QSI International School of Dushanbe
Code of Conduct 2025-2026

This Code of Conduct must be read and signed by all employees of the school, parents, and anyone who will have contact with students as part of a school program, activity, field trip, or other event. The person's signature indicates understanding and agreement to the Code of Conduct.

QSI International School of Dushanbe is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers. The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, students, and volunteers acting on behalf of the school 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. Additionally, members of the school community, including parents, must be aware of the parameters of the Code of Conduct and the expectation of adult behavior toward children within the school community.

**For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, the phrase "faculty, staff, and volunteers" includes coaches, contractors, and all other adults who work with, or around, children within the school community.

- We should be aware of our own and other persons' 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 not engage in any covert 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 school activities, both on and off campus. We ask families to provide safe environments for children at private events as well.
- 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 whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. School personnel and volunteers are prohibited from physical discipline of 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. The following are examples of appropriate and inappropriate physical behavior.
    - Appropriate physical behavior includes contact that maintains physical boundaries at all times and only consists of public and nonsexual touches, such as:
        - Pats on the back or shoulder

        - Child-initiated hugs, or hugs given with consent to meet a child's needs, e.g., saying to a crying student, "What do you need right now? Would you like a hug or is there another way I can help you?"
        - Holding hands to cross the street safely
        - Support with toileting or changing clothes, as outlined in the Intimate Care Policy
        - To prevent a child from injury (such as catching a child in a fall)
        - To restrain a child from self-harm
    - Inappropriate physical behavior is any contact that abuses, exploits, or harasses a child; crosses professional boundaries; or places the needs of the adult above the needs of the child. Inappropriate behavior includes:
        - Slapping, shaking, pinching, hitting, punching, pushing, grabbing, kicking
        - Patting the buttocks
        - Touching private body parts
        - Intimate/romantic/sexual contact
        - Showing pornography or involving children in pornographic activities
        - Hugs initiated by the adult to meet the adult's needs, e.g. "I need a hug today–will you give me a hug?"
- One-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting. All meetings between adults and children must be observable and interruptible.
- 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 and local authorities.
- Faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers must refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol, 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 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 parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:
    - Any dual relationships with students (close family friendships with parents of students, volunteer positions outside of school that involve students, etc.) are governed by the professional expectations of behavior and adhere to all other points in this Code of Conduct.
    - Any one-on-one encounters with minors must be observable and interruptible.
    - 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.
    - Faculty, staff, and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may only do so for activities involving school business.

- Faculty, staff, and volunteers will not connect with, or "friend," any student on any social media platform until the child has graduated from secondary school and reached the age of maturity.
- Volunteers will not engage in dating or any form of "romantic" relationship with a student until that student has graduated from secondary school and reached the age of maturity.
- Faculty and staff employed by QSI will not engage in dating or any form of "romantic" relationship with a student until that student has reached the age of 21.
- Faculty, staff, and volunteers will not share names or photos of any students on social media without written permission from the students and their parents/guardians.

Statement of Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct for Signature

I promise to follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in QSI International School of Dushanbe programs.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities without another adult being notified or in a place that is observable and interruptible by others (e.g., an open classroom door or open meeting area).
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of the school by reporting any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Director.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse or neglect of children and/or youth.
- Protect the child and the child's family by maintaining confidentiality in the case of a report of misconduct and refusing to share any details about the report with anyone outside of the school's Child Protection Team and relevant authorities.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or 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 alone in a car without permission from the child's parent/guardian unless the child's well-being is in danger. In the case of transporting the child in an emergency situation, I will always make a written report of the circumstances and actions taken as soon as possible to submit to the director.

- Accept gifts from or gives 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.
- Connect with or "friend" students on social media.
- Engage in a dating or "romantic" relationship with a student.
- Share photos or names of students on social media without written permission.
- Discuss the details of any allegations with anyone outside of the Child Protection Team.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of QSI International School of Dushanbe, I am subject to a criminal record background check. My signature on my contract confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children and youth, I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the school. If a report is made against me, and the allegations are confirmed, the school may share, as per the local laws, the findings with anyone who inquires for a reference about me.

**It is impossible to predict every situation that may arise. In all cases, the staff member is expected to exercise sound judgment to protect the safety and well-being of the child.

Parents:
I understand the rules regarding mandatory reporting that are in place at the school. I agree to maintain an environment in my home and at private events that is free from abuse and neglect, for my own children and any other children with whom I may interact.

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My signature below indicates I have read, understood, and will follow the 2025-2026 QSI International School of Dushanbe Code of Conduct.

Print Your Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____