



Christian Heritage School

Child Protection Policy

Scripture teaches that our children are members of God's covenant people (Genesis 17:7, Matthew 19:14). We at Christian Heritage School (CHS) are committed to glorifying God by providing a safe environment for our children, youth, and adults. Overall, CHS intends to promote practices that safeguard our children and youth from all forms of abuse and mistreatment.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, classroom helpers, chaperones, and any individual serving in a capacity involving children through Christian Heritage School.

Definitions

Legally, a child is any person under the age of 18.

Child abuse or neglect is any action or failure to act that endangers or harms a child's physical, emotional, or mental health, safety, or welfare.

Child abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- *Physical Abuse* – Any non-accidental physical injury to a child, including hitting, shaking, burning, biting, or other acts causing bodily harm.
- *Emotional Abuse* – Emotional injury resulting from persistent criticism, humiliation, rejection, intimidation, threats, or failure to provide appropriate emotional support.
- *Sexual Abuse* – Any sexual activity involving a child, including molestation, exploitation, sexual assault, indecent exposure, grooming, pornography, or any sexual contact prohibited by law.
- *Neglect* – Failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, medical care, or protection necessary for a child's well-being.

Safe Conduct and Practices

Christian Heritage School implores all employees and volunteers to demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23), every adult serving children is expected to exercise wisdom, integrity, sound judgment, and vigilance.

The safety and well-being of every child shall always be the highest priority. Employees and volunteers are expected to provide appropriate supervision, maintain professional boundaries, and avoid situations that could place children or themselves at risk.

To accomplish these goals, we have implemented the following rules as they apply to CHS:

- Employees and volunteers should avoid being alone with a single child who is not their own whenever possible.
- Meetings should occur in observable, interruptible locations or with another approved adult (or parent) present.
- Restroom assistance should not be given unless absolutely necessary and the child's parent/guardian is not available. If help is required, two approved adults must assist together.
- Children should never be left unsupervised in classrooms, restrooms, playgrounds, or other isolated areas.
- Physical contact should always be appropriate, brief, non-threatening, and in response to the needs of the child. Employees and volunteers should avoid any touch that could reasonably be misunderstood or that makes a child uncomfortable.
- Discipline shall be constructive and age-appropriate. Appropriate discipline includes verbal redirection, encouragement, and involving school administration or parents when necessary.
- Employees and volunteers must protect children from bullying, harassment, abuse, or inappropriate behavior by any child or adult.
- Electronic communication with students should always include parents.

Reporting Child Abuse

Christian Heritage School is committed to complying with all applicable California laws regarding child abuse reporting.

Under the California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA), certain school employees and other designated individuals are mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are legally required to report known or reasonably

suspected child abuse or neglect immediately by telephone to the appropriate child protective agency or law enforcement, followed by a written report within the time required by California law.

Even individuals who are not mandated reporters are strongly encouraged to report suspected abuse.

If any employee or volunteer has reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected, he or she shall:

1. Immediately ensure the child's safety whenever possible.
2. Immediately notify the school administration.
3. If the individual is a mandated reporter, immediately make a report to Child Welfare Services or the appropriate law enforcement agency as required by California law.
 1. *Notification to school administration does **not** satisfy a mandated reporter's legal obligation.*
4. Cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement, Child Welfare Services, or other authorized agencies.

Christian Heritage School will fully cooperate with all lawful investigations while maintaining appropriate confidentiality to protect the child, the reporting individual, and all parties involved.

Retaliation against any person who makes a good-faith report of suspected abuse is strictly prohibited.