



EVANGEL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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ECS Staff and Volunteers:

We know that child abuse is abhorrent in God's sight and devastating to the healthy functioning of all individuals and institutions involved. Therefore, Evangel Church believes that educating those involved in training and supervising children is helpful to increase their safety and prosecute any violations thereof. In its attempt to further protect the children involved in each of its ministries from any sexual abuse and provide adequate legal protection for itself, Evangel Church has adopted a new child protection policy.

This policy involves newly worded policies and procedures and watching a one-hour video about child predators. Therefore, as a staff member or volunteer with Evangel Christian School in any capacity that provides access to more children than your own, you must watch this one-hour video and sign the new child protection policy.

To that end, please complete the attached child protection policy and expect an email from Evangel Church associate pastor and ECS board member Alex Goodsell with the link to the required video. You will have one week from receipt of that email to watch the video and take a test on it, the results of which will automatically transmit to Mr. Goodsell upon your successful completion.

We are so grateful for your willingness to serve ECS families and pray that as you do so, God fills you with His Holy Spirit *"to equip his people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up."* -Eph. 4:12

ECS Administration



Evangel Christian School Student Safety Policies

This policy form is the core safety policy for a school.

Evangel Christian School Supplemental Policies for Athletics is available to MinistrySafe and Abuse Prevention Systems members at www.MinistrySafe.com or www.AbusePreventionSystems.com.

To access policy forms, click the 'Resources' link from your MinistrySafe and Abuse Prevention Systems Control Panel.

Staff Member, Volunteer, or Contractor,

Welcome to Evangel Christian School!

At Evangel Christian School, we take our responsibility to educate and care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment where children can learn and grow in a healthy educational environment.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for Evangel Christian School volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of Evangel Christian School. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After carefully reading this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form on the last page.

Sincerely,

Evangel Christian School

Evangel Christian School

Safety Policies & Procedures

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Overview of the Evangel Christian School Safety System

DEFINITIONS:

- **VOLUNTEER**- Those who donate their time and talent to Evangel Christian School (ECS) school functions, with whom these ECS functions would be available.
- **PRIMARY VOLUNTEER**- Those who serve regularly and voluntarily in a position essential to a particular ECS school function. The participation of the volunteer in the ECS school function requires them to be in close contact with and manage the activity of ECS students.
- **DISCRETIONARY VOLUNTEER**- Those who serve regularly or occasionally in an ECS school function whose participation does not require the volunteer to be in close contact with or manage the activity of ECS students.
- **STAFF MEMBER** – Paid staff member, full-time or part-time.
- **CONTRACTOR** – One authorized by ECS to work with ECS students, e.g., Tutorials instructors.
- **ECS SAFETY COMMITTEE**- A group comprising the ECS Athletic Director, the ECS School Administrator, and the Board Chairperson. This group is the primary notification source for suspicious or inappropriate behaviors, enforcement or violation of policies, or reports of abuse and other matters discussed in this policy. This committee has the authority to investigate matters it is notified of and decide whether it is appropriate to give further notification after their investigation. Notice to any committee member is deemed notice to the full committee.

NOTE: Primary or discretionary volunteers may be parent or non-parent volunteers. As used herein, ‘volunteer’ shall include primary and discretionary volunteers unless otherwise stated. Because we care for children and desire to protect them, ECS requires all volunteer and staff members to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** *before employment or service begins.*

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

4 SAFETY STEPS

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

ECS policies and procedures require volunteers and staff members to avoid abusive behavior. Primary volunteers and staff must report policy violations to the EPC Safety Committee.

Primary volunteers and staff members should understand the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in ‘grooming’ a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser 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 abuse.

To equip ECS primary volunteers and staff members with the information necessary to protect a child from sexual abuse, ECS requires all primary volunteers and staff members to complete Sexual Abuse Awareness Training provided live or online through Abuse Prevention Systems (www.AbusePreventionSystems.com) or MinistrySafe (www.MinistrySafe.com). This training will be renewed every three years.

STEP TWO: Screening Process

- Staff members are required to:
 - Complete an Employment Application
 - Complete a face-to-face interview with the ECS Administrator or his designee.
 - Provide a reference check.
 - Receive written board approval.
- Parent Volunteers are required to:
 - Complete an interview with the ECS Administrator or his designee.
 - Receive written board approval.
- Non-Parent Volunteers are required to:
 - Complete an interview with the ECS Administrator or his designee.
 - Receive written board approval.
 - Provide acknowledgment of compliance with the ECS statement of faith standards of conduct and the handbook.
 - Obtain a recommendation from two or more parents of ECS students (the number of recommendations over the minimum is up to the discretion of the ECS administrator).

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Primary volunteers and staff members must review the policies in this manual and sign the Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement, attached hereto, indicating they have read and understood the material and agree to comply with policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check

ECS requires all primary volunteers and staff members to undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon the position, background checks may require different levels or intensity.

ABUSE TOLERANCE

ECS has **zero tolerance for abuse** in school programs and activities. Every volunteer and staff member at ECS is responsible for acting in the best interest of each child in every school program.

Suppose primary volunteers or staff members observe inappropriate behaviors (i.e., policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual). In that case, they are responsible for immediately reporting the information to the ECS Safety Committee.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

ECS is committed to providing children and their families a safe, secure environment. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and, when deemed appropriate by the ECS Safety Committee, will be reported per this policy and Alabama state law (See Alabama code 26-14-1 et seq). Staff members and primary volunteers will also report suspicious or inappropriate behaviors to the ECS Safety Committee.

ECS supports and encourages a communication culture related to abuse or suspected abuse of children. Suppose you see or suspect inappropriate interaction with or between children. In that case, you are responsible for reporting the inappropriate interaction to a supervisor and the ECS Safety Committee. This includes partial or inconclusive information concerning behavior, which may or may not be blameless.

Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, a staff member or primary volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and primary volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, policy violations, or suspicious behaviors to a supervisor and the ECS Safety Committee.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

ECS staff members and primary volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers diligently enforce all ECS policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the ECS Safety Committee.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICIES

To maintain a safe environment for our children, ECS staff members and primary volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation violating these policies. All questions or concerns about inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to the ECS Safety Committee.

CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED/HARMFUL ACT

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the school to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from all child interaction and school-related activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement, child protective agencies, or ECS.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act may be banned from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students, or vulnerable populations at ECS. If the person is a staff member, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from ECS.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person violates this policy and grounds for termination of employees or removal of volunteers of ECS.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

The ECS Safety Committee will take appropriate action on behalf of the school when a report of abuse occurs.

WHEN A CHILD HAS BEEN VICTIMIZED

Suppose a staff member or primary volunteer knows that a child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment. In that case, the information will be reported to supervisory staff, the ECS Safety Committee, and the appropriate authorities will be notified as outlined above.

BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE

Staff members and primary volunteers should refrain from taking children to the restroom. Elementary students may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, the student should receive the minimum amount of aid based on their capabilities.) If a staff member or primary volunteer must go to the restroom to check up on an individual child, they should:

- 1) Seek out another person to accompany them.
- 2) If someone is unavailable to accompany them, they should knock at the exterior bathroom door and ask if the child needs assistance.
- 3) If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the area and try to assist the child verbally in completing their activities. In contrast, the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.
- 4) Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should only be done in the presence of another staff or volunteer.

GIFT GIVING

Staff members and primary volunteers are prohibited from providing unique gifts to any individual student. Special occasions or exceptional accomplishments should receive group acknowledgment and can quickly be rewarded with group recognition (i.e., give mention during announcements; have the entire class sing Happy Birthday, etc.) Any requests for variance from this policy must be addressed to the Administrator.

INTOXICANTS

Staff members and primary volunteers are prohibited from using, consuming, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs in any ECS facility, during a school activity, or while working with students at ECS. ECS staff members and primary volunteers are prohibited from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to students.

TOBACCO

ECS is a tobacco-free facility. ECS requires staff members and primary volunteers to refrain from using or possessing tobacco products in any ECS facility, in the presence of children or students who attend ECS or their parents, during any ECS school function. ECS staff members and primary volunteers are prohibited from providing tobacco products to students.

NUDITY

Staff members and primary volunteers at ECS should never be nude in the presence of students in their care.

ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND STUDENTS

ECS recognizes that meeting students' educational needs may occasionally require staff members and primary volunteers to interact with them individually. These people should observe the following guidelines when interacting with students:

Individual Meetings

Staff members and primary volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual student when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed. There will be no one-to-one meetings between a staff member or primary volunteer and a student behind closed doors. Suppose a circumstance arises where a private one-to-one meeting does occur. In that case, the staff member or primary volunteer will notify the appropriate supervisor before or after the meeting. If applicable, that supervisor will further inform the succeeding supervisor.

Transportation

Staff members and primary volunteers may occasionally be required to provide transportation for students. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of students:

- 1) Students should never be transported without parental permission.
- 2) Students should be transported directly to their destination. No unauthorized stops should be made. Visits for food or restroom usage may be necessary, and all other guidelines should apply.
- 3) Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
- 4) No drivers under age 25 may provide transportation for students unless the student's parent approves a student to drive.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave their students in the care of ECS staff members and volunteers for services and activities will be contacted if their child/student becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in school activities.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to participate in all services and programs in which students are involved at ECS (a parent accompanying a child to any school program or activity is responsible for their child's safety).

PHYSICAL CONTACT

ECS is committed to protecting the students in our care. The school has implemented a physical contact policy to promote a positive, nurturing environment while protecting our students. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of ECS staff or primary volunteers must always foster trust – personal conduct must be above reproach. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in School programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back, and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff or volunteers and students are essential for students' development and are generally suitable in the school setting.
2. Physical affection should be appropriate to the student's age. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any touching and inappropriate affection displays should be immediately reported to the athletic director, administrator, or board chairperson.
3. Physical contact and affection should only be given in the presence of other children, school staff, and primary volunteers. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when more than two individuals are present and the contact is open to observation.

4. Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection upon a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

At the end of the school activity, ECS primary volunteers and staff members are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated in writing by parents or legal guardians.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS

ECS staff members and primary volunteers are prohibited from sexually-oriented conversations with students. However, it is expected that from time to time, staff may be called upon to address students regarding human sexuality and purity. Staff members and volunteers are not permitted to discuss inappropriate or explicit information about their personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any student in the school. This provision includes using cellular phones, text messages, e-mail, instant messaging, and online chat rooms.

POSSESSION OF SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS

ECS staff members and primary volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, etc.) on school property or in the presence of students. If any such materials are necessary for classroom instruction, the Administrator must approve them in advance.

INTERNET/SOCIAL MEDIA

No computer, phone, tablet, or other electronic device on school premises in the possession of a student, volunteer, or staff member during any ECS school function is to be used to visit pornographic or sexually inappropriate websites. Violation of this policy can lead to discipline from the ECS Safety Committee. Any questions about the improper use of computers or the suitability of a particular website should be discussed with the Administrator. The absence of, or lack of, explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. The suitability of a particular website should be discussed with the Administrator.

Parents

ECS expects each volunteer or staff member to maintain a professional relationship with parents. Should you choose to participate in social networking with parents, please be aware that you represent ECS. Anything you post, including pictures, reflects on ECS.

Other Friends

Remind other members of the network of your position at ECS and that current or former students may access your profile and monitor their posts to your network accordingly. Conversely, be judicious in your postings to all friends' sites, and act immediately to remove any material that may be inappropriate from your site, whether posted by you or someone else.

Privacy

Recognize that there is no complete privacy on a social networking site. Take care in anything you post online. Keep your privacy settings at appropriate levels to protect yourself. Any violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

It is anticipated that certain ECS activities may occasionally require that overnight sleeping arrangements be made for students and staff members or primary volunteers. If an activity requires sleeping arrangements, staff members and volunteers will strictly observe the following rules: any exceptions to the below policies must be approved in advance by the Administrator:

1. Staff members and volunteers will monitor sleeping students periodically, conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping students remain in designated sleeping areas.
2. Only students of the same sex will be permitted to sleep in the same room.
3. Sometimes, a staff member or volunteer will sleep in the same room as students or an adjoining room. However, staff members or volunteers are prohibited from sleeping in a 1:1 ratio setting with students for any reason unless the staff member or volunteer is an immediate family member of the student.
4. If overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each staff member, volunteer, and student will use single sleeping bags or blankets. A “one-person-to-one-bag or blanket” rule will be observed in these instances.
5. Staff members, volunteers, and students must wear top and bottom clothing while sleeping.

SUPERVISION

ECS staff members and primary volunteers are expected to provide adequate supervision for children in their care while working at the school. Some group activities away from the school may let youth function in small, unsupervised groups for brief periods. When group activities allow for unsupervised functioning, staff and volunteers should set clear expectations for students concerning meeting times and “check in” with staff members or workers in charge of the activity.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between staff members, volunteers, and students should be positive and uplifting. ECS staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal exchanges encouraging and constructive and be mindful of their mission of aiding parents in educating children. Staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of students.

Policies and Procedures
Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Evangel Christian School’s Safety Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Evangel Christian School.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and Evangel Christian School may amend, revise, or eliminate any guideline.

[For Volunteers]

I acknowledge and will comply with the ECS [Statement of Faith](#), [Standards of Conduct](#), and the [Handbook](#).

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my position description. While, ideally, I will serve in this position for the entire term specified in the position description, I understand that I am serving as a volunteer and may choose to end this service at any time. (If possible, I agree to provide two weeks’ notice to my supervisor).

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this policy statement do not express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Evangel Christian School and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for the hours that I have worked.

Finally, I understand that I must review new guidelines created and distributed and manual policies changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the policies and procedures manual.

Staff Member or Volunteer’s name (please print)

Staff Member or Volunteer’s signature

Date: _____

[This page is to remain attached to the Evangel Christian School Safety Policies]