



**Pharos
Academy**

A Christian, Classical, Hybrid Microschool

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Updated 7-8-2026

PHAROS ACADEMY CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Pharos Academy is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for those participating in our ministry activities—children, youth, and vulnerable adults. We also seek to minimize any vulnerability to unwarranted accusations of improper behavior that our organization, volunteers, and employees may experience as they fulfill their ministerial duties. To fulfill these commitments as fully as possible, our leadership team has adopted the following procedures to be used, without exception, when selecting ministry volunteers and new employees and supervising children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

DEFINITIONS

- Minor — Any person between the ages of 0 and 18. A minor may include any 18-year-old still enrolled in high school.
- Child or children — Any minor from birth through fifth grade.
- Youth — Any minor from sixth through 12th grade. A youth may include any 18-year-old still enrolled in high school.
- Volunteer — A person performing services or donating time or effort without compensation who is authorized to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Employee — A paid staff member or a self-employed teacher contracted to teach or serve at Pharos Academy.
- Worker — A volunteer or employee authorized to work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

VOLUNTEER AND EMPLOYEE SCREENING PROCEDURES

- All prospective volunteers and employees are subject to Pharos Academy's Child Protection Background Check Policy. Prior to consideration, all candidates seeking a volunteer position that involves working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will complete and return an initial ministry application.

SUPERVISION

1. Two Adult Rule: At least two screened adults must be present at every function or program involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults. This includes each classroom, vehicle, or enclosed area. At least one adult must be 21 years of age or older. For large groups, the number of adult supervisors must meet or exceed applicable state/teacher ratio requirements.

2. Rule of Three: In limited circumstances when the Two Adult Rule cannot be implemented, at least three individuals must be present, with at least one being a screened adult employee or volunteer. The Two Adult Rule must always be followed for activities involving children under age five.
3. Adult workers should avoid being alone with a child or youth. Limited exceptions may be permitted for spiritual counsel/mentoring of a youth, but any one-on-one interaction must occur where both parties are visible to others. *Planned one-on-one meetings require prior approval from a ministry leader and written parental/guardian consent. Such meetings are limited to no more than three occasions of 30 minutes each.*
4. *Adult employees and volunteers should avoid traveling one-on-one in a vehicle with a minor. If necessary, notify parents/guardians or supervisors of departure and arrival times.*
5. No-Go Zones: Unused rooms, closets, and outdoor structures must be kept locked with limited key access to reduce unsupervised areas.
6. Workers should avoid the appearance of impropriety, such as sitting children on their lap, kissing, or embracing in ways that could be misinterpreted.

BATHROOM PROCEDURES

1. Children age 5 or younger should be assisted as needed by an adult female, with the bathroom door left and a second screened worker nearby.
2. Never touch the private areas of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult except when necessary (e.g., changing a diaper).

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

1. Workers must arrive at least 10 minutes before a scheduled activity and remain until all participants in their care have been picked up by an authorized person. No child or youth should be released to find parents or wait unattended.
2. Children and youth may only be released to parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized in advance.

DISCIPLINE

1. Workers are never to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone. Physical restraint is permitted only when reasonably necessary to prevent immediate harm to self or others.

2. Disciplinary problems should be reported to the ministry leader or to the parent/guardian.

INJURIES OR ILLNESS

1. Persons who are ill (with fever or a communicable disease) will not be permitted to participate.
2. Ill participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as possible, or isolated under adult supervision until pickup.
3. Take reasonable steps to avoid contact with blood, saliva, or other bodily fluids.
4. Ministry leaders will ensure proper medical attention for injuries and notify parents/guardians promptly. Serious injuries require immediate medical care and notification.

RECORDKEEPING

1. Attendance lists must be maintained for every function, including date, names of participants, coordinators, and supervisors.
2. A written Notice of Injury report must be completed for any injury and forwarded to the ministry coordinator or supervisor.

SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT AND MANDATORY REPORTING

1. All workers subject to mandatory reporting laws must comply and report any reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect to local authorities as required by law.
2. Any worker suspecting abuse must immediately inform their supervisor or ministry leader (unless that person is the suspected perpetrator) and may need to complete a Suspected Abuse or Neglect Report form.
3. **Employees and volunteers** must promptly notify parents/guardians (unless they are the suspected perpetrator), Pharos Academy's insurance carrier, and any required denominational or oversight body.
4. When in doubt about reporting, legal counsel will be consulted immediately for a written opinion (within 24 hours).

VIOLATION OF POLICY OR PROCEDURES

1. Workers must report violations to the **Head of School. If the Head of School is in violation, worker must report violations to the President of the School Board.**

2. Leaders will take steps to ensure compliance, which may include removal from position.

INTERNAL INVESTIGATION

1. All allegations of abuse or molestation will be taken seriously and investigated first by civil authorities, then internally with legal counsel, **as needed**. The ministry will not interfere with law enforcement.
2. Any employee or volunteer under investigation will be removed from duties pending outcome.
3. Individuals found guilty of abuse or molestation will be permanently removed from positions involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

DEALING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NEWS MEDIA

1. Pharos Academy will fully cooperate with law enforcement.
2. *Legal counsel will be consulted promptly.*
3. Only a designated spokesperson (leadership team member, employee, or attorney) will handle media inquiries.

ANNUAL REVIEW

1. This policy and procedures will be reviewed annually with all workers and leadership.
2. All employees and volunteers will complete a brief renewal application annually. Unsuitable individuals will be removed from relevant positions.

REVISION OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Pharos Academy's Board will periodically review and update this policy as needed, communicating changes to all affected parties.

Additional Supporting Policies:

- Personal Conduct / Morals Clause (adapted to Pharos Academy's biblical standards). ??
- Youth Ministry Communication Policy (covering texting, social media, electronic communications with consent forms and safety guidelines).