



**CENTRAL FLORIDA
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**
EDUCATE • INSPIRE • EQUIP

CFCA EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS

Standards of Ethical Conduct

(Adapted from the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida and principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida)

1. Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. Our primary concern is the student and the development of the student's potential. Employees will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Concern for the student requires that our instruction personnel:
 - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c. Shall not unreasonable deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.

- i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the community, employees of our school must display the highest degree of ethical conduct. This commitment requires that our employees:
 - a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
 - c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
 - d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
 - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

Training Requirement

All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators

All employees and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to your Principal.

Reports of misconduct committed should be reported in accordance with the Whistleblower Policy.

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services.

Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in all teacher workrooms and on our web site at cfcaeagles.org.

Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800-96ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

Confidentiality Agreements

Confidentiality agreements will not be entered into with personnel who are dismissed, terminated, or resign in lieu of termination due to misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Further, if such an instance occurs, any reference provided to a future potential employer in an education setting will disclose such misconduct.

Signs of Physical Abuse

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or may run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

The child may have torn stained or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

Signs of Neglect

The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention.

Patterns of Abuse

Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

Liability Protections

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. (see F.S. 39.203)

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095)

Sexual Misconduct Policy

THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT FOR CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

As creatures created by God, together with the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called to live in right relationship with God, with one another, and with ourselves (Mark 12:29-31). This calling to live in the fullness of our God-created humanity requires that we sustain a vital and personal relationship to God so that we may maintain the dignity of all life, out of which flows the desire and mandate to treat one another with respect.

As we become aware of the many instances of sexual misconduct occurring, it is imperative that we recognize the following:

- Human sexuality is a gift from God for the enhancement and propagation of human life, not its degradation.
- All powers, capacities, and gifts of the human person are given by God and must be exercised with consideration and respect due to self, others, and God.
- All acts of sexual exploitation, harassment, and abuse constitute sin against God, against the Church body, against the victim(s), and against the integrity of the self.

We recognize that while we all are in need of God's redemptive grace, we must remain committed to providing just and merciful responses to instances of sexual misconduct in the School and to reduce as much as humanly possible the chances that an act or acts of sexual misconduct might occur in our activities.

SCREENING PROCEDURES

A. New Job Applicants

All new job applicants for paid School positions, full-time or part-time, and all volunteers shall be required to provide information that will include, at least, the following:

- Personal contact information.
- The name, address, and phone number of at least three (3) references who know the applicant and/or have worked with this individual in a prior setting.
- Consent to allow School personnel to contact these references. References will be contacted by the Headmaster or his designee. All related information will be kept confidential.
- Reference requirements may be waived in the case of someone who is well known or other extenuating circumstances exist that make references unnecessary. This decision rests with the Headmaster.
- The following question must be answered: "Has a lawsuit, claim, charge or arrest, been made against you for sexual misconduct, abuse, or molestation?"

B. Background Checks

- All paid staff, full-time or part-time, regardless of their job description, must consent in writing to a Federal criminal background check.
- All volunteers that have more than incidental contact with students as determined by Administration must consent to a statewide background check.
- All volunteers that will potentially do one-on-one mentoring or be involved with overnight activities with students must consent to a statewide background check.
- Such a check will be run before employment or volunteer work will commence. Results of this background check will be shared with the potential employee. In the rare case that the information in the background check is challenged by the applicant, the Headmaster and School Committee shall make the determination as to what information will be considered in the decision process.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

CFCA employees must report ANY known or suspected abuse or neglect of a CFCA student by an adult to the proper authorities. Consult the Crisis Manual for proper procedures and contacts to report suspected or known abuse.

Florida State Statutes protect any person, official or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to any law enforcement agency from any civil or criminal liability.

RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Anyone who presents themselves or is presented to the School as a victim of sexual abuse, misconduct, or molestation, must be:

- Offered counseling by a qualified counselor not in any way connected to the School.
- Given the opportunity to present his/her side of the allegation to a representative of the School in a non-threatening and confidential environment.

Any staff member accused of an act or acts of sexual abuse, misconduct, or molestation, must be:

- Given the opportunity to present his/her side of the allegation to a representative of the School in a non-threatening and confidential environment.

The Headmaster and Chairman of the School Committee must decide together what course of action needs to be taken after reviewing the facts of the case as reported by the victim and the accused.

Responses can include any of the following:

- Report the incident(s) to the proper law enforcement authority.
- School disciplinary action on the accused, if guilty, up to and including termination.
- Report the incident(s) to the insurance company.

In all cases, the goal of the process must be to promote the safety of all people involved in the School, maximum care and support for any victim, repentance and restoration for the accused, and protection for any falsely accused individual.

Policy on Prevention of Children and Youth Abuse

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate behaviors in the presence of minors, CFCA will demonstrate Christian love and respect for one another.

Leadership recognizes that our faculty has exceptional talents for teaching and supporting the growth and development of the School's students and we wish to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. At the same time, however, we have set certain criteria on faculty who choose to serve in this capacity so as to protect the well-being of our children and youth.

Our intent is not to be judgmental, for we are all accountable to God. We rely on God's wisdom in developing, implementing, and carrying out His will through these guidelines. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation, reporting, or follow-up action that results from the procedures as outlined in this policy.

Faculty support is critical for adherence to this policy. The limited nature of our resources, and our desire to devote as much as possible to the work of the Lord, dictate that this policy be fully understood by every member of our faculty, staff and extended family. This will enable CFCA Leadership to do what is within their power to preserve the School resources for the work of the Lord.

PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

The following behaviors are prohibited for all paid employees and volunteers:

- Threatening or inflicting physical injury upon a child and youth, other than by accidental means
- Committing any sexual offense against a child or youth, or engaging in any sexual contact with a child or youth
- Making any kind of sexual advance, or making a request for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Profanity, profane gestures, sexual comments, degrading comments
- Smoking, drinking alcohol, or favorable comments on either

Definitions of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse:

Non-accidental injury, which may include beatings, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning, or burns. The results may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long-lasting psychological damage, serious internal injuries, brain damage, or death.

Neglect:

The failure to provide a child with basic needs including food (proper nutrition), clothing, education, shelter, and medical attention to the extent that the child's health, development, and safety are endangered; so abandonment and inadequate supervision.

Sexual Abuse:

The sexual exploitation of a child by an older person as in rape, incest, fondling or touching of the genitals, exhibitionism, or pornography. It may be done for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator or third party, out of a need for power, or for economic reasons.

Emotional Maltreatment:

A pattern of behavior that attacks a child's emotional development and a sense of self-worth, such as constant criticizing, belittling, insulting, and manipulation; so, providing no love, nurturing, support or guidance.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

If you suspect that a minor involved in any of the programs of the School has been abused or is being abused, the following steps are to be followed:

- 1) The faculty or staff member is to document what has been reported at school.
- 2) The faculty or staff member is to document any cause for suspicion of child abuse.
- 3) The faculty or staff member is to notify CFC Administration.
- 4) The Teacher will notify Florida's Department of Children and Families.
- 5) The Principal or his designee is to stay with the student until Law Enforcement arrives.
- 6) The Principal or his designee will provide a room for the Department of Social Service to interview and examine the student in privacy.
- 7) If Florida's Department of Children and Families allows the school to contact the parent/guardian, the Principal or designee should call the parent to inform them of the situation.
- 8) The Principal or designee should provide counseling if appropriate.
- 9) The Headmaster or designee – Depending on the situation and in cooperation with Florida's Department of Children and Families should prepare for:
 - a. Statement to media
 - b. Inquiries from irate, demanding, scared parents
 - c. Staff meeting to stop the spread of rumors and to provide update on facts as known

- d. Parent meeting with administrator to give reassurance that safety measures are being taken to prevent future incidents and to allow questions/discussions, if necessary

The School staff will report the suspicion to the appropriate law enforcement agency as required by law.

It is neither the volunteer's nor the School's responsibility to substantiate abuse, but legally, we are required to report any reasonable suspicions of abuse. If you feel compelled to report a suspicion yourself, please inform the Principal or designee who will in turn notify the Headmaster or designee.