



## **WestcoastYouth School Student Contact Policy**

At WestcoastYouth the safety and protection of school students is of the highest priority, and we have a zero tolerance policy for any actual or suspected misconduct of anyone involved in WestcoastYouth leadership.

### ***Purpose of leader-student contact***

The relationships school students have with their WestcoastYouth leaders is often a treasured relationship with a mentor and role-model. To develop and deepen these relationships, contact outside of Friday night WestcoastYouth meetings (in person, or via text, email, phone calls, social media, etc) is often greatly beneficial, and much appreciated.

### ***Policy***

Our policy at WestcoastYouth for contact between leaders and school students is as follows:

#### **(A) For in-person contact:**

1. Leaders may not meet with a school student in-person without the prior consent from their parent or guardian for such a meeting;<sup>1</sup>
2. Leaders may never be alone with a school student, unless in an open public place with other people present (e.g. a café).

#### **(B) For all other contact (e.g. text, email, phone call, social media):**

1. Leaders may not initiate or continue contact with a school student without the prior consent from their parent or guardian;
2. Leaders must retain a record of all communication;
3. As far as practicable, leaders must keep the school student's parent or guardian aware that contact is being made, and the general content of such contact, and if possible, the parent or guardian should be included in correspondence;
4. Leaders should seek to follow the 'home phone' rule of thumb, where no contact is made (or responded to) at a time when you would not call their home phone line (i.e. approximately 9pm-8am).

Please also note that St Lawrence's and WestcoastYouth policy relating to leaders includes that all leaders:

1. Have a valid Working with Children's Card;
2. Have a valid WA or National Police Clearance Check;
3. Have attended a Diocesan Safe Church Training Course (level 2);
4. Have completed a Diocesan Volunteer registration form with reference checks.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Appendix for specific outlines regarding mentoring



## WestcoastYouth Contact Policy – Outline

	Youth at WestcoastYouth, Years 6-12
In-person contact: Friendships	! Only in group contexts.
In-person contact: Mentoring	! Only in public spaces (eg: café, church courtyard) with other people present. This must be approved by a parent/guardian.
Phone/video calls	! Only in relation to a WestcoastYouth event.
Social Media: Friend/follower	♀ ♂
Social Media: Public posting (eg: commenting)	♀ ♂
1-to-1 messaging (eg: private chats, text messages, ect.)	♀ ♂ Limit and steer towards group messaging (eg. Another adult in the conversation, ideally a parent/guardian). A leader should not initiate a 1-to-1 message.
Group chats (eg: social media, WhatsApp, ect.)	✓
Chat with Parent/Guardian included	✓
Untraceable contact/messaging	X WestcoastYouth leaders are not to use any messaging service that deletes previous contact. If contact is initiated by a youth on a platform like this, a leader is to respond using a different means (ideally repeating the initial contact for context).

NB: Reasonable efforts must be made to store and not delete any form of correspondence.

Key:

✓ = Permitted

X = Not permitted

♀ ♂ = Permitted with students of the same gender as the leader

! = Permitted with specific restrictions, as outlined above.



## **WestcoastYouth Photographic Policy**

The leaders at WestcoastYouth will take every effort to protect the privacy and rights of school students who attend WestcoastYouth activities or events, including in the taking, retaining and using of any photographic material.

### ***Purpose of Photograph or Video Taking***

The taking and using of photos and videos can play an important and positive role in building memories, growing relationships, and sharing experiences. This is perhaps especially true for youth today given the place of media in their lives and relationships. As such, it is foreseen that photographs or videos may be taken at WestcoastYouth activities or events for the following purposes:

1. For screening at other WCY events (eg a slide show of WCY activities the previous week, a year-end video montage, etc);
2. For posting to official WestcoastYouth social media accounts;
3. For promotional purposes (eg in a brochure for a camp).

### ***Policy***

WestcoastYouth Photographic policy is as follows:

1. Photographs or videos may only be taken in the course of regular WestcoastYouth activities or events, and for the above-listed purposes;
2. Where students are identifiable, WestcoastYouth will only use photographs or videos of school students for whom we have received photographic consent from their parent or guardian;
3. If at any point a school student or their parent or guardian requests that a photograph be removed from a social media platform or deleted from storage on the St Lawrence's server, this is to be done immediately;
4. Within a reasonable time, any photographs or videos of school students are to be transferred to and kept on the St Lawrence's IT server, and deleted from a leader's photographic device, unless explicit permission has been granted by their parent or guardian for a specific image or video to be retained on such a device.



## **Appendix – Specific outlines regarding leader-student mentoring**

Often students desire a mentor who can teach them about the Bible, encourage them and personally answer their questions. This is sometimes known as a one-to-one. The mentor relationship is often treasured and one that can prove very helpful. However, whenever a Westcoast youth leader mentors a student, it needs to be done safely.

It is important to note that not every student at Westcoast Youth will be mentored by a leader – not every student will want to be, and leaders will not always be available. We seek to not show favouritism when it comes to mentoring.

### ***Purpose of leader-student mentoring***

The purpose of a leader mentoring a student is to help them grow and encourage them in their understanding of God. This will happen as the leader and student read the Bible, discuss it and pray together.

### ***Procedure for initiating leader-student mentoring***

In order to avoid pressuring a student into a mentoring relationship, the initiation of such a relationship should come from the student and not from the parent/guardian or the leader.

### ***Guidelines of leader-student mentoring***

Due to the nature of leader-student mentoring, there are particular dangers that are not found in group settings. This is due to reduced accountability, and the dynamics of adults meeting with minors. Therefore, guidelines are important so that the emotional, physical and spiritual safety of students is always maintained, and the leader is shown to be 'above board' in their behaviour.

Here are the guidelines for a Westcoast Youth leader:

1. A Westcoast Youth leader will always ask the parent/guardian for consent before beginning any mentoring. This will include details such as duration, location, time and purpose. A leader will also send a copy of this policy.
2. A Westcoast Youth leader will follow the policy for "in-person contact" and "other contact" as outlined above.
3. A Westcoast Youth leader will not pressure or manipulate a student to speak of anything they do not wish to speak about, especially on sensitive topics such as sin, embarrassment or romantic relationships.
4. Mentoring should be established on a termly basis. Each term, if the student would like to continue, consent should be regained from the parent/guardian.
5. A Westcoast Youth leader will not continue in-person contact with a student after the time set for mentoring unless consent is given from the parent/guardian for that contact.