

Safety is everyone's responsibility

Ensuring the physical, mental, social, and spiritual safety of confirmation class participants is essential for a successful experience.

The purpose of the rules and guidelines is to create a safe environment and to enable the young person to have a memorable and positive confirmation class experience. **Therefore, it is important that adequate information is shared between the home and the confirmation class leaders.**

The leaders of the confirmation class must have adequate information about the confirmand and their life situation (for example, regarding health, learning and support needs, friendships), so that the parish can take responsibility for their safety during confirmation class meetings and the camp period. To make the exchange of information easier, you will receive a personal information form to be filled out together by the young person and their guardian.

Safety matters are also discussed in meetings between guardians and the confirmation class leaders, so it is important to participate in them. Responsibility for the safety of the confirmation class is mutual.

The confirmation class leaders will provide the confirmand and their guardians with the necessary information about the confirmation class—its content, implementation, schedule, and matters affecting safety.

Please inform the leaders of any major changes in the young person's life or learning-related challenges. In a changed situation, it is important to contact the confirmation class leaders.

The personal information form should be filled out together by the confirmand and their guardian(s) and returned to the confirmation class leaders. You will receive the form and instructions for returning it from the confirmation class organizers.

The information on the personal information form is confidential and will be available only to the confirmation class leaders, unless otherwise agreed.

CONFIRMATION SCHOOL RULES IN ESPOO

General Principles

Safety in confirmation school is built on a shared commitment to agreed rules. It is important that these rules are discussed together with the guardian and the confirmation school participant. The confirmation school leaders are responsible for the participants during the meetings and the intensive period. Mutual commitment to the rules is the basis for a successful confirmation school experience.

Communication

Open communication between the young person, guardian, and confirmation school leaders builds trust. During the confirmation school, discussions and meetings are arranged to address shared matters, and there is also the opportunity for private conversations about issues that affect an individual young person's participation. Each participant must have an adult contact person (a guardian or another trusted adult) who is reachable during the intensive period.

Insurance

The Espoo Parish Union has insured confirmation school participants against accidents. Any other medical expenses, damage to personal belongings, or intentional damage caused by the participant to someone else's property are the responsibility of the participant and their guardian. Information about the insurance policies and their procedures can be obtained from the confirmation school leaders.

Tobacco Products, Vapes, and Nicotine Substitutes

Current tobacco legislation is followed in confirmation schools. The use of tobacco products and their substitutes is prohibited in the Espoo parishes' confirmation schools. Possession of these products is also forbidden for those under 18. If a young person is found to possess or use tobacco, nicotine products, or vapes, the leaders will intervene and contact the guardian together with the young person. If use continues despite warnings, the participant's camp- or group-based confirmation school will be discontinued, and further participation will be agreed upon separately with the guardian and the participant. Help for quitting smoking is available from school health services and the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (MLL) website.

Energy Drinks

Energy drinks may not be consumed during confirmation school meetings, nor may they be brought to the intensive period.

Alcohol and Drugs

Possession or use of alcohol or drugs—or participating in confirmation school under their influence—is strictly prohibited. Possession or use of such substances will result in discontinuation of participation in group-based confirmation school. Leaders will report any possession or use of alcohol or drugs to the guardian, child welfare authorities, and the police.

Medication

All medications prescribed to the confirmation school participant and brought to the confirmation school must be listed on the personal information form. All medication allergies must also be recorded on the form. The form should specify if the participant needs support in managing their medication, and what kind of support is required. It is important that the need for medication and related support be discussed in good time between the guardian and the confirmation school leaders.

Bullying and Privacy

All forms of bullying are prohibited in confirmation school. If any bullying occurs, it will be addressed immediately. Every participant has the right to privacy, which must be respected. Permission must be obtained from everyone appearing in photos or videos before publishing them. Phones may be used during free time and at agreed times during the confirmation school program. The use of phones may be restricted during confirmation school. Privacy is also respected by ensuring that dormitory rooms at confirmation camp are only for those assigned to stay in them.

Daily Schedule

The confirmation school operates according to an agreed schedule and follows a shared daily program. At night, camps observe quiet hours, as sufficient rest helps participants manage the activity-filled days and reduces the risk of accidents. If the participant experiences difficulties with sleep or program participation, please contact the instructors in advance.

Transportation

Transportation of confirmation school participants to the camp centers is handled by a professional driver, who is responsible for the participants' safety during the bus trip. In addition, one of the adult leaders from the confirmation school is always present on the bus. If a participant's camp period is interrupted, the guardian is responsible for arranging transportation home.

Water and Beach Safety

To ensure safety, all water- and beach-related activities, such as swimming, are supervised by the camp's adult leaders. Appropriate life jackets must be worn during water activities, and the instructions given by the confirmation school leaders must be followed.

Interruption of Confirmation School

An interruption of confirmation school may refer to the discontinuation of a single meeting or of the intensive camp period. Causes for interruption may include serious or repeated violations of the confirmation school's rules or possession of alcohol or drugs. Continuous rule violations, such as repeatedly breaking nighttime quiet hours at camp, can also lead to interruption. The intensive period may also be interrupted if a participant falls ill in a way that prevents participation or poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

If the intensive period of confirmation school is interrupted, the leaders will immediately contact the guardian or designated contact person and, if necessary, the authorities. The decision to discontinue a camp-based confirmation school is made by the parish pastor responsible for the confirmation school, after consulting the team of leaders for that specific group. In the case of an interruption, the participant's designated contact person must come to pick them up or, if agreed otherwise, cover the cost of transportation for the participant and an accompanying adult.

The continuation of the confirmation school will always be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the young person and the guardian. The date of the confirmation ceremony may also change.

Cooperation for Safety and Well-being in Confirmation School

A great deal of joint effort goes into ensuring the safety, group spirit, and well-being of the confirmation school: pre-session meetings, getting-to-know-you activities, discussions and meetings between guardians and leaders, reviewing the rules, and jointly establishing safer-space principles with the youth all help strengthen overall safety and a positive environment.

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