



## Respectful Environment Policy

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### I. **Purpose**

Ready Set Learn is a free one-to-one tutoring program for children in grades K to 6. The PEI Literacy Alliance strives to create fun, positive and safe learning environments virtually through the Google Meet platform.

Every Participant has the right to work and learn in a safe, healthy, private and productive environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. This Respectful Environment Policy is intended to support an online tutoring environment where all Participants conduct themselves with integrity and treat one another with respect.

Respect is defined as the willingness to show consideration for the rights or feelings of others; to treat them courteously, inclusively, and safely. A respectful learning environment recognizes and welcomes differences, encourages communication and engagement, offers feedback and recognition, supports collaboration and teamwork, addresses conflict in a positive and respectful manner, and provides a safe, healthy and private environment for all.

At PEI Literacy Alliance, we believe in a proactive approach to respect and this policy is based on the principle that early recognition of unsatisfactory Participant behaviour can minimize the risk of disrespect or in our online learning community. Substantiated claims of disrespectful behaviour will be dealt with promptly.

The PEI Literacy Alliance reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to amend this Policy at any time.

### II. **Scope**

This Policy provides guidelines for PEI Literacy Alliance management, supervisors, tutors, volunteers, clients (children and parents/guardians) or any individual who has interaction with our online environment to respond quickly and fairly with any incidents reported under this Policy. Violations of this Policy will be investigated and, if substantiated, dealt with expeditiously.

All those participating in the Ready Set Learn program are required to utilize this Respectful Environment Policy as their standard.

### III. **General Definitions**

**Complaint** means a written complaint by the Complainant, or more likely their parent or guardian, disclosing details of the allegations.

**Complainant** refers to the person who has made a Complaint of disrespectful behaviour and includes their parent or guardian.

**Disrespectful Behaviour** refers to any unwelcome form of comment or conduct that is known or reasonably ought to have been known to:

- i. Breach the privacy of a one-to-one tutoring session;
- ii. Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment;
- iii. Be objectionable, demeaning or offensive behaviour that is unwelcome;
- iv. Adversely affect the tutor-child relationship; or
- v. Deny an individual dignity and self-respect.

**Investigator** refers to the individual appointed to investigate a Complaint under this Policy.

**Investigator's Report** means the formal report presented to the PEI Literacy Alliance after the conclusion of an investigation including recommendations for resolution of the Complaint.

**Participant** means a child or tutor engaged in the Ready Set Learn program.

**Policy** means this Respectful Environment policy.

**Respondent** refers to the person who has been accused of misconduct in violation of the Policy and who must respond to the Complaint.

#### IV. **Disrespectful Behaviour**

Disrespectful behaviour can take many forms including but not limited to jokes, insults, threats, or personal comments made verbally or by other means, including but not limited to, writing, graphic materials, posted or displayed during a one-to-one tutoring session.

The following are some examples that would offend this Policy:

- i. Displaying derogatory posters, pictures, graffiti or statements;
- ii. Insults, slurs and negative stereotyping;
- iii. Threatening, intimidating or hostile comments or actions;
- iv. Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility towards an individual or group; and
- v. Profanity and offensive language; verbal and physical threats; intimidation; taunting or ostracizing; rude or inappropriate jokes or innuendos; overly aggressive, embarrassing, humiliating or demeaning behaviour; and malicious gestures or actions.

The following are some examples that would not offend this Policy:

- i. Opinions expressed that are different from someone else's;
- ii. Chit-chat or good-natured jesting when both parties find the conduct acceptable;
- iii. Normal exercise of tutor responsibilities; and
- iv. Personality differences between individuals.

## **V. Expectation of Privacy**

Maintaining privacy in the one-to-one tutoring sessions is integral to the creation of safe and productive learning environments.

Tutors must ensure that no other person is present (spouse, friend, roommate, etc.) during a Google Meet session with a child. Any failure to maintain complete privacy of all sessions with a child will offend this Policy.

## **VI. Roles and Responsibilities**

Every individual included in the scope of this Policy has the right to be treated with respect and has a responsibility to treat others with respect. Disrespectful behaviour of any kind is strictly prohibited.

### **a) Individual Responsibility**

All individuals are responsible for:

- i. Abiding by this Policy;
- ii. Maintaining safe, healthy, private and productive learning environments;
- iii. Treating one another with respect and dignity and respecting the diversity of other individuals;
- iv. Challenging inappropriate behaviour/objectionable conduct when it happens;
- v. Cooperating and sharing openly and honestly in investigations under this Policy;
- vi. Making objections known to the alleged offender that the behaviour is unwelcomed and must stop immediately or if unable, inappropriate or uncomfortable in doing so, tell another appropriate person in authority, such as a parent or guardian, or management of the PEI Literacy Alliance;
- vii. If the unwelcome behaviour does not stop or you are considering making a Complaint, report the behaviour to management of the PEI Literacy Alliance who will attempt to facilitate an Informal Resolution, if appropriate; and
- viii. If Informal Resolution is not achieved or is not appropriate, you have the option to make a Complaint under this policy.
- ix. If you are accused of breaching this policy be sure to; listen to the person and do not act defensively or minimize the person's concerns, seek a resolution by discussing this with the person and their parent or guardian; and be open to meeting with management of the PEI Literacy Alliance.

### **b) Managers and Supervisors**

Managers and supervisors with the PEI Literacy Alliance are responsible for:

- i. Leading by example to ensure Ready Set Learn is free of disrespectful behaviour;
- ii. If advised of behaviour that breaches this policy, immediately advise the individual (where possible) that such behaviour is unacceptable and must stop immediately even in the absence of a complaint;
- iii. Ensuring that all tutors have knowledge of and understand this Policy and upon being made aware of behaviour which violates this policy, advise the individual of his/her rights under the Policy;

- iv. Encouraging early and open dialogue and feedback before inappropriate behaviour escalates;
- v. Participating in learning opportunities, and encouraging participation in learning opportunities, on the prevention, early intervention, and resolution of disrespectful behaviour and;
- vi. Monitoring situations where complaints have been made even after corrective measures have been taken and ensuring that individuals are not subject to retaliation for their involvement in a complaint.

**c) Complainant's Obligations**

Once a Complaint is made, the Complainant agrees to cooperate in any investigation being conducted under this Policy.

**d) Respondent's Obligations**

The Respondent to any Complaint shall cooperate in the investigation process conducted under this Policy.

**VII. What To Do If You Are Subjected to Disrespectful Behaviour**

It is in the interest of all parties for a Complaint to be resolved as quickly as possible and Complainants are encouraged to seek resolution of the matter at the earliest possible opportunity. Options include the following:

**a) Informal Resolution**

- i. A potential Complaint that is resolved by direct discussion with the help of a parent or guardian, which results in the behaviour ending and the parties being able to continue the tutor/child relationship.

**b) Informal Complaint**

- i. If possible, speak with or have your parent or guardian speak with the person about his/her behaviour; sometimes people do not realize the impact of their actions on others;
- ii. If this is not successful in stopping the behaviour, or if you or your parent or guardian are not comfortable speaking with the person, advise management of the PEI Literacy Alliance. Prepare written documentation to support your recollection of the incident(s) including dates and details and any steps taken to communicate or address the concerns to date;
- iii. In consultation with the PEI Literacy Alliance, determine if it is appropriate to attempt an Informal Resolution through dialogue with the person alleged to have violated this Policy; and
- iv. Where the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or where an informal complaint is inappropriate, the Complainant may choose to file a written Formal Written Complaint against the Respondent.

**c) Formal Written Complaint**

- i. A written formal complaint should be made with the assistance of any of the following:
  - (a) A parent or guardian; or
  - (b) The PEI Literacy Alliance.
- ii. The Complaint shall be signed by the Complainant and shall include the following:

1. The name of the person alleged to have engaged in behaviour which violates this Policy;
2. The date, time and location of the incident(s);
3. A detailed description of the incident(s) and or circumstances of the incident(s);
4. Copies of any relevant documents or drawings (electronic or hard copy); and
5. Any other relevant information.

## **VIII. Complaint Investigation**

### **a) When and Who to Conduct the Investigation**

- i. Within two (2) days, if practical, and no later than seven (7) days upon receiving a Complaint, an internal or external impartial Investigator shall be appointed by the PEI Literacy Alliance;
- ii. Where the PEI Literacy Alliance is not able or not appropriate to conduct an impartial investigation, a qualified external independent Investigator may be appointed to conduct the investigation.

### **b) Investigation Process**

- i. The Investigator will conduct and document a thorough and impartial investigation appropriate to the circumstances and collect evidence, question the involved parties, and review documentation. The Investigator may interview the Complainant and Respondent more than once to obtain further information and clarification.
- ii. The Investigator will submit an Investigator's Report within seven (7) days of being appointed, if practical, documenting the findings.
- iii. The report will be reviewed by the Executive Director or his/her designate and he/she will determine if any corrective action is required and if so, what type of corrective action is justified.
- iv. When the final determination is complete, the Complainant, firstly, and the Respondent, secondly, are to be informed of the investigation findings and, as appropriate, the Respondent will be notified of any corrective action(s) to be taken.
- v. If there is disciplinary action the Respondent must be provided with a copy of any discipline notation.

### **c) Investigator's Report**

- i. The Investigator will submit an Investigator's Report within seven (7) days of being appointed, if practical, documenting the:
  - (a) Identification of the Complainant and Respondent;
  - (b) An overview of the nature of the complaint including a review of the Complainant's statement;
  - (c) when the Complaint was initiated and by whom;
  - (d) all information relevant to the Complainant and Respondent;
  - (e) the Respondent's statement and any other relevant information;
  - (f) the determination on whether the policy was breached; and
  - (g) any other information deemed appropriate.

**IX. Remedies**

Appropriate action to be taken against any employee or volunteer of the PEI Literacy Alliance found to have violated this Policy may include but is not limited to and not necessarily in the following order:

- i. Written reprimand;
- ii. Attendance at a Respectful Workplace Training;
- iii. Attendance at Cultural, Anger and/or Gender Sensitivity Training;
- iv. A suspension without pay; and
- v. Termination of employment.

**X. Confidentiality**

All parties involved in investigations of complaints of disrespectful behaviour under this Policy will be treated with the strictest of confidence. Only those people involved in the process will have access to the information collected including the Complainant, Respondent and others involved in resolving the complaint. The names of the individuals involved, and the circumstances will only be divulged as required to facilitate their participation in investigating and resolving the complaint, if required by law, or pursuant to this Policy. Those found to be in breach of confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

**XI. Retaliation for Making Complaints**

Participants who feel they are victims of disrespectful behaviour have a right and responsibility to report concerns to the PEI Literacy Alliance without the fear of retaliation. Retaliation is considered a serious breach of this policy. Any tutor who retaliates in any way against a Complainant will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

**XII. Other Resources**

Nothing in this Policy prohibits a Complainant from exercising their right to report and have an incident dealt with through an external process. It is within the individual Complainant's right to file a complaint with the PEI Human Rights Commission, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or other agency as appropriate.

**XIII. Acknowledgement and Agreement**

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Respectful Environment Policy of the PEI Literacy Alliance, and I agree to adhere to this Policy.

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

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian (typing here is considered your signature): \_\_\_\_\_