



Personal Communications Policy School for Life Supporters

Last updated: 30 January 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Personal Communication Policy* is to ensure that all School for Life supporters, together with School for Life's community and staff, respect the school's values and vision. A key priority of this policy is to maintain an efficient and respectful communication policy that respects the donors enthusiasm for interacting with students, whilst ensuring the comfort and protection of School for Life students.

This policy is also in place to bolster the terms outlined within the School for Life's *Child Protection Policy* to ensure compliance and understanding, and to uphold our commitment to safeguarding the welfare of our students. School for Life are bound by both Ugandan and Australian child protection laws and are committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for students, staff, supporters, and our community.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Policy states the following:

- 1. Communications between School for Life's supporters and School for Life's community members (inclusive of staff and students).**
 - 1.1.** No personal communication or exchange of personal contact information is permitted between School for Life's supporters and School for Life's community members, staff and particularly students. This includes accepting or requesting personal contact information.
 - 1.2.** The only permitted communications between School for Life supporters and School for Life community members are those which are conducted and facilitated through official school channels, and for official school duties and purposes, or those which align with School for Life's activities.
 - 1.3.** School for Life supporters must not provide or gift School for Life community members or students with money, loans, goods, or services of any kind, aside from those which are approved by School for Life operations staff and are made through official school channels. If a School for Life supporter is solicited by a School for Life community member for money, loans, goods, or services of any kind, they must alert a School for Life staff member immediately.

1.4 – School for Life supporters may purchase goods from School for Life Community Members if the exchange is reciprocal and of equal and fair value. For example, a visitor purchasing souvenirs from a community member during a home visit or at the local market.

2. Visiting School for Life

2.1. Any financial support is highly appreciated, and visitors are most welcome to make donations to the school. All donations to School for Life by visitors should be made via the School for Life Foundation website, www.schoolforlife.org.au/donate.

2.2. School for Life visitors are welcome to have an official, supervised meet and greet with their sponsored student whilst visiting the school for up to (1) hour. The time and specifics of the meeting are to be arranged in line with School for Life’s schedule, values, and capacity. These meetings should not come to the detriment of the student’s learning and therefore, though School for Life encourages regular and lasting meetings, these meetings should not disrupt the student’s learning experience nor infringe upon their studies in any way.

2.3. Only a parent or guardian is permitted to attend official academic meetings in relation to that student. School for Life supporters are not entitled to any academic information regarding their student.

3. Gifts for students

3.1. School for Life appreciates the incredible generosity and goodwill of our supporters. When visiting School for Life schools’ supporters are welcome to present donated goods to the school; however, this is not an expectation. If a School for Life Supporter intends to do this, they can request guidelines on appropriate, modest and inexpensive gifts for the school. Electronic and financial gifts from supporters directly to the school are not permitted. School for Life reserves the right to deny any and all requests as they see fit.

3.2. School for Life discourages the act of gift giving to individual children as it infringes upon our efforts to prevent preferential treatment. If a supporter would like to give a gift to a student they must contact a staff member who can review the request on a case-by-case basis.

3.3. School for Life adopts this policy on gifts for the following reasons:

- School for Life attempts to minimise any and all risks of preferential treatment amongst our students, to create an environment of equal treatment and opportunity.
- Our students come from very poor backgrounds and if they receive expensive gifts, it may cause issues such as jealousy or disappointment within their local community or peer group at school.
- Not all students at School for Life have a ‘Scholarship Supporter’ and therefore do not have the opportunity to receive gifts.

- Receiving expensive or extravagant gifts can create expectations amongst students that they will receive additional financial assistance or goods from School for Life supporters (apart from scholarships) and, as Paragraph 1.3 states, such activities are not permitted, in line with our goal that School for Life's local community will work towards self-sufficiency and independence.

4. Compliance with this policy

5.1. All School of Life's supporters are required to comply with this policy. Any violation in terms of this Policy by a School for Life supporter may result in suspension or termination of the relationship between the School and the Supporter.

EXPLANATION OF TERMINOLOGY:

- **Child/children** - Identified as students enrolled at any of School for Life's three campuses, any students residing upon our grounds or employed under our care and any student taking part in tertiary education funded by School for Life.
- **Personal communication** - Identified as any verbal, written, electronic, or other communication which is not conducted through official school channels and for official school duties and purposes; or that which has not been approved by a School for Life official staff member.
- **School for Life supporters** - Identified as any School for Life donors, scholarship providers (sponsors), visitors, major benefactors, or partners.
- **School for Life's community** - Identified as any individual employed under our care, residing on our grounds, attending our programs / campuses, including pathways students, as well as their family members, guardians, and friends.
- **School for Life staff** - Identified as all current, official staff members employed on a permanent or temporary basis, as well as volunteers, contractors and consultants and other individuals recognised as providing a service under our employment.
- **Personal contact information** - Identified as any personal contact including, but not limited to: email, addresses, phone numbers, Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype ID, Twitter, Instagram, business cards, Google+, blogs, Flickr, LinkedIn, and other social media and communication media.
- **Official school channels:** A staff member with a '@schoolforlife.org.au' email address.
- **Solicit** - Identified as direct requests including, but not limited to money, monetary loans, gifts, electronics, personal items, travel, medications, etc. or indirect requests through describing a family's or individual's circumstances and implying the need for assistance in any way, etc.



RESPONSIBILITIES

All School for Life staff in Australia and Uganda are responsible for ensuring that this policy is distributed to all School for Life supporters who come in contact with School for Life's community members and staff. Furthermore, School for Life staff are responsible for ensuring that supporters and visitors comply with this policy to the best of their ability to prevent any risk of danger or unacceptable behaviour.

SUPPORTERS DECLARATION

- I will not share my personal information including email, phone number or social media channels with the School for Life community, staff and students.
- I will not accept personal information such as email, phone number or social media from members of the School for Life community, staff and students.
- I understand School for Life does not expect gifts, but I can request guidelines on appropriate, modest and inexpensive gifts for the school.
- I will not provide or gift School for Life community members or students with money, loans, goods, or services of any kind, aside from those which are approved by School for Life operations staff and are made through official school channels.
- I will alert a School for Life staff member immediately if solicited by a School for Life community member for money, loans, goods, or services of any kind.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the Personal Communications Policy and agree to comply with it in full.

Supporters name: _____

Supporter's signature: _____

Date: __/__/____