



## **CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

### Table of Contents

I. Philosophy .....	2
II. Aims and objectives .....	3
III. Framework.....	3
IV. Roles and Responsibilities .....	4
V. School Procedures - What to do if you suspect child abuse.....	4
VI. Training and Support .....	5
VII. Dealing with a Disclosure .....	5
1. Receive.....	5
2. Record.....	6
3. Refer .....	6
VIII. Support.....	6
Professional Confidentiality.....	6
Records and Monitoring .....	6
IX. Supporting Students at Risk.....	7
X. Safe Recruitment .....	7



## **CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

### **I. Philosophy**

BIS Hanoi educational philosophy is underpinned by our belief and commitment that all our students will be supported to realise their potential by learning and thriving in the safest possible environment. Our students are empowered to make decisions for themselves and are supported in this by learning through specific elements of the curriculum, aimed at enabling students to be able to keep themselves safe (e.g. through personal, social and health education, our wellness programmes and international life skills curriculum).

BIS HANOI recognise that having a safeguarding and child protection policy does not mean that any risk to our students is eliminated. Rather, we expect that all BIS HANOI staff, including all staff and volunteers in our schools and any contractors or third party providers used by our school, recognise where a student is at risk of, or is actually being harmed and do all they can to reduce further risk or further harm.

We recognise that our school plays an important role in protecting our students; we are strongly placed to identify concerns early, and provide or identify help for students as well as helping to prevent concerns from escalating. Consequently, BIS HANOI accept and adhere to these basic principles:

- A child's welfare is paramount and each student has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded irrespective of race, religion, ability, gender or culture.
- All students need to be safe and feel safe in school. Every student is entitled to a rich and broad curriculum that equips them with the skills to keep themselves safe
- Every adult in school must have a demonstrable commitment to protecting the students with/for whom we work.
- All staff at BIS HANOI work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of students.
- Our guiding principle throughout is 'the best interests of the students'.
- All students have equal rights to protection. To ensure the rights of all students, specific circumstances are recognised such as, but not limited to, special educational needs, disability, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation.

An effective whole-school child protection policy is one that provides clear direction about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound internal school procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in the school. The Vietnamese Government is a signatory of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child and as such our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.

In our school we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, (which follows the National Curriculum for England), helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them. We give opportunities for children to discuss problems or concerns with an adult as part of our pastoral programme.



## **II. Aims and objectives**

This policy ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- *Prevention*

Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of our staff and volunteers who work with children.

- *Empowerment*

Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

- *Protection*

Developing then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.

- *Support*

Supporting pupils who have been abused and establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

## **III. Framework**

- This policy sets out the principles and expectations, that BIS HANOI uphold to ensure the safety of our students. The policy also describes the steps that are taken in meeting our commitment to safeguarding students, at each level within the school.
- Vietnamese Law (Decree No 56/2017/NĐ-CP) provides a clear statutory framework to support Child Protection within Vietnam and enumerates rights for all children in line with the the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the obligation of all working with children to maintain these rights.
- In addition to Vietnamese law, BIS HANOI recognises, our obligation under the following Articles of the UN convention:
- Article 3: which states that the best interests of children must be the primary concern in decision making about them.
- Article 13: which states that children have the right to get and share information as long as it is not damaging to them or another child.
- Article 14: which states that children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion.
- Article 19: which states children have the right to be protected from hurt and mistreatment; physically and mentally.
- Article 34: which states that Governments should protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Article 35: which states that Governments should take all measures to ensure that children are not abducted, sold or trafficked.
- Article 36: which states that children should be protected from any activity that takes advantage of them or could harm their welfare and development.
- Article 37: which states that no one is allowed to punish children in a cruel or harmful way.
- All the UN articles can be found at the following link:
- [http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights\\_overview.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf)

In addition to BIS HANOI's commitment to the UN convention on the rights of the child, BIS HANOI has used the safeguarding standards set by the international safeguarding organisation "Keeping Children Safe" to benchmark against; and the UK schools' statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in



Education' (September 2016). The policy is also underpinned by the UK multi-agency guidance "Working together 2015" where relevant.

#### **IV. Roles and Responsibilities**

All adults working with or on behalf of the children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are however key people within the school who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. These are listed in Appendix 4.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible to the Principal. They:

- Give advice and support to all members of staff
- Ensure that all procedures are in place
- Ensure that appropriate training is provided to all staff
- Decide which members of staff need to be informed about children considered to be at risk.
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Principal. The Head of Primary/Secondary is responsible for ensuring this policy is effectively carried out.

#### **V. School Procedures - What to do if you suspect child abuse**

If any member of staff is concerned about a child, he or she must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or if they are unavailable, Head of Primary/Secondary).

*Information regarding the concerns must be recorded and referred by the member of staff on the same day. The recording must be a clear, factual account of the observations.*

A pro-forma is available as Appendix 1 to this policy.

- Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in Dealing with a Disclosure and Appendix 2 to this document.
- Staff are kept informed of the procedures and, where appropriate, any children involved in child protection issues by the DSL or Head of Primary/Secondary.
- If it was felt that the child was in need of protection, we would discuss with parents but only if this did not increase the risk to the child or prejudice further enquiries
- Procedures to follow when the DSL is notified of the concern about the welfare or Safety of a child
- When a case of concern is brought to the DSL, they will share all matters of concern with the Head of Primary/Secondary and Principal. A decision of action will be taken together.
- If after investigation it is felt the student is at risk of significant harm then the Principal may take the decision to contact the Regional DOET Office or the Local Police if the student is Vietnamese. If the student is a child of expatriate parents then the Principal may take the decision to contact the appropriate Consulate/Embassy.

When to be concerned

Staff should be concerned about a student if he or she:-

- has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's injuries.



- regularly has unexplained injuries.
- frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).
- confused or conflicting explanations are given on how injuries were sustained.
- exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.
- discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

## **VI. Training and Support**

Appropriate staff will have access to Child Protection training that is appropriate to their role. This includes training in procedures to follow, signs to note and appropriate record keeping. It is important that all staff teaching have access to appropriate training in order that they are able to react appropriately if an incident should occur.

All staff are trained to recognise and respond to situations where a child may be considered to be at risk. New staff will be trained as appropriate at the start of the academic year.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be trained to UK multi agency level 2 or equivalent. An on-line UK Safeguarding Children Level 1 training programme will be available for teaching staff. All teachers and teaching assistants receive in-house training.

Appropriate local support staff will also receive appropriate in-house training.

Support is available for all staff who have concerns or queries about Child Protection from the Principal and DSL.

## **VII. Dealing with a Disclosure**

### **1. Receive**

If a student discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:-

- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- accept what is being said
- allow the child to talk freely
- reassure the child but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
- not promise confidentiality
- reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- stress that it was the right thing to tell
- listen, rather than ask direct questions
- ask open questions rather than leading questions
- not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- explain what has to be done next and who has to be told



## **2. Record**

When a student has made a disclosure the member of staff should:-

- ensure any immediate medical needs are dealt with
- make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by another external agency
- record the date time, and place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- (may decide to) draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury
- record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

## **3. Refer**

After receiving and recording, the member of staff should:-

- inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- pass on the records and information
- not ask the child to repeat what they have already disclosed

## **VIII. Support**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a Child Protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of Primary/Secondary.

### *Professional Confidentiality*

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Child Protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

Children's desire, need and right to speak in confidence to others about things which concern them should be respected. In order to deal with the matter honestly, and to avoid collusion, it is important to tell the child who you will need to pass information onto. Listen to the child, be sympathetic and tell the child you are pleased they have told you, this should help the child feel safe.

Information will then be shared with the DSL and the Head of Primary/Secondary. Depending on the exact nature of the concern, they would then decide whether to contact the appropriate authorities.

An exchange of relevant information between professionals is essential in order to safeguard children. The safety of the child is always the paramount consideration

### *Records and Monitoring*

Well kept records are essential to good Child Protection practice. The school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

These records are stored in a secure location, separate from any Educational records and are not accessible to everyone in school.

THE DSL should also keep a CP Diary as this will allow the school to chart timescales.



If a child with Child Protection concerns leaves the school or transfers, then the Principal will discuss whether it is appropriate to pass on our files and the method for doing this.

### **IX. Supporting Students at Risk**

The school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider suspension or exclusion from school.

It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

The school will endeavour to support students through:

- the curriculum, to encourage self esteem and self motivation.
- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- the implementation of school behaviour policies.
- a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting.
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents.
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- offering the support of the Counsellor.

### **X. Safe Recruitment**

All staff must submit legalised copies of a criminal record check from their home country. In addition they must also provide copies from recent countries they have worked in. References, including the most recent employer, must state that there are no known reasons for the applicant not to work with children.

#### **Allegations Involving School Staff**

Teachers and staff are placed in a responsible and vulnerable position and have a right to expect any allegations against them to be investigated professionally and impartially.

In all cases where there is reason to suspect a member of staff may have abused a child or young person in his/her care, the details of the suspicions should be immediately reported to the designated person and the Principal who should then contact the Principal. Following their discussion, a joint decision is then taken as to the next appropriate course of action.

Where the Principal or DSL is the alleged abuser, the referrer should contact the Principal directly.

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