



**Zurich  
International  
School**

## **ZIS Safeguarding Code of Conduct**

## **About the Code of Conduct**

This code of conduct has been informed by:

- Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) - 2016
- 'Working Together to Safeguarding Children' - 2015
- 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working children and young people in education settings' - 2015
- CIS - The International Task Force on Child Protection (ITFCP)
- Girling Hughes Associates Ltd - Independent Safeguarding Consultants

## **Application**

This policy applies to all ZIS Employees, including, but not limited to, teaching faculty, non-teaching faculty and staff, support staff, peripatetic, contract staff and ancillary staff, volunteers / parent volunteers, and any other adults working at the School.

This Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy applies to all pupils and adults in the school, including when being educated off-site and undertaking educational visits. It also applies to students who are on an exchange and being hosted by the School.

## **Publication**

This policy is updated annually and is published to all employees and volunteers and placed on the school website.

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*Date / Place  
School*

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*Elsa Donohue, Director of Zurich International*

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*Date / Place*

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*Board Representative of Zurich International School*

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## 1. Overview

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### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to:

- confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of all employees
- clarify the legal and moral position in relation to sensitive aspects of teacher / student relationships and communication including the use of social media
- set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained within ZIS
- to help adults establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct

### 1.2 Guiding Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989)
- Adults are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Employees should make a disclosure promptly to their Principal, over any incident which may give rise to concern
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and ZIS's Data Protection Policy.
- Employees should be familiar with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines the School's responsibilities and procedures for reporting to external agencies allegations of practices or behaviour which have put (or may have put) children at risk of significant harm.
- Employees should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them

## 2. Safeguarding Responsibilities

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### 2.1 Duty of Care

- Employees are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.
- All employees have a responsibility to keep students safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns.
- Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.
- The safeguarding culture of a school is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and children and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.
- When individuals accept a role working in an education setting they should understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust involved in that role.

### 2.2. Making Professional Judgements

- This code of conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour. It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.
- There will be occasions and circumstances in which employees have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a child which could contravene this code of conduct or where no guidance exists.
- Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.
- These judgements should always be recorded and shared with the Principal or appropriate line manager.
- Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

### 2.3 Power and Positions of Trust and Authority

- As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school or education setting are in a position of trust in relation to all students.
- The relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence. It is vital for adults to understand this power; that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.
- The potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children means that adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

- Employees should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident.

## 2.4 Confidentiality

- The storing and processing of personal information is informed by Swiss data protection laws. ZIS will provide clear advice to employees about their responsibilities under this legislation so that, when considering sharing confidential information, those principles should apply.
- Employees may have access to confidential information about students and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child.
- Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.
- Employees should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations).
- Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.
- Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis.
- In circumstances where the child's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.
- There are some circumstances in which an employee may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected.
- In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to a Child Protection Officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Director (as appropriate).
- If a child – or their parent / guardian – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the employee should follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.
- If an employee is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Safety & Security Committee.
- Employees are expected to maintain a positive climate of respectful communication and not engage in 'gossip' which could be damaging to individuals or the school.
- Employees should be aware of the surroundings and ensure that confidential conversations take place in an appropriate environment.

### **3.0 Behavioural Expectations**

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In addition to the expectations outlined in the ZIS teaching standards, all faculty / staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work. Conduct applies to environments within the workplace, outside of the workplace, and in the 'virtual' world.

#### **3.1. Discrimination**

No employee or student may be discriminated against, favored, harassed or ostracized as a result of race, skin color, nationality, parentage, creed, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical constitution or appearance. Any such behavior in the workplace or place of training is not tolerated by ZIS.

#### **3.2 Equal opportunities**

ZIS is committed to equal opportunities for all its employees, in particular, regarding wages, the division of labor, education, vocational training and promotion as regulated by Swiss law. ZIS aims to foster an environment in which its employees are encouraged to perform and be rewarded for it.

ZIS is committed to equal opportunities for all its students. ZIS aims to foster an environment in which its students are encouraged to perform and be rewarded for it.

#### **3.3 Bullying**

Bullying, without a sexual element, can be described as repeated emotional or physical harassment with the intent to harm the victim. Bullying can often involve a difference in power. All validated cases of such behavior will lead to disciplinary action. The Board members, director, principals, teachers and other employees are called on to participate actively in measures to hinder and prevent bullying.

#### **3.4 Sexual harassment and / or Abuse**

Sexual harassment and / or abuse are completely and absolutely prohibited. No one's position or role gives them the right to abuse it by pursuing personal interests of a sexual, emotional or professional nature. All conduct of a sexual nature and other behavior based on gender that denigrates employees and students is disruptive. Sexual harassment is an infringement of personal integrity and the individual's right to privacy. Sexual harassment in the workplace or place of training is not tolerated by ZIS. Sexual harassment can take the form of words, gestures and deeds.

This might mean:

- Insinuating and suggestive remarks about the appearance of a person.
- Sexist comments and jokes about sexual characteristics, sexual behavior and the sexuality of women and men.
- Showing or displaying pornographic material.
- Issuing unwanted invitations with unmistakable intent.

- Unwanted bodily contact.
- Stalking in or outside the school (including online).
- Attempting to get close in a way which involves promises of advantage or threat of disadvantage.
- Sexual assault, coercion or rape

### **3.5 Sexual conduct**

Any sexual behaviour by an employee with or towards a student is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of faculty / staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a student at the school or a young person under 18 years of age and sexual activity with a student will result in criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.

Sexual activity involves physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, however it also includes non-contact activities, such as causing students to engage in online discussions of a sexual nature or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

This means that employees should:

- not have any form of sexual contact with a student from the school
- avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, indecent

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate the relationship so sexual abuse can take place. (see Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy) All employees should undertake appropriate training so they are fully aware of those behaviours that may constitute 'grooming' and of their responsibility to always report to a Child Protection Officer (CPO) any concerns about the behaviour of an adult / student which could indicate that a child is being groomed.

### **3.6 Physical Contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for faculty / staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the student's individual needs. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one student, in one environment, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different student. Employees should use their professional judgement based on the following:

- Physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development.
- Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity.
- Physical contact should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary.
- Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority.

- If an employee believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the Senior CPO and recorded.

### **3.7 Physical Intervention / Physical Restraint**

Physical intervention / restraint can be an appropriate measure / action. However, great care must be exercised in order that adults do not physically intervene in a manner which could be considered unlawful.

Adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others

Adults should:

- always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible
- remove others from potential harm, send for support
- where physical intervention is necessary, only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed

### **3.8 Communication with Students (the use of social media)**

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new and emerging technologies, students need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. E-safety risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself.

- Faculty / staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, adhering to the ZIS Acceptable Use Policy and Rules for Electronic Communication & Information Media which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

ZIS employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online.

When using email, social media, or other systems of communication, the employee observes the customary rules of courtesy, the corporate identity guidelines and the interests of ZIS. When communicating with students, teachers are furthermore expected to maintain the standards of a safe student-teacher relationship which is open and transparent.

Use of social media and connections with students

- Employees should not invite, or accept any connections, or otherwise establish online personal relationships with
  - current ZIS students of any age
  - any ex-student of the school under the age of 18.
- ZIS employees should seriously consider the ramifications of online connections with recent graduates (who may still be friends with current students).

## Use of Social Media and Communication

- By virtue of identifying yourself as a ZIS employee, you are connected to all constituents of the ZIS community, including colleagues, students, parents, and alumni; ensure that online content associated with you as an ZIS employee is consistent with the professional standards and expectations in the ZIS Code of Conduct.
- All communication between employees and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account or approved system / platform
- Online behavior should be open, transparent and maintain the standards of a ZIS employee as outlined in the ZIS Code of Conduct.
- When posting – even on the strictest settings – act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- Employees are advised to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts

## Duty to Report with Regards to Social Media

- Any communication received from students on any personal social media sites must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Senior Child Protection Officer (Principal)
- If any employee is aware of any inappropriate communications / misuse of social media involving any employees or students in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above

### **3.9 Use of Images, videos and other media**

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Whilst images are regularly used for very positive purposes adults need to be aware of the potential for these to be taken and/or misused or manipulated for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes.

This means that adults should:

- adhere to the ZIS Rules on Usage of Electronic Communication and Information Media
- only retain images when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so
- store images in an appropriate secure place defined by the school and delete from any personal device
- avoid making images in one to one situations

This means that adults should not:

- take images of students for their personal use
- display or distribute images of students unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so

- take images of children which could be considered sexually suggestive, demeaning, or otherwise inappropriate in anyway.

### **3.10 Exposure to inappropriate images**

Adults should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images. This means that employees should:

- abide by the ZIS' Acceptable Use Policy and Rules on Usage of Electronic Communication and Information Media
- ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate

Under no circumstances should any adult use school setting or equipment to access pornography. Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should never be brought into or used in the workplace.

### **3.11 One to one situations**

Adults working in one to one situations with students, including visiting adults from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. To safeguard both children and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should always be undertaken.

This means that adults should:

- ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- consider the needs and circumstances of the student involved

### **3.12 Transporting Students**

In certain situations employees or volunteers may be required to or offer to transport students as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the adult has a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm.

- Employees should not offer to transport students unless the need for this has been agreed by a line manager, the student and their parent / guardian.
- The Assistant Principal or ATAC Director, as appropriate, is responsible to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise.
- Wherever possible, and practicable, it is advisable that the transport undertaken is limited to ZIS vehicles, not private vehicles, unless with prior approval from the line manager, and parent / guardian.
- Employees should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. This means that employees should:

- plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance respond sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise
- take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle
- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive
- ensure that if they need to be alone with a student this is for the minimum time
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the student is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of transportation are recorded and can be justified
- It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so.
- They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats for younger children.
- They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.

Employees should never offer to transport students outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their line manager and the child's parent(s).

### **3.13 Field Trips & Educational Visits**

- Faculty / staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the [ZIS Field Trip Risk Management Policy](#).
- Assistant Principals / ATAC Directors are responsible for ensuring that all potential risks have been assessed, and appropriate precautions taken, in line with the ZIS Field Trip Risk Management Policy.

Faculty / staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

### **3.14 First Aid**

- All faculty, and staff with direct contact with students, are obliged to maintain an up to date first aid qualification
- ZIS nurses will provide sufficient opportunities to fulfil this obligation by offering first aid courses throughout the school year.

