

Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Including Specific Anti-Bullying Policy Statements

OBJECTIVE

Promote a zero-tolerance policy for any act of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying, and other forms of abuse.

I. FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow is fully committed to promoting the rights of children notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow has a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. In order to achieve this, we will ensure the following:

- That as an educational institution, we will actively endeavor to fulfill our role of providing quality academic training - keeping in mind that each child is a unique individual. We believe that part of protecting the child is to provide venues for the discovery of his God-given talents and abilities so that he develops his full potential by prescribing a curricular track that will prepare him for his future station in life.
- That as a Christian school, we will maintain effective child discipline that is Bible-based because it is our conviction that the Word of God is the final authority in all aspects of life. We believe that by teaching a child to set boundaries and parameters through rules and regulations, and the efficient implementation of these, a child grows into adulthood with a balanced view of his rights in line with his responsibilities. Thus, ultimately protecting him through wise living.
- That as a partner of the government, the Department of Education in particular, we will support its campaign on child protection as embodied in the "DepEd Child Protection Policy" enclosed in DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2012. We recognize the duties and responsibilities of the school and school personnel stated in the policy as well as the duties and responsibilities of the pupils, students, and learners stated therein. We believe that a balanced emphasis given to the duties and responsibilities of both the school and the learners will provide ultimate protection for all. That as an employer, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. This policy aims to prepare them as effective agents of discipline as well as protect them from unfair and false accusations by students and parents.

- That as partners of parents and guardians, we will exercise parental authority and responsibility over the pupils, students and learners while under our supervision, instruction and custody in all authorized activities whether inside or outside the school premises. We believe that this authority is given by the parents through the Parents' Commitment and Understanding and Parents' Letter of Agreement (Appendix B) signed upon registration.
- That as "second" parents of the pupils, students and learners, we will provide a balance of nourishment and discipline.

II. Definition of Terms

As used in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (*IRR*) of Republic Act No. 10627, otherwise known, as the "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013", the following terms shall be defined as:

"Bullying" refers to any severe, or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of another student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school; such as, but not limited to, the following:

1. Any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the victim like punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, tickling, headlocks, inflicting school pranks, teasing, fighting and the use of available objects as weapons;
2. Any act that causes damage to a victim's psyche and/or emotional well-being;
3. Any slanderous statement or accusation that causes the victim undue emotional distress like directing foul language or profanity at the target, name-calling, tormenting and commenting negatively on victim's looks, clothes, or body;
4. **"Cyber-bullying"** or any bullying done through the use of technology or any electronic means. The term shall also include any conduct resulting to harassment, intimidation, or humiliation, through the use of other forms of technology, such as, but not limited to texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, internet, social media, online games, or other platforms or formats as defined in DepED Order No. 40, s. 2012; and
5. Any other form of bullying as may be provided in the school's child protection or anti-bullying policy, consistent with the Act and its IRR.

The term “*bullying*” shall also include:

1. “**Social bullying**” – refers to any deliberate, repetitive and aggressive social behavior intended to hurt others or to belittle another individual or group.

2. “**Gender-based bullying**” – refers to any act that humiliates or excludes a person on the basis of perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI).

c. “**Bully**” – refers to any student who commits acts of bullying as defined by the Act or its IRR.

d. “**Bullied**” or “**Victim**” – refers to any student who experiences the acts of bullying or retaliation as defined by the Act or its IRR.

e. “**Bystander**” – refers to any person who witnesses or has personal knowledge of any actual or perceived acts or incidents of bullying or retaliation as defined by the IRR.

f. “**Service provider**” – refers to any person who is not a teacher or school personnel but who works in the school, such as, but not limited to, security guards, canteen personnel, utility workers, and transportation service personnel.

g. “**Student**” – refers to a person who attends classes in any level of basic education, and includes a pupil or learner as defined in DepED Order No. 40, s. 2012.

III. GENERAL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY PRINCIPLES

With the foundational statements, Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow will:

1. Ensure that the school shall be conducive to learning and children shall have the right to education free from fear;
2. Ensure that all children shall be protected from all forms of abuse and bullying to develop self-esteem and self-confidence;
3. Advocate a positive and non-violent mode of disciplining children to foster self-discipline and to improve self-esteem;
4. Ensure that corporal correction shall not be used in school for the purpose of discipline, training, or control;
5. Take steps to prevent bullying and ensure that the appropriate

- interventions, counseling and other services, are provided for the victims of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, and bullying;
6. Ensure that pupils, students or learners shall respect the rights of others and refrain from committing acts of bullying and peer violence;
 7. Ensure that parents shall be actively involved in all school activities or events that raise awareness on children's rights, positive discipline, and the prevention of bullying;
 8. Ensure that the school shall orient visitors and guests on the Child Protection Policy.
 9. Establish a Child Protection Committee (the administrator or principal will be the chairman of this committee or may designate another person as chairman), of which composition are updated every school year. (See Section VI of this policy)

Further, Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow shall:

1. Coordinate with appropriate offices and other agencies for appropriate assistance and intervention, as may be required in the performance of its functions;
2. Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral obligations to protect children and young people from harm, abuse, and exploitation;
3. Develop best practices in relation to the recruitment of all workers – full-time, part-time, or volunteers;
4. Ensure that all workers or service providers – full time, part-time or volunteers - understand their responsibility to work to the standards and procedures detailed in their contracts.
5. Ensure that all workers understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a pupil, student, or learner, or a worker's conduct towards a pupil, student or learner, to the school head;
6. Ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
7. Ensure that the designated child protection officer (the officer can be designated by the Administrator or Principal) understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. police and/or social work).
8. Ensure that the school meets all its responsibilities in adhering to the requirements of the DepEd Child Protection Policy;
9. Provide opportunities for all workers – full time, part-time, service

- providers and volunteers - to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the care and protection of children and young people;
10. Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

IV. SPECIFIC ANTI-BULLYING POLICY STATEMENTS

In compliance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 (Republic Acts 10627), Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow will:

1. Prohibit the following consistent with Section 3 of the Act –
 - a. Bullying on the school grounds and its adjacent properties, in school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off the school grounds, vehicles leased by the school for special events, and school buses accredited by the school.
 - b. Cyber-bullying – bullying through the use of technology and electronic device or other forms of media owned, leased, or used by the school.
 - c. Retaliation against a person reporting a case of bullying.
2. Address bullying through preventive and intervention programs as provided for in Rule IV Sections 6 and 7 of the Anti-Bullying Law.
3. Implement the mechanisms and procedures provided for in Rule VI Sections 8.4-8.6 of the Anti-Bullying Law.

V. PROTOCOL ON DISCIPLINE CASES

Philippine Christian School of Tomorrow will follow the general procedures in handling disciplinary cases:

1. All child abuse and bullying incidents shall be reported to the School Head.
2. The School Head shall in turn inform the parents of the students concerned and a meeting shall be held for that purpose.
3. The student shall be referred to the CPC for counseling and other interventions.
4. The school may impose measures in accordance with the Conduct Policies stated in the Parent/Student Handbook using the principles of positive and non-violent discipline.

5. Punitive measures such as suspension or dismissal will be a last resort.

VI. THE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Composition (SY 2023-2024):

- Chairperson – President, PCST Inc.
- Vice Chairperson – Principal
- Faculty Representative
- Parents' Representative
- Students' Representative

The Functions of CPC:

1. Initiate information dissemination programs and organize activities for the protection of children including awareness-raising programs in preventing and addressing bullying;
2. Establish a system for identifying students who may be suffering from significant harm based on any physical, emotional or behavioral signs;
3. Monitor all cases or incidents related to child abuse and bullying;
4. Monitor the implementation of positive measures and effective procedures in providing the necessary support for the child and for those who care for the child;
5. Ensure that the children's right to be heard is respected and upheld in all matters and procedures affecting their welfare; and
6. Make the necessary referrals to appropriate agencies, offices or persons, as may be required by circumstances.