



## **Child & Volunteer Protection**

A policy of Woodstock Christian Academy

Members of Woodstock Christian Academy come with various experiences, backgrounds, and needs. Our commitment as a School is to provide an environment as safe as possible for children and youth who attend the School (Woodstock Christian Academy) or School sponsored programs or activities and to take the necessary precautions to protect School leaders and volunteers from accusations or suspicions.

The following policies demonstrate Woodstock Christian Academy's commitment to providing a safe environment for children and our zero tolerance for abuse, harassment or neglect committed by any children's or youth ministry or school worker, including employees, members, and volunteers. The purpose of the procedures are to prevent harm to the children in our programs, to help prevent the opportunity for abuse to occur, and to protect our staff and volunteers from false or wrongful allegations.

I Corinthians 14:40 *"But be sure that everything is done properly and in order."*

II Corinthians 8:9 *"For we are taking pains to do what is right not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of man."*

## A. SCREENING OF CHILDREN, YOUTH & SCHOOL WORKERS

### **Policy**

**School:** All supervisors, monitors, and volunteers must be screened prior to being allowed to volunteer or minister. A person will only be considered for a supervisor or monitor if they are a professing Christian, a member of a church or parent of a student attending our school, and in an accountability relationship with others in the school (through participation in a cell group), and exhibit a Christ-like character including being teachable. Volunteers will only be considered if they are a professing Christian, and either a member of a Church or a parent of a student.

At no time shall a person who has been convicted of sexual or physical abuse be involved in ministry with children and youth. As well, individuals who admit to struggling with sexual temptations towards children will be prohibited from serving in children, youth, or school ministries.

### **Procedure**

#### **For Paid Staff**

##### **a. Recruitment**

The goal and practice since 2010 has been to recruit staff from within our community by recommendation of those in leadership positions.

##### **b. Interview and References**

Hiring is based on the demonstrated giftings of the individual, their demonstrated strength of character during their time as a member of the churches in the community, and on the leading of the Holy Spirit. References could be sought from that person's cell leader and line pastor.

#### **For School Volunteers**

##### **a. Recruitment**

Each year, a request for volunteers is sent out to school families.

##### **b. Applications**

A Volunteer training session must be completed by anyone interested in volunteering. These are obtained from the school. They also must provide a criminal record check from the police department. These are kept on file by the School's secretary. These are confidential forms and will be kept confidential in a locked file. Upon receipt of the completed "Volunteer Training", the secretary/principal will confirm school involvement and relationship. This may include a telephone or face-to-face interview with applicant and a minimum of two of their references. At this point, if they are considering acceptance of the individual as a volunteer, their name is to be submitted to the Department Administrator who will add them to the list of new volunteers and begin to track that all remaining steps in this procedure are completed. At this point the applicant can be scheduled and allowed to serve as a volunteer, but the supervisors must be aware that it is pending a successful police record check and they must be sure to take special notice of the volunteer when supervising their areas until the police record check has been completed.

**For all of the above Volunteers or Staff**

**c. Criminal Record Check**

This is required for anyone 16 years of age or older. The police department will give them the forms to the applicant to obtain this police record check.

*This Criminal Record Check provides relevant information that is necessary to consider when screening applicants since they will be working with those who are in a position of dependence and would be at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust. The screening provides information regarding criminal records, convictions, pending charges, ongoing investigations, probation, prohibition, other judicial orders, and sexual offences.*

The applicant must submit the form to their department head or the school principal who will forward it to the School Department Administrator who will keep it confidentially in a locked file.

**d. Approval**

Approval will be given by School Board or principal when the above requirements have been satisfied. If the Police Record Check shows convictions related to violent crimes, sexual misconduct, or crimes that would put children at risk, the application to be a volunteer will be denied. If the Police Record Check shows other convictions, approval may be given at the discretion of the Department Head in consultation with the Board of Directors. Denial of an application should not be viewed as a denial of God's Power to bring about significant changes in a person's life. For the protection of all involved we believe it would be better for those persons to minister or volunteer in areas that do not involve children.

**e. Training**

Training is provided regarding this policy and its related procedures as each volunteer or worker becomes involved. The Department Head or Supervisor will give them "Volunteer Training" a self-directed learning package that must be completed prior to being allowed to serve. Attendance at a "Child & Volunteer Protection at Woodstock Christian Academy" workshop is required. This in-service is offered at least annually.

**f. Documentation Retention**

All documentation (police record check) will be kept on file indefinitely. These files are kept in a secure, but accessible place by the Department Administrator. This information is strictly confidential and may only be accessed by the appropriate personal.

**B. PROTECTING CHILDREN'S SECURITY WHILE IN OUR CARE**

**Policy**

Every effort is made to ensure the security of children placed in the care of Woodstock Christian Academy's volunteers or staff for the purposes of children's ministries or schooling.

**Procedure**

**School**

Children are supervised once they enter the building at beginning of day until they exit building at end of school day. The outside doors of the building close to the school classrooms are locked in a manner that permit free exiting but allows entry only to those permitted entrance by school staff or volunteers. All visitors or those requiring entry at times the door is not supervised, must enter through doors of the building that require them to pass by the Supervisor so entry is monitored. All students are supervised when outside on school property or park across street during designated break or recess times.

**C. PROTECTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH WHILE IN OUR CARE**

**Policy**

Every effort is made to promote the health of children placed in the care of Woodstock Christian Academy's volunteers or staff for the purposes of children's ministries or schooling.

**Procedure**

**a. LABELING OF ALL PERSONAL ITEMS**

**School**

Parents are encouraged to label all items and clothing.

**b. SICK CHILDREN**

**School**

Parents are encouraged to keep sick children home. If a student becomes ill while at school, the parents are contacted to pick up the student as soon as they are able.

**D. PROTECTING CHILDREN'S SAFETY WHILE IN OUR CARE**

**Policy**

Parents are always welcome to come and check in on their children while they are in our care. Classroom doors are left open where appropriate. Workers may never take a child alone to the restroom. Corporal punishment by workers is prohibited.

**School**: Supervisors are present in each classroom.

## **Procedure**

### **a. CLASSROOM STAFFING & SUPERVISION**

#### **SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

All volunteers that are working with our students are required to be individuals who exhibit Christ like character, and show the students in their care the utmost respect and care.

- (a)** All classrooms have at least one Supervisor and may also have additional volunteers.
- (b)** The doors to the school are not opened until 8:15 when several staff are present and individual classroom doors are not opened for students to enter until at least one supervisor or volunteers are present.
- (c)** All volunteers and paid staff at the school are required to have a full police background check performed.
- (d)** If a situation arises where a paid staff member or volunteers has a legitimate reason to be alone with a student, it is required that parent/guardian give permission to do so.
- (e)** Any students are required to also have parental permission for any school field trips or overnight stays directly associated with school activities.

### **b. WASHROOM USE**

#### **SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

All students use the washrooms on their own in the school wing of the building. Supervision, when required at break time, is provided by standing in hallway waiting for all students to exit. If a student is taking a long time, the supervisor may knock on door and call out to the student to ensure everything is alright.

### **c. SNACK/MEAL TIMES**

#### **SCHOOL BREAK & LUNCH TIMES**

Students eating their snacks at break or lunch times in the lunch room or gymnasium are to remain seated.

## **E. PROVIDING A SANITARY & SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN WHILE IN OUR CARE**

### **Policy**

Every effort is made to provide a sanitary and safe environment for the children placed in the care of Woodstock Christian Academy's volunteers or staff for the purposes of children's ministries or schooling.

## **Procedure**

### **a. ROOM CLEANLINESS**

#### **School**

Lunch tables are washed and sanitized after each use during breaks and lunch. School test tables, scoring tables are washed and sanitized every night. Students' desks are washed as needed during the year and at every holiday break. Lockers are washed and sanitized at every holiday break.

**b. ROOM SAFETY**

**School**

Broken furniture/equipment is reported and repaired/replaced as quickly as possible.

**F. EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Policy**

Every effort is made to respond to emergencies in an appropriate manner.  
Workers will be aware of their role in responding to emergencies.  
Parents/guardians will be informed of the emergency as soon as possible.

**Procedure**

**a. Medication Administration**

Staff and volunteers are not to give or apply any medication. If a child needs medication we believe that it is the parents responsibility to give it. No medication will be left in the classroom or with a worker or child. The exception to this is for life-threatening conditions where action needs to be taken immediately (i.e. serious allergies, or asthma). In these situations, parents must make all volunteers aware of such risk and show the volunteer how the medication should be administered. Parents should also supply written instructions to be kept with the medication.

**b. Emergency Assistance**

**School**

If a child needs emergency assistance, 911 is called immediately. The parents are also immediately notified. Numbers for the student's doctor as well as their health card number are kept on file.

**c. Dealing with cuts or injuries involving Blood**

1. Immediately separate the injured child from the other children. Isolate the area where any blood may have dropped on carpet, toys, etc. Apply first aid measures and send someone to locate the parents.
2. If other children come in contact with any of the blood immediately clean the area affected, and inform their parents.
3. For volunteers cleaning the wound, they are required to put on vinyl gloves (available in the first-aid kit) and bandage the injury, avoiding contact with any open wounds they have as well as their mouth, ears and eyes.
4. Carefully wipe up all blood and bloody bandages and throw away in a separate bag and dispose that bag immediately into the large waste bin.
5. Any blood on the floor or toys must be washed away using a solution of one part bleach to ten parts water.
6. Once clean up is complete, volunteers are to remove gloves, dispose of them safely, and wash hands thoroughly.

**d. In Case of FIRE**

**SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

In the event that a fire breaks out in the school building, all staff and volunteers must follow this procedure to ensure that all children make it out of the building safely and in a group. In order to facilitate a fast exit, all students must wear shoes at all times.

1. When the fire breaks out, all children and staff stand immediately (if they are in the classroom) at their desks.
2. Each supervisor calmly leads the children out in single file through the exit that is closest to their classroom. These exits have been given to the supervisors. There is always another staff member present in the room and they will be at the end of the line to ensure that all children leave.
3. Each supervisor will have a list of the children in the classroom. Roll call is immediately taken once everyone has safely exited to the building.
4. The administrator is the last to leave the building after checking that all doors are closed, lights off,

- and everyone has exited (if safe to do so). Upon exiting, roll call is confirmed with the staff outside.
5. Once outside, the staff and students proceed to the far side of the parking lot where they stand in single file and answer the roll call. No one enters back into the building unless instructed by fire captain (all clear).
  6. If it determined that students and staff will be unable to return back into the building, the administrator will begin to notify families to pick up their children. In the event of severe weather, arrangements to transport students to alternative site will be made.

## **G. PREVENTING ALLEGATIONS**

### **Policy**

Every effort is made to prevent allegations against children's workers.

Workers are instructed as in I Thessalonians 5:22 says to "abstain from all appearance of evil."

This includes avoiding activities that could be misinterpreted and avoiding situations that leave you vulnerable to false accusations.

Parental consent and permission should be obtained for off-premises or unusual activities.

### **Procedure**

#### **BEING CAUTIOUS REGARDING ACTIVITIES THAT COULD EASILY LEAD TO ALLEGATIONS**

Certain activities inherent in the care of children and youth could lead to allegations of abuse. These activities have been addressed in the above policies and procedures. Volunteers and staff are requested and encouraged to follow these procedures.

Other activities that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment (such as out-of-program or off-premise contact, individual photography of children, unsupervised internet access, vehicle transportation by workers alone with unrelated youth, or improperly supervised sleepovers) should be **avoided**.

Other activities that have potential to lead to allegations should be handled as follows:

#### **a. ONE-TO-ONE YOUTH MENTORING**

Staff or volunteers should not mentor (disciple, share, counsel, or minister) youth of the opposite sex outside of normal office hours or scheduled school times. These meetings should be done at the office. It is encouraged that mentoring generally occur between staff or volunteer of same sex as youth. Mentoring with someone of the same sex can be done at a restaurant, fast-food place, or other public establishment. Time in the car should only be spent in traveling to and from the establishment. Staff or volunteers should not visit in seclusion with youth on a one-to-one basis.

#### **b. MALE WORKERS ASSISTING WITH WASHROOMS**

No worker is to change the diapers of children in our care. Two adults should escort groups of children to the washroom. If only one volunteer is available upon the child's request to use the washroom, the adult volunteer should escort the child to the washroom and prop the outside door open. The volunteer should then remain outside the washroom door and wait for the child before escorting him or her back to the classroom. The volunteer should call the child's name if they are taking longer than seems necessary. Workers should never be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom and never go into a washroom cubicle with a child and shut the door. When preschool children need assistance in the washroom, an adult may enter the washroom cubicle to assist only when a second adult is within visual contact. In light of the fact that most abusers are male, and for the protection of our male volunteers, it would be wise for men to avoid assisting boys or girls of any age in the washrooms.

## C. FIELD TRIPS AND OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES

On occasion the children and youth programs of the school may participate in field trips and or overnight stays for youth conferences. In order to better protect all involved, the following measures should be taken.

1. All field trips and overnight stays are to be pre-approved by school leadership.
2. Parents will be required to fill out and sign a permission slip for all youth under the age of 18.
3. Parents should be notified of field trips and/or overnight stays a minimum of three weeks prior to the event.
4. If using a personal vehicle to transport children to and from activities, the driver must hold a valid drivers license and car insurance. Also each person in the vehicle must be secured by a working seatbelt. Passengers should not exceed the amount of seatbelts available in any given vehicle.
5. For overnight activities the parent should fill out a medical release form. Information such as the child's health card number and any medical problems should be filled out on the medical release form.
6. Information concerning the sleeping accommodations for children at any overnight event is always to be available for parents
7. Minimum child/volunteer ratio should be 1:14. The volunteer can include youth (ages 16-18) who are approved volunteers.

## H. INCIDENT REPORTING

### **Policy**

An incident report form should be completed for any incident occurring on school property or during school events/ ministry that resulted in or may have resulted in injury (include near misses) and for all reports of suspected abuse or inappropriate behavior occurring on school property or during school events/ ministry. These reports are then followed-up and used to respond fully and appropriately to the situation and to look at what can be done in the future to avoid a similar occurrence.

### **Definitions**

#### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

**Physical Abuse** is a deliberate action that results, or could result, in injury to a child. This includes punching, beating, shaking, burning, biting or throwing a child. This is different from reasonable discipline administered by a loving parent.

**Sexual Abuse** is any sexual exploitation of a child where the child is being used for a sexual purpose. This includes sexual interference, an invitation to sexually touch, exposing genitals to a child, exposure to sexually provocative material, or improper touching.

**Emotional Abuse** is the absence of a nurturing environment for a child. This includes constant yelling, demeaning remarks; rejecting, ignoring or isolating a child; or terrorizing a child.

**Child Neglect** is when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as safety, supervision, or medical treatment.

**Harassment** can be physical, psychological, written, or verbal. It can include racial insults, derogatory ethnic slurs, improper sexual comments, or sexually oriented humor.

**Improper Touching** is touching of any area that would be covered by a bathing suit, touch that inflicts discomfort, touch that is uninvited and unwanted, any type of massage.

**Improper Discipline** is physical discipline of any kind (spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, hitting) administered by workers in the School setting or activities to others' children in their care.

**Appropriate Discipline** would include letting a child know that behavior is inappropriate, giving a short time-out sitting in a chair, or calling a child's parent to notify them of behavior. Workers are urged to use distraction, participation, affirmation and encouragement to prevent behaviors that would require discipline.

*Any actions by workers towards the children in their care that would fall into any of the above categories are unacceptable and should be reported to a supervisor.*

## **TOUCHING**

### **Appropriate Touch**

Volunteers are able to show love, care and concern to children/youth by using these appropriate measures of touch.

- Bending down to child's eye level, speaking kindly, listening carefully
- Leading a child by the hand to redirect him/her to an activity
- Putting an arm around a child who needs to be quieted or comforted (side hug).
- Holding a child's hands to keep them focused on what you are saying to them.
- Patting a child gently on the head, hand, shoulder, or back to show approval.
- "High fives", handshakes, brief hugs

### **Inappropriate Touch**

Volunteers should avoid the following forms of touch to protect themselves against accusations and to protect the children/youth they are working with.

- Kissing a child should be avoided at all times and under every circumstance.
- Holding an older child in your arms or on your lap.
- Having a child sit on your lap if another worker is not present nearby or if the room is darkened for a video
- Touching a child on an area of that may be close to or on any private parts of their body (ie. would be covered by a bathing suit).

## **INJURY**

**Resulted in injury:** there were complaints of pain that did not resolve or physical evidence of an injury

**May have resulted in injury (include near misses):** there is/was a situation or equipment that could /could have potentially caused an injury or almost caused an injury

## **Situations**

### **Child-to-Child**

If a volunteer has witnessed a child hurt another child or exhibit inappropriate behavior (punches, bites, touches and kisses inappropriately), the volunteer should call the supervisor to complete an incident report. The form is then submitted to the staff that directly oversees the department. The overseer will then carefully read and file the documentation. If the matter appears to be serious, the overseer will contact the parent and discuss the behavior. Parents will also be notified of any incidents upon picking up their child.

**Adult-to-Child**

If a volunteer witnesses or is told of an adult hurting a child on the church property or during a school activity / ministry, the volunteer must immediately contact the supervisor after personally securing the safety of the child. Do not leave the child while reporting the incident. Do not personally confront the alleged / accused person. At this time, the volunteer will be encouraged to give a detailed account of what was witnessed or told so the supervisor can complete an incident report. The supervisor or department head will report the incident to the parent / guardian of the victim. If the offense appears to be serious, the Principle will be contacted regarding the issue. Again, depending on the alleged offense, outside law enforcement/child protection services will be contacted.

**Staff-to-Child**

If a paid staff is the one who has committed the offense, then their superior will be contacted and further action will be taken.

**I. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR HARASSMENT**

**Policy**

All allegations or complaints of misconduct will be responded to in an appropriate manner. All allegations will be taken seriously. All allegations will be handled confidentially. Compassion will be shown towards the victim. All involved parties will be treated with respect. Situations should not be prejudged. All major allegations should be communicated to the Board who in turn may contact the school's lawyer for advice on how to further deal with the allegation at hand. In all allegations, all steps of action are to be documented fully. Everything that is said and has been witnessed should be included without prejudice. Support should be offered to all parties involved.

**Procedure**

- a. An incident report must be completed by a supervisor, department head, or staff for suspected abuse. All allegations must be treated seriously.
- b. Satisfy statutory reporting obligations to police authorities or child protective agencies. The supervisor is responsible to pass all incident reports on to the Board. If the Board suspects that a child is or may be in need of protection, there is an obligation to report promptly to the New Brunswick Child Protection Agency. This may be protection from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect or harm.
- c. Assure the complainant that Woodstock Christian Academy is committed to assisting the investigation.
- d. Confidentiality is to be maintained. All documentation must be kept confidential. Anyone who is not directly involved with the situation (problem or solution) should not be made known of the incident that has taken place. This is for the benefit of both the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.
- e. Suspend alleged perpetrator from children's or youth ministry duties pending outcome of investigation.
- f. Deal with allegations in a direct and very honest way. Full cooperation with outside authorities will be given upon approval and discretion of Woodstock Christian Academy's lawyer.
- g. Treat both parties with respect.
- h. Do not admit liability or make public statements. Refrain from admitting liability or from making public statements to media without obtaining formal legal counsel.
- i. Contact our insurance agent or broker to report the incident in order to satisfy the statutory conditions of our liability policy and to avoid jeopardizing any available coverage response.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee/Volunteers Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date