



Policy on Child Protection and the Safeguarding of Children

Context

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19 states that children should be protected from all forms of violence and have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

This policy sets out common values, principles and beliefs adopted by The British International School, Abu Dhabi (BISAD) and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children.

Our values, principles and beliefs;

- All child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
- The abuse of children is never acceptable
- We have a commitment to protecting children with/ for whom we work

What we will do

We will meet our commitment to protect children from abuse through the following means:

Awareness: we will ensure that all staff and others associated with the school are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.

Prevention: we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimize the risks to children.

Reporting: we will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.

Responding: we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.





The School is fully responsible for the care and protection of students whilst they are in the School's care, or travelling to and from the School using School-provided transportation, and whilst moving between activities organized by the School. The School will take all possible measures to protect students from any form of exploitation, abuse, oppression and insult and / or any other physical, sexual or emotional threats, danger or harm.

In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, the school and its employees will also ensure that they:

- take seriously any concerns raised
- take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns
- support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns act appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of investigation
- are guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
- listen to and takes seriously the views and wishes of children
- work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children
- The School shall follow reporting procedures in respect of any incident affecting the security of students within the School to Parents / Guardians, ADEC and other related government entities.

Training and Support

The school will undertake to ensure that all staff:

- are familiar with, understand and abide by the Code of Conduct (see P3)
- are provided, through training and support, with the necessary skills to recognise children who are at risk or potentially at risk
- fully understand the systems and frameworks through which concerns may be raised and addressed
- are aware of the mechanisms by which this policy and its associated procedures will be applied and monitored and where the levels of accountability lie.





- The School shall ensure the provision of an on-going First Aid training and dissemination of knowledge regarding all health, safety and prevention matters so that all School staff know what is expected of them and what to look out for with respect to the protection and safety of students.

Co-ordination and Response

Any person who works with children should be aware of the possibility that a vulnerable or 'at risk' child may choose them to be the first point of contact. It is therefore important that all employees are fully aware of the procedures and guidelines relating to reporting and investigation. BISAD has appointed 2 Child Protection Officers who will guide and support all employees.

Code of Conduct

All BISAD staff abide by this Code of Conduct.

Staff and others must never:

- hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse, use abusive language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- have a child/children with whom they are working visit or stay at their home
- do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.





It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:

- be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these
- plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks as far as possible, be visible to other adults when working with children
- ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem

In general it is inappropriate to:

- spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- take children to your home, especially where they will be alone with you





BISAD Child Protection Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in the school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in the school.
- 1.2. Child abuse takes a variety of forms :
 - Physical abuse involves the hitting, shaking or other treatment of a child that can cause actual bodily harm
 - Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening. This includes noncontact situations, such as showing children pornography
 - Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of children, such as frightening them, or putting them in positions of danger. It is also an abuse to convey to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved
 - Children are abused also if they are neglected. This could involve failure to provide proper food and warmth, but it might also be failure to see to the emotional well-being of the child
- 1.3 In this school, we respect the children. The atmosphere within school is one that encourages all children to do their best. Children are provided with opportunities
- 1.4. The school recognises that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children make good educational progress.
- 1.5 The teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the English National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in 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.
- 1.6 This policy is based on DfES Circular 10/95 – Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service. This policy takes account of the duties and requirements set out in the Children Act 2004 ('Every Child Matters') and is compliant with UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights, Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on penal code and other relevant UAE laws. The policy also takes into account ADEC Policy No. 3, article (5) of 2014.





2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The school aims are:

- to provide a safe environment for children to learn in
- to establish what actions the school can take to ensure that children remain safe at school
- to raise the awareness of all staff to these issues, and to define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse
- to identify children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- to ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues. The school has two Child Protection Officers who are available to you throughout the day. If you have concerns and cannot locate the CP officers, speak with your Line Manager.
- to set down the correct procedures for those who encounter any issue of child protection (see section 5 of this document).

3. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure all of the following:

- Staff undertake a formal course in Child protection, as advocated by Nord Anglia Education and ADEC.
- that the school leadership adopts appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard children in the school
- that these policies are implemented by all staff
- that sufficient resources and time are allocated for staff to carry out their responsibilities effectively
- that all staff and adult helpers in the school are able to voice their concern if they feel that a child is vulnerable, or if there are any particular practices within the school that they feel may impact negatively upon the wellbeing and safeguarding of our students.

3.2 The Primary and Secondary School each has a designated Child Protection Coordinators. The coordinators are guided by two principles:

- In accordance with the Children Act, the welfare of the child is always paramount
- Confidentiality should be respected as far as possible

A key role of the Coordinator is to ensure that the school takes action to support any child who may be at risk. The Coordinator must also make sure that all staff, both, teaching and nonteaching, are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection. When investigating any allegations of abuse, all parties involved will handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, remembering all the time that the interests of the child are of paramount importance.

The Coordinator should also take into account the possibility of the situation affecting siblings or other relatives of the child in question.





4. EMPLOYMENT AND RECRUITMENT

4.1 The school will do all it can to ensure that all those working with children in school are suitable people. This involves scrutinizing applicants, verifying their identity and qualifications and obtaining references, as well as Criminal Records Bureau checks (CRB) or equivalent checks. We follow the DfES guidance set out in Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children

5. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IF AN ADULT HAS CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

5.1 All adults in our school share responsibility for keeping our children safe. We may on occasion report concerns which, on investigation, prove unfounded.

5.2 All school staff, including any person who, in the performance of his / her duties, has regular or temporary contact with students and who provides services to students or school – are authorized and mandated by ADEC to report all cases of suspected abuse and / or neglect (conducted by the perpetrator inside or outside of school) directly to the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Centre – within 24 hours.

It is mandated to report using the telephone hotline (116111) or the electronic link at <http://www.moi-cpc.ae/en/default.aspx>

If a child is in immediate danger (risk of serious harm), the police should be called using the 999 service, followed by reporting to the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Centre.

In addition, school staff must inform the school principal orally when they suspect the exposure of any student to any form of abuse and / or neglect.

No member of staff in the school shall impede or inhibit reporting of a suspected case of child abuse and / or neglect by a third party, nor shall they take any action against the reporter or threaten to do so.

If there is uncertainty about the course of action to be taken, the school will use the 24 hours to convene a meeting of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Committee - Principal, Head of Primary / Secondary School (or both), Child Protection Officer(s) and other informed parties as appropriate to decide on an appropriate course of action.

5.3. If a child alleges abuse, the school will carry out a full investigation, obtaining statements from the victim, the accused and witnesses. The Principal will then contact those involved regarding the result of the investigation.

5.4. The school shall provide a detailed report concerning the incident and procedures taken in regard. This report should be kept in the student's folder. If the abuse is a crime, the school is required to notify the relevant official entities.





6. PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

6.1. There may be times when adults, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation and must follow the guidance given in the DfES circular 10/98 on The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. The Principal will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to him or her immediately.

7. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

7.1 If an allegation is made against a member of the school staff (or a volunteer helper), it will always be investigated by the Principal, or, in the case of the allegation being against the Principal, by the designate of the CEO of Nord Anglia Education. If it is felt, after these initial investigations, that a further enquiry is needed, then the member of staff will be suspended. Suspension is a neutral act, and in no way implies that the person is guilty of any wrongdoing. However, it is acknowledged that this would be distressing for the person concerned, and the school will do all it can to balance the interests of any individual with that of the need to keep children safe. The school will comply with national and locally agreed guidance. Please note, all volunteers and guests into the school must be approved by ADEC and actions taken by the school following an allegation must be in line with the ADEC Child Protection Policy.

7.2 Local Practice regarding Child Protection within Abu Dhabi the private schools' system is under the remit of a specialist Department of the Abu Dhabi Education Council. The ADEC Code of Practice has been adopted by our school and its provisions incorporated into this policy.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 The school will regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat it accordingly. Information will be passed on to appropriate persons only at the discretion of the Principal.

8.2 All records relating to child protection will be secured appropriately. Such information must not be held electronically.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

9.1 This policy is reviewed annually.





APPENDIX 1 SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

Action to take if as a member of BISAD staff you receive an allegation of, or yourself suspect, abuse of a child

- Stop and listen to what you are being told. Responding to an allegation or suspicion of abuse of a child immediately takes priority
- Take notes of what is said, as it is being said – if it is not possible to take notes at the time, make notes immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written
- Do not promise confidentiality or agree to “keep it a secret”. Action will have to be taken if you believe that any child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm. Try to be clear to the child about what you think we happen next. You can always assure the child or anyone else giving you information, that you will only tell those you have to tell to try to get the matter dealt with. You can and should express support for the child or person giving you information in getting the matter sorted out
- Avoid asking leading questions like “Did he do X to you?” but open questions like “Can you tell me what happened?” Ask only what you need to know to ascertain whether abuse may have taken place and be aware of cultural sensitivities. You do not need full details. Avoid expressing opinions beyond the facts. Leading questions and anything likely to suggest ideas or interpretations could damage subsequent investigations
- Consider whether a child now needs immediate protection (this decision is normally taken by the Principal or Child Protection Co-ordinator in consultation with the Principal). Consider both the child who has told you of concerns, and any other child, in the light of what you have been told or suspect. Initiate or take the necessary temporary protective action – e.g. by staying with the child on site until satisfactory arrangements for the child are made. You can ask and take into account the child’s wishes about any immediate protection. You should aim to transfer protection of any child into the normally expected arrangements as soon as you are satisfied these are safe
- Decide whether the allegation or suspicion indicates that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. The Principal/Child Protection Coordinator should consider whether:
 - The allegation or suspicion appears to be seriously meant
 - If true, it would constitute or seriously risk a child suffering, or being likely to suffer significant harm
 - The actual or likely harm is of a sexual, physical, emotional or neglect nature, significant to affect the child’s normal physical, sexual, emotional, educational or social development

Remember, even if there are doubts and whether or not you personally believe it- the benefit of the doubt must be always in favour of making the report.





- Do not reveal details of the allegation or identify the staff or individuals concerned what you have been told or what you suspect – that may put a child at further risk. Child Protection issues should remain confidential to those designated as responsible for dealing with them. An individual member of staff who has heard a child's disclosure may feel under pressure from colleagues to explain but should be aware they are under a contractual obligation to maintain the circle of trust
- Do not investigate the case yourself. Discuss the allegation or suspicion immediately with the nominated Child Protection Coordinator (unless you are the subject of the allegation In which case refer to HR). They will determine next steps
- Ensure that a serious incident report sheet is completed (Annex 2)

Action to take if as a member of staff you observe abuse whilst it is taking place in this school

You must do all you can to stop the abuse immediately without putting yourself or the other person being physically, sexually or emotionally abused at further risk. Inform the perpetrator of your concerns. Advise them to stop the action Immediately. Ask them to remove themselves from the area and to one without contact with children and young people. Advise them that you will be immediately be informing the appropriate authorities.

- If they fail to desist- ring or call for help
- If they do desist, accompany the victim to a place pf safety away from the perpetrator and leave them in the care of a responsible adult
- Inform the principal immediately of the action you have taken and why. Inform them of the actions you now need to take in accordance with the above procedures.





Appendix 2

Incident Report

Staff Name:

Date of Incident:

Student Name:

Tutor Group:

Year:

Details of incident

Include student's full names and years as well as other students and staff who were present.

Action taken

Further action to be taken. This may be filled in retrospectively or by a Child Protection Co-ordinator; Principal

Signed:

Date:

