

4. Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Aim

- To protect all Wales International School students and ensure that safety of the students is always our first priority.

Cross reference

- This policy follows ADEC Policy 3 of The Private Schools Policy and Guidance Manual.
- This policy corresponds to Article (5) of the Organising Regulations.

Policy

Wales International School fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare and well-being of children in our school. It is our primary responsibility to ensure we provide an environment which ensures children are safe from potential abuse, including bullying, and will respond to any suspicion of potential abuse in a way which respects the child's rights and reinforces the school's responsibilities. It is our duty to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

We recognise that children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts or failure to provide proper care or both. Children may suffer neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse. Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interest.

In order to do this the School will:-

- Raise awareness of child protection and safeguarding roles and responsibilities with staff and volunteers. Offer on-going training in child protection and safeguarding issues, ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities and recognise and respond to suspected abuse of children, whether physical, emotional, sexual or the result of neglect.
- Provide as part of the School's planned learning programme, activities, which will help children, understand issues of personal safety, and how to express their fears and anxieties
- Ensure the practice of safe recruitment in checking and recording the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. Require all potential staff to provide references
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable all staff and volunteers to identify and report cases, or suspected cases of abuse. Provide an induction programme for new staff that includes Safeguarding Children responsibilities.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with the (ADEC) Ministry of Education policies and procedures in collaboration with the police.
- Have clearly set out procedures, which all staff working will be aware of, to respond to concerns of suspected abuse.

- Support children who have been abused in accordance with an agreed child protection plan.
- Support children with additional needs.
- Recognise that parents should always be involved in the monitoring of children's behaviour or development and should be the first point of contact (except in cases of suspected sexual abuse). If the staff have any concerns about your child, staff will speak to you in the first instance, and hope that you will approach staff if you have any concerns about your child.
- Keep an on-going record of observations of significant changes in children's behaviour or appearance, which will be written and kept confidential.

Whole Staff Responsibilities

Wales International School recognises that because of their day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore: -

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are heard.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Follow the procedures set out by the ADEC and the Ministry of Education and take account of guidance issued by the Ministry of Interior.
- Treat all disclosures with the strictest confidence.
- Notify the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre of any cases of alleged or suspected child abuse.
- Inform parents of any concerns, and provide them with opportunities to change situations, where this does not place the child at greater risk.
- Notify the social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days.
- Develop effective links with local police and the Ministry Of Interior Child Protection Centre
- Ensure that there is a Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO)

Staff Guidelines:

1. Staff will be alert to any signs of child abuse and will report concerns to the appropriate member of staff. (CPLO)
2. Details of a disclosure will be established quickly and objectively. These will be communicated to the appropriate member of staff.
3. No leading or intrusive questions will be posed as these could prejudice future legal proceedings.
4. No guarantee of confidentiality will be given to the pupil.
5. Any suspicion of abuse or cause for concern will be notified by the member of staff aware of the matter and sent to the CPLO
6. A written record will be kept, with the date and time, of any suspicions concerning evidence of possible child abuse for as long as is necessary in relation to any investigation undertaken by the school management. Such record(s) will be held centrally and separately from pupil's educational or personal records.
7. Procedures will be displayed in all staffrooms.

CPLO responsibilities:

In Wales International the Child Protection Liaison officer is Erah Espelimburgo

- Ensure that the school management staff are fully aware of and understand their responsibilities and obligations under this policy.
- Ensure they have received appropriate training and attend training every 2 years.
- Ensure every member of staff, committee and volunteers knows the name of the designated person CPLO, their role and their contact details.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated CPLO.
- Keep written records of child protection records and/or records of concern are transferred accordingly when a child leaves the school.
- Ensure that where a pupil leaves the school, their information is transferred to the new school immediately.

Responsibilities of adults within the school community:

- All adults are required to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- If an adult identifies that a child may be in an abusive situation they should record their concerns and report them to the CPLO as soon as practical (within 24 hours)
- If a child disclosures and allegation are against a member of staff they will follow the allegations procedures.

At school we will educate and encourage pupils to Keep Safe through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- A school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupil a sense of being valued.
- A 'Rights, Respect, and Responsibility' agenda.
- The creation of a culture which helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.

Review date: April 2017

Chair of Safeguarding Committee: Erah Espelimburgo

Safeguarding Committee: Social Worker : Erah Espelimburgo, KG teacher: Natalie Rossi, School Nurse, Primary: Jen Hill, Arabic: Sally El Sharkawy, Receptionist: Rasha Milhim, Registrar: Nawal Al Azzeh

Child Protection Procedures

The prime concern of all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interests between the child and parent, the interests of the child must be paramount. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the flow chart.

ADEC identifies 4 categories of abuse: (see appendices)

1. Physical Injury
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

If a pupil makes a disclosure relating to any type of Child Abuse staff must:

1. Never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil. If abuse is alleged, whether physical or sexual, it is our professional duty to communicate the information through the correct channels
2. Show that you accept what they are saying and that you take their allegations seriously.
3. As a whole school, continue to support pupils and reassure them that we are approachable. However, all staff must remember to safeguard their own position i.e. try to have another person present, or at least inform a colleague that a pupil has requested a meeting or that a meeting has taken place.
4. Encourage the child to talk but do not prompt them or ask leading questions.
5. Explain what action you must take i.e. notify Parents and/or the police.
6. Write down what you have been told using the exact words if possible.
7. Make a note of the date, time and place and people present at the discussion.
8. Not approach or interview the alleged perpetrator.
9. It is not the duty or responsibility of teachers or other staff to make judgements.
10. Not discuss the disclosure made by the child or disclose the written record of any discussion with the child with anyone other than the relevant senior member of staff.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, through physical injury they must

1. Record their concerns
2. Report it to the CPLO/Principal immediately
3. Consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention and if so assistance must be called for.
4. Make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings) as soon as possible as cases must be reported to MOI within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:
 - a. Dates and times of their observations
 - b. Date and times of any discussions they were involved in
 - c. Any injuries
 - d. Explanations given by the child/adult
 - e. What action was taken
 - f. The records must be signed and dated by author.

Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the CPLO must

1. Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting child abuse in which case a referral must be made to the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center within 24 hours upon suspicion. It is mandated to report using the telephone hotline (**116111**) and the electronic reporting link available on the ADEC website (<https://www.adec.ac.ae/ar/Pages/childabusereportingabu-dhabiedusector.aspx>).

Ensuring a precise report is available of:

- a. The known facts
- b. Any suspicions or allegations
- c. Whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family

If the CPLO feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary they can phone the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre to discuss concerns and obtain advice. To do so will not constitute a child abuse referral and may well help to clarify a situation.

2. If there is no clear risk of harm the CPLO will either monitor the situation or seek advice from the MOI Child Protection Centre.
3. The CPLO must confirm any referrals in writing to MOI Child Protection Centre, within 24 hours, including the actions that have been taken. The written referral should be made using the referral form.
4. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective actions is required, the police should be called using the **999** service. The CPLO should also notify the MOI Child Protection Centre of the incident and what action has been taken. The CPLO should seek advice from the Police/MOI Child Protection Centre about informing parents.
5. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement before making a referral to MOI Child Protection Centre. However, in accordance this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk. The child's views should be taken into account.
6. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the CPLO should clarify with MOI Child Protection Centre or the local police whether, the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. Where appropriate the CPLO should help the parents understand that a referral is in the interests of the child and that the school involved in the police investigations.
7. When a pupil is in need of **urgent** medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the CPLO or principal should take the child to the Accident and Emergency Unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified MOI Child Protection Centre. The CPLO should seek advice about what action the MOI Child Protection Centre will take and about informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent medical attention. If the suspected abuse is sexual then the medical examination should be delayed until MOI Child Protection Centre and/or police can liaise with the hospital, unless the needs of the child are such that medical attention is priority. If a decision is made not to inform the parents there must be a responsible adult with the child at all times, whether from the school, MOI Child Protection Centre or the police.

When dealing with allegations against staff, governors and volunteers:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Principal as soon as possible.
- If an allegation is made against the Principal, the concerns need to be raised with Board of Governors and ADEC as soon as possible
- In either event the Chair of Governors should contact the MOI Child Protection centre on Telephone 116111

Safe Working Practice:

It is essential that all staff and volunteers working in schools are aware of how to pass on any concerns about other members of staff or volunteers and be conscious of how they should conduct themselves to minimise the risk of finding themselves as the subject of any child protection processes.

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult in the school all staff should:-

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff to the Principal as soon as possible and within 24 hours
- If an allegation is made against the principal, the concerns need to be raised with the chair of Board of Governors
- In either event the Principal should contact the MOI Child Protection Centre on Telephone 116111

All staff should:

- Work in an open and transparent way. Dress appropriately for your role
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children
- Not engage in activities out of school that might compromise their positions
- Not establish or seek to establish social contact outside school. This includes communication with pupils in inappropriate ways, including personal emails and mobile telephone or contact through social networks. Only use e-mail via schools system.
- Be careful about recording images of children and only do this when it is approved educational activity
- Ensure that areas of the curriculum that may involve sexually explicit information are taught in accordance with school policy
- Not access inappropriate material via the internet
- Never use physical punishment of any kind
- Not attribute touch to their teaching styles
- Allow children to change clothes with respect and privacy

Circumstances as to when child protection concerns may arise

1. Where staff have concerns/suspicions regarding apparent injury/bruising to pupils
2. Where staff are concerned that pupils may be suffering from neglect
3. Where staff are concerned that pupils may be exposed to inappropriate experiences

How to Handle Child Abuse Disclosures

It is not uncommon for a small number of children to disclose abuse to someone who is on a position of authority and whom they feel they can trust. It is important to know what to do if a child tells you about an abusive experience. You should always remember, as an adult you have the responsibility to keep children safe.

Types of disclosures

Disclosures can be direct or indirect. Most likely disclosure will be indirect, which can mean that the child does not share the abuse without being prompted, or does so in a roundabout way.

Recognising the clues

When a child confides in you:

- Give the child undivided attention
- Show concern, support, warmth, but do not show emotions, distress or negative reaction
- Listen and support the child
- Check if the child is hurt or might be in need of medical attention
- Deal with the allegations in such a way that the child does not have to repeat the information to different people within the school
- Make careful records of what was said, put the date and time when the child spoke to you, put the location and names of people who were present as well as what was said using child's language. Sign it and hand your record to the CPLO straight away. Keep a copy of your notes

Things you should not do:

- You must not promise a child complete confidentiality- you should explain that you may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep them or other children safe
- Malign the character of the alleged perpetrator Jump to conclusions
- Ask leading questions
- Ask for lots of details about the alleged event(s) Make a promise you cannot keep
- Pre-empt or prejudice an investigation by leading the child with closed questions

Questioning skills:

To avoid leading questions when clarifying what a child has said, you should use open questions with a child rather than closed

Examples:

Closed

Do

Did

Can

Would

Could

Are

Open Questions

Tell me

Explain to me

Describe to me

Who

What

When

Where

How

Avoid using 'Why' this can confuse a child and leads to feelings of guilt

Initial Responses to child

When a child has made a disclosure, it can be a relief for them; however they are likely to feel vulnerable and confused. Here are some examples of what can be said to a child.

‘Thank you for telling me’

‘I am sorry it has happened to you’

‘I am going to help you, and will tell you what I am going to do’

‘It should not have happened’

‘You are not to blame’

Do Not Say

‘It will be all right soon’

Or anything which you will not be able to fulfil

Briefing for Temporary staff (For staff on short contracts in Wales International School)

Whilst working at Al Ansar, you have a duty of care towards the children here. This means that you should act in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

In addition, if at any time you have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if you suspect or think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the school Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO), who is, Erah Espelimbargo and can be found in the Social workers’ room ext. 207

If you become concerned as a result of:

- Observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental
- Observing something in the appearance of a child or young person which suggests they are not being sufficiently well care for
- Observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about child or young person
A child or young person telling you they have been subjected to some form of abuse

If a child talks to you you should follow these guidelines:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don’t push the child to tell you more than they wish
- Make it clear that you may need to pass on information to staff who may be able to help- do not promise confidentiality. You are obliged to share information relating to abuse or neglect
- Write an account of the conversation immediately, as close to verbatim as possible. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it, and give your record to the Erah Espelimbargo the designated child protection officer.
- The school has a policy on safeguarding children and young people which you can find, together with the local procedures to be followed by all staff

REMEMBER IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN DISCUSS IT WITH THE CHILD PROTECTION LIAISON OFFICER.

Child Protection Vetting

Wales International School strongly recognise the need for vigilant awareness of child protection issues. It is important that all staff have appropriate training and induction so that they understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident about carrying them out. Staff, pupils and parents should feel secure that they can raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously. This is supported by having clear child protection policies, appropriate induction and training.

Recent recruits require an enhanced DBS from the UK, overseas recruits require good conduct certificate or police clearance as appropriate from country of residence.

APPENDICES as per ADEC Child Protection Policy

APPENDIX 1

Possible signs of physical abuse can include:

1. Unexplained bruises or injuries
2. Injuries which have not received medical attention
3. Repeated abdominal pain
4. With drawl from physical contact
5. Arms and legs covered in scalds
6. Fear of returning home
7. Fear of contacting caregivers/parents
8. Self-destructive tendencies
9. Displaying aggression towards others
10. Unusual passive behaviour
11. Repeated running away from home
12. Cigarette burns
13. Human bite marks
14. Broken bones
15. Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

APPENDIX 2

Possible signs of emotional abuse can include:

1. Regular tiredness
2. Fear of a new situation
3. Low self esteem
4. High levels of anxiety
5. Unusually passive or aggressive
6. Delayed speech
7. Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
8. Running away
9. Lying
10. Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
11. Fear of making mistakes
12. Self-harm
13. Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

APPENDIX 3

Possible signs of sexual abuse can include:

1. Unusual behaviour which could be general or sexual
2. Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
3. Sexually transmitted diseases
4. Physical indicators in the genital and anal areas
5. Pain or itching in the genital area
6. Bruising or bleeding near genital area
7. Vaginal discharge or infection
8. Discomfort when walking or sitting down
9. Pregnancy

APPENDIX 4

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT CAN INCLUDE:

1. STEALING
2. POOR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

3. FAILURE TO THRIVE
4. POOR PERSONAL HYGIENE
5. FREQUENT HUNGER
6. UNTREATED MEDICAL COMPLAINTS
7. FREQUENT LATENESS OR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL
8. INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHING
9. SUBSTANCE OR ALCOHOL MISUSE

APPENDIX 5

Child Protection Flow Chart

*CPLO – Child Protection Liaison Officer
R & A – Referral & Assessment
CP – Child Protection
MOI – Ministry of Interior*

