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**The British International
School of Brussels**

Child Protection Policy

V1.0

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Introduction

- The British International School of Brussels fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.
- Our policy applies to all appointed staff working in the school

Relevant School Aims

- To sustain a friendly, safe and interesting environment that stimulates and encourages the fascination of learning.
- To develop good home-school interaction and together improve the quality of learning.
- help the children develop a sense of right and wrong as the foundation for relationships, alongside consideration of the rights, feelings and well-being of all others.

Appendices

Recognising abuse

There are six main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff to work with children.
2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
3. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
4. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
5. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
6. Review the safeguarding policy annually

1 Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We obtain professional references from previous employers, preferably from at least 2 different locations. Monitor staff for any inappropriate behaviour or comments during their probationary period in school. If there is any employee, volunteer or student whose services are no longer used within school because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children then this will be reported to the DBS (UK government's Disclosure and Barring Service) and NCTL (UK National College for Teaching and Learning) within one month. Please see recruitment policy for more details.

2 We recognise that because of the 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 listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

3 We will apply the following procedures taking note of guidance issued by the UK Department for Education. We shall

- Ensure that all staff members and volunteers are aware that Stephen Prescott is the designated senior person for child protection. In the event of the designated senior person being absent then Helen Prescott shall deputise for him.
- Ensure that the designated person has received appropriate training and support for this role. At the date of this policy the Head has undertaken an 'Introduction to safeguarding' NSPCC training course and will have completed the 2-day NSPCC course 'Designated safeguarding lead for schools and colleges in England' by January 2016.
- Ensure that all staff members undergo the online NSPCC training course 'Child protection in schools'. This training will be updated at least every three years.
- 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 person responsible for child protection. All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm. Any adult receiving a disclosure from a child should inform

the child that absolute confidentiality cannot be promised and the adult should avoid asking any leading questions but rather let the child give the disclosure using their own words

- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements that are observed or detected are remedied without delay;
- Ensure that where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer this should be reported to the head. If the designated person is not the head then he or she should be contacted in each instance (unless he or she is the object of the allegation), since the designated person may have received higher level safeguarding training. If the head is absent, the allegation should still be passed to the head who will decide which other member of the Senior management Team should deal with the allegation. If the allegation concerns the head, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform another member of the Senior Management Team. In case of serious harm, the local procedure should be followed, including police contact if relevant.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its procedures in the parents' handbook which includes reporting evidenced suspicions to ONE SOS-Enfants (Tel 02 764 20 90) within 24 hours of the suspicion of abuse
- Co-operate with ONE (Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance) as required, with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

4 Code of ethical practice for school staff

All school staff are valued members of the school community. Everyone is expected to set and maintain the highest standards for their own performance, to work as part of a team and to be an excellent role model for our children.

All school staff should:

- place the safety and welfare of children above all other considerations
- treat all members of the school community, including children, parents and colleagues with consideration and respect
- adhere to the principles and procedures contained in school policies involving safeguarding of children and in teaching and learning policies
- ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil (e.g., in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil, etc.);
- treat each child as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual need
- demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to non-discriminatory practice
- recognise the power imbalances between children and staff, and different levels of seniority of staff and ensure that power and authority are never misused

- understand that school staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a child is a criminal offence
- be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm
- encourage all children to reach their full potential
- never condone inappropriate behaviour by children or staff
- take responsibility for their own continuing professional development
- refrain from any action that would bring the school into disrepute
- value themselves and seek appropriate support for any issue that may have an adverse effect on their professional practice.

Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the school community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

a) Official use of Images/Videos of Children by the School

All images taken by the school/setting will be used in a manner respectful of the eight Data Protection Principles. This means that images will be:

- fairly and lawfully processed
- processed for limited, specifically stated purposes only
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate and up to date
- kept on file for no longer than is necessary
- processed in line with an individual's legal rights
- kept securely
- adequately protected if transferred to other countries

Parental permission for the use of photographs will be sought on admission to the school and additionally on a case by case basis. Staff will receive information regarding the safe and appropriate use of images as part of their safeguarding training and responsibilities. All members of staff (including volunteers) will ensure that all images are available for scrutiny and will be able to justify any images in their possession. Only official school owned equipment (i.e. work provided equipment) will be used by staff to capture images of children for official purposes. Use of personal cameras by staff is prohibited at all times.

Photography is not permitted in sensitive areas such as changing room, toilets, swimming areas etc.

b) Other actions to be followed include

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving children in decision-making that affects them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in a child's behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse

- reading and understanding all of the school's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact, e-safety plans and information-sharing
- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

5 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which includes the aim of supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse that has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil with a legally documented experience of an incident of abuse leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately

6 This policy and the procedures contained herein will be reviewed annually by the members of BISB asbl. The date of the most recent review by the members of BISB asbl was November 28th 2015.

Appendix Recognising abuse

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation), emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including sexual exploitation) and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

(FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in Belgium and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age – or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- Sexual exploitation

involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying is thought to result in up to 12 child suicides each year.

All incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents are made aware of anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the head teacher and the responsible person will consider implementing child protection procedures.

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

A child going missing from education is also a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and

neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for, with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty
- be regularly missing from school or education
- change their eating habits
- have consistently poor hygiene
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful and / or make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.
- talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers
- reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason
- be reluctant to go home after school
- have poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- be concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- talk about running away;
- have parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- •have Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the person responsible to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

The impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.