groups (e.g. Sport club chat group, MUN facebook page etc) make sure that other adults, preferably staff, are also in the group and that your communication in the group remains professional and for the purpose that the group was established.
- Where there is a legitimate family connection to a student outside of work (e.g. sport team coach, family friends) staff need to remain conscious of their professional responsibilities, any contact should be generated in relationship with the parents or team organization.
- Never post photos of children in our care without written permission of the parent/guardian and the child's awareness.

Accountability

- Counseling or other necessarily confidential meetings with children shall be in a room with an unobstructed window in the door and only when another adult is in close vicinity, aware that the meeting is occurring and willing to stay in the vicinity until the counseling/ meeting is completed.
- Staff/volunteers should monitor each other in the area of physical contact with children and should help each other by pointing out anything that could be misconstrued.

- Staff/volunteers will be observant of grooming behaviors evidenced by steps an abuser takes to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity, and keep the child from disclosing the maltreatment and report any concerns to their schools Child Safety Specialist.

Change room management and use

Changing for PE/sport

- The changing space needs to be available for sole use of the students.
- Boys and girls must have separate change rooms.
- Elementary and Secondary students must have separate change rooms *or* must fully alternate use of the room so they do not overlap.
- Teachers are to check the change rooms are empty before students enter.
- A teacher of the same sex is to stand at the change room door to monitor sound and respond verbally as needed if there is an issue or concern.
- Students can call out or speak to the teacher. If a student needs practical assistance the student should come to the door to speak to the teacher.
- The teacher may need to open the door so they can hear, have the door only slightly ajar so the teacher can hear but outsiders cannot see in.
- If there is an urgent concern that requires a teacher to enter the change room or student hotel room (e.g. a fight, a medical emergency) the teacher should tell all students that you are coming in and why; and give the students a moment to cover themselves, as much as this is possible understanding that in an emergency time may not be available.
- Ideally call out for another adult to also assist. It is understood that in an emergency there may not be time to do this first, get another adult to you as soon as possible, call or send a student to get someone as able. Ask a student to stand at the door holding it ajar to increase visibility and accountability until help arrives.
- Move the student/s out of the change room as soon as appropriate.

Change rooms in non-LifePlus locations

- The changing space needs to be available for the sole use of the students. If the change rooms are at a public location the location organization needs to be aware and supportive of this requirement *or* there needs to be enough individual changing stalls with locking doors available for students to use.
- If the above criteria cannot be met students could change in the LifePlus school facilities before attending the location.

- Students must have the ability to get changed without assistance in order to attend an excursion/event that requires them to get changed in off-site facilities.

Swimming/water sports

- Students must be fully independent changing in and out of swimwear to go on field trips that require changing into or out of swimwear *and* have facilities available to change in private (individual changing stalls with locking doors) if they wish to use them.
- *Or* students will need to change into and out of their swimwear at home and bring suitable clothing to wear over their swimmers to travel to and from the pool/location—this is only an option where travel is short and weather is warm or where parents collect students from the location.

CCTV

It is prohibited to have any video monitoring in change rooms or bathrooms.

Students are to be made aware of the expectations for their behavior in the change rooms—details can be found in the student handbooks.

Overnight trips

- Staff to student ratios and other planning requirements for trips are detailed in the Safety and Security documents.
- Where you have students of one gender on a trip at least one chaperone must be of that same gender. Where there are male and female students on a trip you must have both male and female chaperones on the trip.
- Refer to the 'Change room management and use' section of this policy for what to do if a staff member needs to enter a student's hotel room due to an emergency. Remember the details under the Two Adult Rule if you need to enter for a non-urgent reason.
- Students are to share rooms with others in their same school division (e.g. MS with MS/HS with HS), the age difference between the oldest and youngest person in a room should be no more than two grades apart and no more than one year and 12 months' age difference.
- Do not put one student in a room on their own (if needed you can ask the hotel for a roll out bed to be added to a room with other students, or book a family room or rooms with an adjoining door).
- Where number/age/gender numbers cannot work out to meet these requirements talk to the Director of Child Safety or Director of Safety and Security to discuss options and get approval for variations.

LifePlus Online Academy and use of Zoom

- Remember that the LifePlus's professional guidelines, IT guidelines, Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy apply to online classes. Online contact between staff and students should be educational based, accountable, observable and interruptible.
- When using video calls plan your background and appropriate attire, set an appropriate profile picture and have your account clearly labelled. If working from home be mindful of what parts of your home you are sharing with students (e.g. choose a professional space not showing your bedroom, let other family members know when you are on a call).
- Keep in mind the Two Adult Rule when using video calling, e.g. when fewer than three students are in a class ask another staff member to be in the same room for the call in hearing/visual distance throughout the call. For one-to-one calls you can also ask the student's parent to be the second adult.
- Resist changing to an unapproved platform if a technical problem arises, reschedule instead.
- Hackers, or Zoom attendees, can try to use video conferencing to expose students to inappropriate (e.g. violent or pornographic) content or to cause harm (e.g. bullying). You need to use a unique ID, set a password for a call or enable the waiting room to manage who comes into the class.
- Staff need to be prepared to act to keep students safe should a safety issue arise.
- Staff must know how to use the following Zoom features before starting a call with a child: Identify who is on your call, mute an attendee, eject someone from a call, disable a camera, disable screen sharing or chat features and save chats. (For instructions on how to do these, go to the IT Knowledge Base on Sharepoint or Zoom's own help centre)
- Group chats are ephemeral, meaning that when you end the call, the chat is deleted. Therefore, if there are any files or chats that are of concern, it is incumbent on the adult to save the communication while the meeting is in session so that the data is saved for further review by the local Child Safety Specialist.
- For concerns raised through an online class contact the Child Safety Specialist at the school of the student concerned.

When facing a scenario that is not detailed in this policy, work together with other staff leaders to consider the best way forward—keep in mind three key areas of: *visibility*, *accountability* and *power differences*. Call the Director of Child Safety or Director of Safety and Security to get approval for any variation to the policy or to seek advice.

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Code of Conduct Agreement

As a staff or volunteer of LifePlus, I acknowledge I will be held accountable to the following in the prevention of child maltreatment:

- ☐ I have read the attached Child Safety and Protection Policy.
- ☐ I understand the definitions of child maltreatment including the definitions of Sexual Maltreatment, Physical Maltreatment, Emotional Maltreatment, and Neglect in the Child Safety and Protection Policy.
- ☐ I acknowledge that I am required to report a disclosure of any kind of child maltreatment or any suspicion of maltreatment of any child under the care of LifePlus staff or volunteers.
- ☐ I confirm that I have not been accused of (to the best of my knowledge), been investigated for, prosecuted, or found to have committed any form of child maltreatment (sexual, physical, emotional, or neglect) or any other form of inappropriate behavior with a child.
- ☐ I have completed the Child Safety and Protection training and passed (70% or above) in the follow-up quiz and in the survey text questions.
- ☐ I agree to cooperate fully with any part of the Child Safety and Protection Response Process carried out by anyone on the Child Safety and Protection team.
- ☐ I understand that LifePlus will report suspicions of any form of child maltreatment to government authorities. I understand and agree that LifePlus will report to any licensing authority, sending agency, and/or supporting agency and disclose to anyone requesting a reference concerning me in the future from LifePlus, any instance where LifePlus has determined or learned that I have engaged in conduct meeting LifePlus's definition of child maltreatment or if I leave LifePlus before an assessment of a concern can be completed.
- ☐ I agree to protect the privacy of any potential victims of child maltreatment and their families by maintaining confidentiality concerning my involvement in reporting any potential case of child maltreatment or participating in any response to a report of potential child maltreatment.

I have received and read the above Code of Conduct and hereby sign and attest that I will abide by these guidelines as outlined.

Print name _____

Date _____

Signature _____