



## **Child Protection Code of Conduct: Employees, Contractors and Volunteers**

Costa Rica International Academy is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, contractors, volunteers and students who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, contractors, students and volunteers acting on behalf of Costa Rica International Academy can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.

We should be aware of our own and other person's vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses or harasses. We are to provide safe environments for children and youth at all times at Costa Rica International Academy.

We must show prudent discretion before touching another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whenever it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern or celebration. Costa Rica International Academy personnel, contractors and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a child or young-person are best held on a public area; in a room where the interaction can (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting.

We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that children are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school authorities as described in the Child Protection Policy of Costa Rica International Academy.

Faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers should refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times, and from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with children. Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people. Staff members, contractors and volunteers should not accept gifts from, or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between CRIA parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:

- Communications between Costa Rica International Academy staff, contractors and volunteers and minors that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship (teacher, coach, host, etc.) is prohibited.
- Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.
- Electronic communication that takes place over the school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.

- Faculty, staff, contractors and volunteers who use any kind of online-communications including any form of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may do so only for activities involving school business.

### **Statement of Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct for Signature**

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in the Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in Costa Rica International Academy programs:

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with a child at school activities without another adult being notified.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children/youth.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of Costa Rica International Academy Child Protection Policy and its reporting regulations to report suspected child abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child/youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride home alone.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, email, Facebook, Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of Costa Rica International Academy, I am subject to a criminal background history check. My signature confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children and/or youth I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including the removal from Costa Rica International Academy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_