

TOP ACADEMY

STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT 330 S. Thompson St., DeLand, FL 32720

TOP Academy is committed to maintaining a safe, ethical, and professional learning environment. All instructional personnel and school administrators must follow the Standards of Ethical Conduct as required by Florida law.

ALL STAFF MUST:

- ✓ Maintain honesty, integrity, and professionalism
- ✓ Treat students with respect and appropriate boundaries
- ✓ Protect student safety and confidentiality
- ✓ Use technology responsibly
- ✓ Report misconduct immediately
- ✓ Follow all Florida laws and school policies

MANDATORY REPORTING

Staff are **REQUIRED BY LAW** to report:

- Suspected **child abuse, abandonment, or neglect**
- Employee **misconduct affects student health, safety, or welfare**

Failure to report is a violation of Florida law.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- ✗ Sexual, physical, or emotional misconduct
- ✗ Inappropriate communication with students
- ✗ Harassment or discrimination
- ✗ Falsifying records
- ✗ Drug or alcohol use while supervising students

REPORT MISCONDUCT TO:

- School Administrator
- School Director/Owner
- Law Enforcement or DCF (if required)

Retaliation for goodfaith reporting is prohibited.

Unethical Conduct of Staff

- Engaging in abusive or unacceptable behavior.
- Disclosing or misusing confidential or proprietary information.
- Engaging in business conduct that is damaging to clients or Living Faith Academy.
- Representing or discussing Living Faith Academy affairs with the media without proper authorization.
- Undermining business decisions.
- Having a relationship with a student's parent.
- Engaging in illegal activity including the use/abuse of drugs or narcotics.
- Using Living Faith Academy confidential information, facilities, and supplies or merchandise for personal gain.

Concern for the student requires that our instructional personnel:

- Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
- Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
- Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
- Shall not harass or discriminate against any student based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make a reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.

Engaging in unethical conduct may result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment. Abusive behavior of parents/ guardians will result in a report to the abuse hotline and in legal consequences, which will be pursued by Living Faith Academy to the fullest extent of the law.

Duty to Report

All staff must report alleged misconduct by any individual including other consumers, Living Faith Academy staff, and other instructional personnel which may affect the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Complaints of professional misconduct should be made verbally or in writing to Administration. If your complaint is against a member of Administration, then it should be reported to a member of the School Board.

- **Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect** - All staff and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800- 96-ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.
- **Signs of Physical Abuse** - The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.
- **Signs of Sexual Abuse** - The child may have torn, stained, or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in the genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.
- **Signs of Neglect** - The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention.
- **Patterns of Abuse** - Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

Reporting Procedure

All employees, educational support employees, and administrators must report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators, which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of staff should be made to the office administrator (386) 279-6445 Lesha R James. Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to school principal Bishop Henry James Jr. (386) 279-6445. Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida-certified educator. will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators that affect the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in the main office and multi-purpose room.

Liability Protections

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result because of such action. (F.S. 39.203)

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095)

Rights and Prerogatives of Students

1. When staff must act on behalf of a student, the interests and the rights of that student shall be safeguarded.
2. When another individual has been legally authorized, according to Chapter 393 of Florida Statutes, to act on behalf of a student, staff shall deal with that person with the student's best interest in mind.

3. Staff shall not engage in any action that violates or diminishes the civil or legal rights of students.

Confidentiality and Privacy

1. Confidentiality is the protection and privacy rendered to students by law. Staff shall respect the privacy of students and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of services.
2. It is the policy of Living Faith Academy that all information concerning students is confidential. This includes the fact that a person has or has not received services from Living Faith Academy.
3. Living Faith Academy's staff must use reasonable safeguards to prevent incidental disclosure of students' Health Information or confidential information. Living Faith Academy's staff must keep student files in locked cabinets; avoid using names and identifying information in public areas or hallways and use computer security measures.

ALL STAFF MUST SIGN AN ANNUAL ETHICS ACKNOWLEDGMENT