

Child Protection Handbook

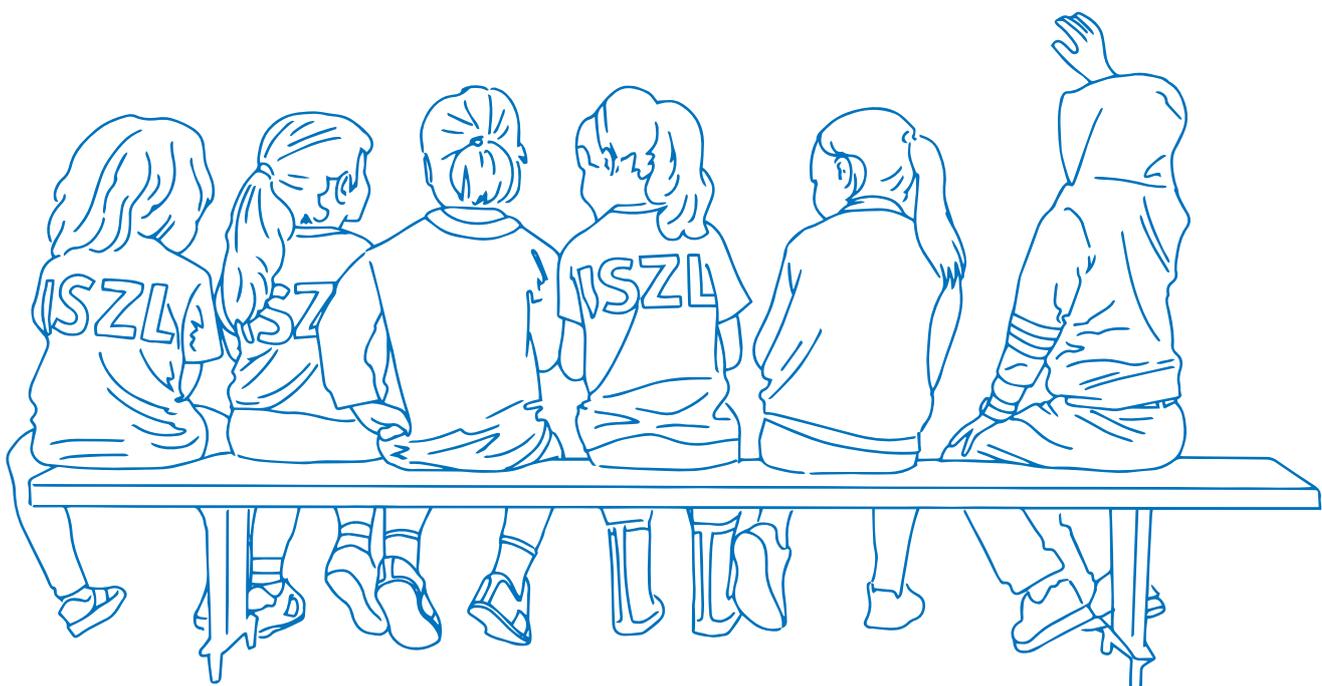
 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
OF ZUG AND LUZERN
respect | motivate | achieve

Safeguarding our community



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Letter of introduction

Dear Parents,

Child protection and safeguarding are at the heart of every decision taken by ISZL. It informs how we consider our curriculum, our classroom structure and our after-school activities. Abuse and neglect are not specific to socio-economic circumstances, and the rights of children do not vary from culture to culture. We all share a responsibility to ensure that children here at ISZL have a safe and secure environment in which to learn, grow and develop. In this publication, you will find the structures put in place to ensure children can learn safely. If you are reading this document because of your concern about a child, I invite you to turn straight to page 6 where your next steps are set out.

ISZL endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which our host county, Switzerland, is a signatory. The following are highlighted areas from the Convention of the Rights of the Child:

Article 3

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 12

Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously...

Article 19

[Governments] must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 39

Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation ... must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social reintegration.

By enrolling your child at ISZL, you agree to work in partnership with the school and abide by the policies adopted by the ISZL Board of Trustees. We value our partnership with you in providing for the safety and care of your children. The ISZL Child Protection Policy defines standards by which ISZL students should be treated at all times, and identifies courses of action should concerns be raised.

As part of our overall educational programmes and specific to our shared responsibility to educate children in a safe environment, ISZL will:

1. Provide age appropriate lessons for all grade levels to help students understand personal safety, needs and rights.
2. Inform all community members of safeguarding procedures and encourage vigilance regarding the protection of our children.
3. Provide support for students in cases where concerns are raised.

Please take the time to review the contents of this handbook, and let your child's counsellor, Principal or the Director know if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support.



Barry Dequanne

ISZL Director

December 2023

ISZL Child Protection Policy

Essential agreements

The welfare of our children is the school's paramount concern. All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and Board members, have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm. For the purposes of this handbook, the word "child" refers to any student at ISZL.

Definition

ISZL has adopted the definition of child abuse and neglect as defined by the World Health Organization: "Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Exposure to intimate partner violence is also sometimes included as a form of child maltreatment"

The following ISZL-specific definitions apply:

- **Physical abuse** Any action that results in deliberately hurting a child, which could cause injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts, including corporal punishment
- **Emotional abuse** Anything that causes significant and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development such as bullying, belittling, making them feel worthless or unloved
- **Sexual abuse** When a child is forced or persuaded to take part in, or witness, sexual activities. This does not have to be physical contact and it can happen online
- **Neglect** The persistent failure to ensure that a child's basic physical, mental and/or psychological needs are met (lack of food, "home alone", delayed or denied medical attention, etc.)

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are having difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to
- To raise the awareness of the ISZL community of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in sharing concerns and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and to ensure the school contributes to assessments of need and support for those children
- To emphasise the need for effective communication between all members of staff
- To set out our procedure to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including the police and Swiss Child Protection authorities
- To ensure that all staff working within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including overseas police checks where necessary

Procedures

Staff verification

All staff at ISZL are given access to the document "Guidance for safer working practices". All members of staff are expected to read and adhere to this document in compliance with school expectations. Police and other checks including verbal reference checks are carried out on prospective ISZL employees in relation to their suitability to work with children.

Handling reports

All cases of suspected child abuse or neglect require careful, confidential and prompt inquiry. All ISZL staff must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever they have cause to believe a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse or neglect. In serious cases of concern, the local child protection authorities will be contacted (see page 8). Should a staff member be concerned that our procedures are not being adequately followed they have the right to liaise privately with these authorities.

In the case of allegations against an ISZL staff member, ISZL will conduct a prompt inquiry in accordance with the administrative procedures for this policy, keeping the safety of the child(ren) at the highest priority.

All staff at ISZL complete child protection training on an annual basis. All Child Protection Officers (CPOs) at ISZL are trained to a higher level through the Council of International Schools (CIS).

Should any adult in the ISZL community have a concern regarding a child protection or abuse issue, they should report their concern by emailing **concern@iszl.ch** as soon as possible. All concerns will be dealt with confidentially.

A child with worries about themselves or another child can approach any member of ISZL staff or use the **concern@iszl.ch** email themselves. They can also ask a trusted adult to email on their behalf.

Student education within the ISZL curriculum is seen as a vital component of our child protection policy. All staff will ensure that their responsibility to deliver child protection components of the ISZL curriculum are conducted to a high standard.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential
- Information about a student will be disclosed to other members of staff only on a need to know basis
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing
- Should there be a need to refer a child to local authorities, this intention should be communicated to their parents/carers, unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal inquiry
- Any files or documents recorded on the computer of a staff member will be deleted from that computer once the item has been saved in the MyConcern database

Raising concerns about our processes

If there is a concern that the school's safeguarding system is failing to adequately address a situation of abuse or neglect, the issue should be brought to the attention of the Director. Should there be serious doubt in the ability of the school's systems or the Director to adequately address a concern, it is important to note that anyone may raise concerns directly with the local authorities.



Reporting Processes

Section 1: Concerns related to an ISZL Student

Procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect

ISZL uses a digital platform called MyConcern to record, manage and report concerns relating to students. It allows the Designated Safeguarding Lead to build up a picture of a child protection case from multiple stakeholders. Only the specified notification groups of the divisional Child Protection Team can see the concerns raised, so confidentiality is maintained.

When a staff member has a concern relating to a child at ISZL, they will log this onto the MyConcern platform at the earliest opportunity, within 24 hours. If the matter is urgent (ie the child is at risk of further harm today), the staff member must use the MyConcern platform and also inform a Child Protection Officer immediately.

When a member of the ISZL has a concern relating to a child at ISZL, they should email **concern@iszl.ch**. Please do not worry that your concern is unproven, or that what you saw could have several interpretations. It may be that your evidence is part of a broader picture which helps us to keep a child safe. Your confidentiality will be maintained. You will not find out how the information is used, as the child's confidentiality must also be respected.

Concerns Process

Every logged concern is received by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Director. Other team members may receive the concern depending on the notification group assigned by the person reporting the concern. If a member of the safeguarding team is involved in the concern, they are recused from the process (see page 7).

Notification group in MyConcern	Director	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Divisional Principal	Grade Level Assistant Principal
DSL	✓	✓		
High School	✓	✓	✓	
HS 9 - 10	✓	✓	✓	✓
HS 11 - 12	✓	✓	✓	✓
Middle School	✓	✓	✓	
MS 6 - 8	✓	✓	✓	✓
Primary School	✓	✓	✓	
PS EY1 - 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS 2 - 5	✓	✓	✓	✓

After making a report

Strict confidentiality applies to all child protection concerns. Therefore, the child protection team is unable to update the person making the report on the outcome of the concern raised. A person making a report may check that a concern has been received and addressed by emailing **concern@iszl.ch**.

Response team

Once a concern has been raised, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will form a response team of three Child Protection Officers to review the concern and consider next steps. A record of this meeting is documented in the MyConcern platform

A Child Protection Officer will be recused from an inquiry in the following circumstances:

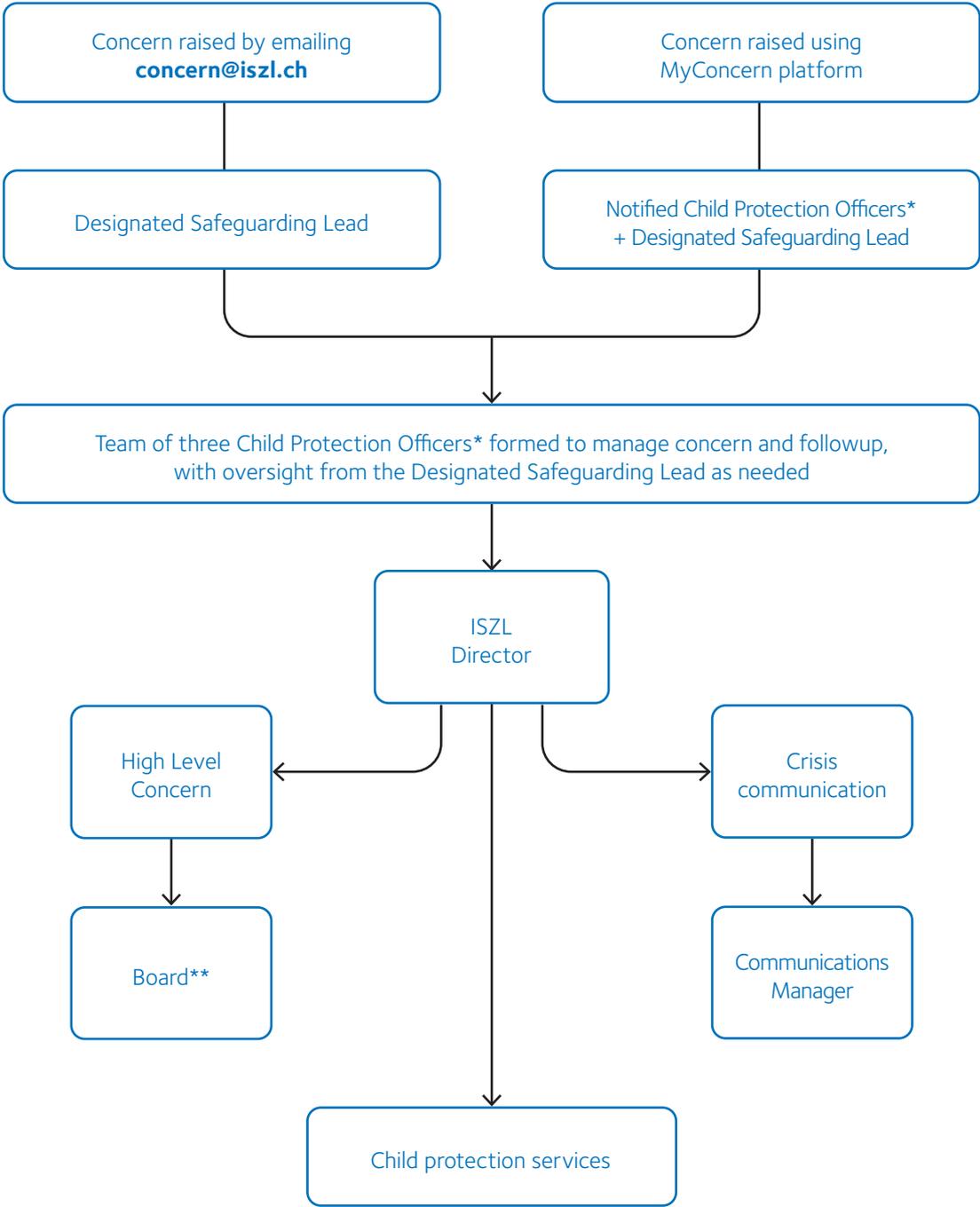
- If they are the parent or a close family friend of the child involved in the concern
- If they have a personal connection to an accused person

In all cases, information will be documented on MyConcern and strict confidentiality will be maintained. The following procedures will be used:

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assign a Child Protection Officer (CPO) and ask them to lead a response team with two other CPOs. In cases where significant abuse is suspected, the DSL will be involved in the response team. In cases that may lead to a referral to external agencies, the DSL will be part of the response team. The DSL will also provide support to teams as needed.
2. The response team will review the concern, any previous history and consider next steps
3. Any files or documents relating to the concern which are recorded on the computer of a staff member will be deleted from that computer once the item has been saved in the MyConcern database.

Child Protection Communications Flowcharts

CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN RAISED FROM COMMUNITY MEMBER



*The team will not include anyone with a known/declared link to the case
 ** In all matters that potentially threaten the reputation of the school or give cause for legal concern, the Director is responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees.

Step 2: Action Plan

The response team will consider all information gathered and recommend a course of action. In most instances the actions will be carried out by members of the response team so that as few people as possible are involved in the management of a concern. This is to ensure confidentiality and maintain clear lines of communication.

For reports of abuse against a child, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. Actions that may take place are:

- Discussions between the child and counsellor in order to gain more information. Depending upon the age of the child, appropriate strategies will be used to elicit more information as to what may have occurred. The child should be consulted and supported regarding further steps that may be taken, including discussions with parents and possibly outside authorities.
- In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counsellor, or member of the Child Protection Team
- Meetings with the family to present ISZL's concerns
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counselling
- In cases where outside authority intervention is deemed necessary, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will act as direct liaison with the authorities, keeping the Director informed throughout the process. The assistant to the Director will act as translator in cases referred to the Swiss authorities.
- An ISZL crisis management team will be created as specified in the ISZL Crisis Management Plan document.

Step 3: Follow up

Subsequent to a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, the counsellor and / or members of the response team will:

- Maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- Provide the child's teachers with ongoing support.
- Provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use.
- Maintain contact with any outside professionals and organisations involved in order to update the progress of the child in school.
- While students have access to counsellors, the school does not offer in-depth counselling but can supply details of external agencies.
- Staff that have become involved with the child who has suffered harm may find this situation stressful or upsetting. ISZL will provide the opportunity for staff to receive further support as appropriate.

All documentation of the inquiry will be kept in the child's confidential records file in the MyConcern database. Any documents downloaded from MyConcern should be deleted from the staff member's computer and the computer's trash folder immediately after viewing. Downloaded documents will not be saved in any location other than the My Concern database. If a student with an ongoing child protection case is withdrawn from ISZL by their parents, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will meet with the Director to decide whether communication with the child's next school is required. No formal records will be sent to the school concerned.

Section 2: Concerns relating to an ISZL member of staff.

If the abuse or neglect concern involves a staff member of ISZL, the concern will be reported using the Confide platform.

Confide uses a similar approach to MyConcern. It records, manages and reports concerns relating to staff members. It allows the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to build up a picture of a staff member's conduct from multiple stakeholders. Only the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Director can see the concerns raised, so confidentiality is maintained.

If a staff member has a concern about a colleague, they should log it on the Confide platform. If the concern is urgent, they should also contact the Director or the DSL.

If a community member has a concern about an ISZL member of staff, they should email **concern@iszl.ch**. Their email will be read by the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will enter the information into the Confide platform.

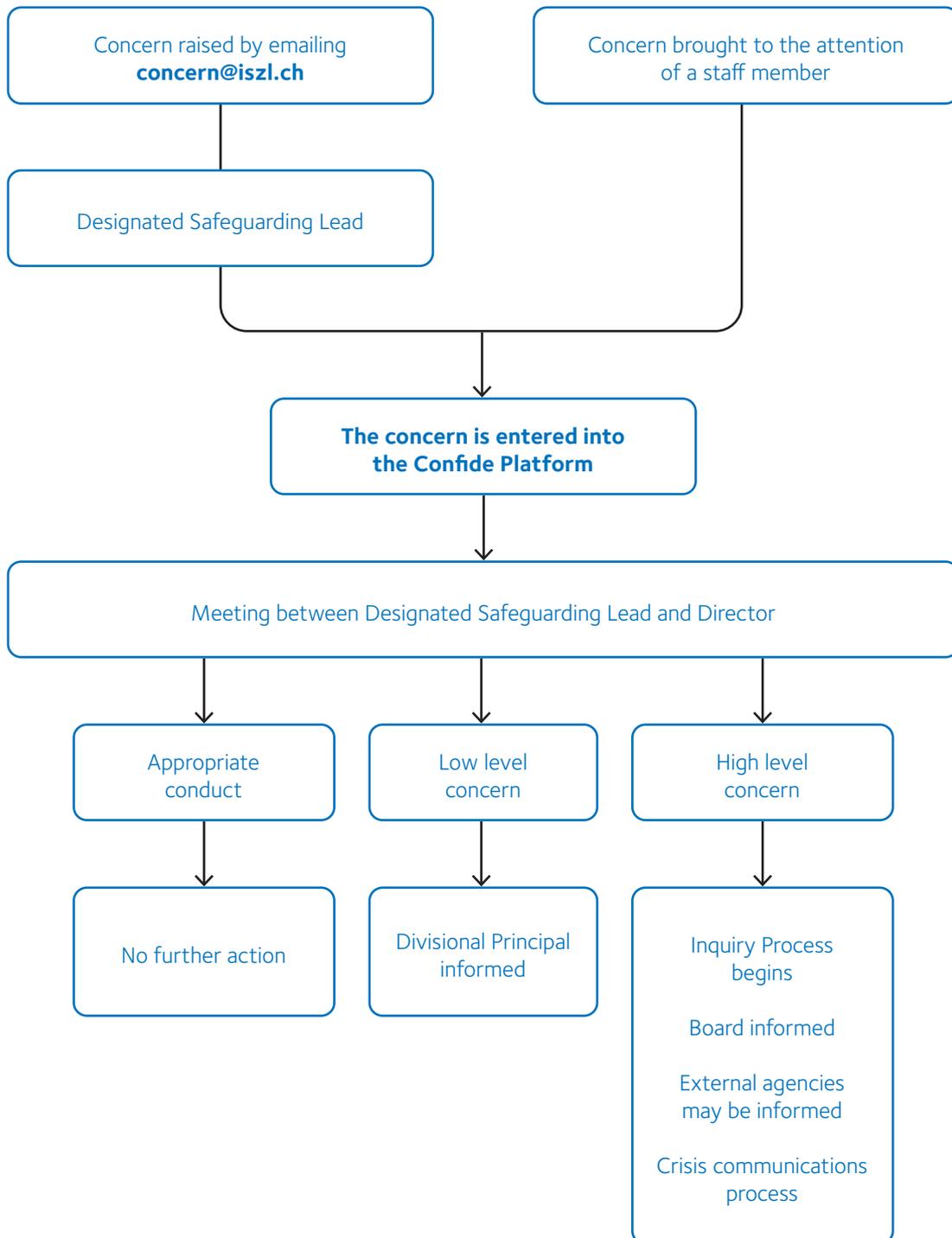
Response

For concerns related to ISZL staff members, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Director regarding an inquiry process. An inquiry into the concerns will be led by external specialists in cases where:

- Inquiries would be needed beyond the ISZL school community
- Initial inquiries lead to suspicion that the allegations may be justified and are serious

In all other cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Director consider appropriate action relating to the concerns. In minor cases, this may lead to a conversation with a staff member, but in serious cases will lead to a disciplinary process.

CONCERN RELATING TO AN ADULT IN THE ISZL COMMUNITY*



*This includes all adults including (but not limited to) staff, parents, those employed by parents, wider families and contractors

Student Information

RECOGNISE
YOU HAVE
A CONCERN

REPORT
YOUR CONCERN
TO AN ADULT

Tell an adult

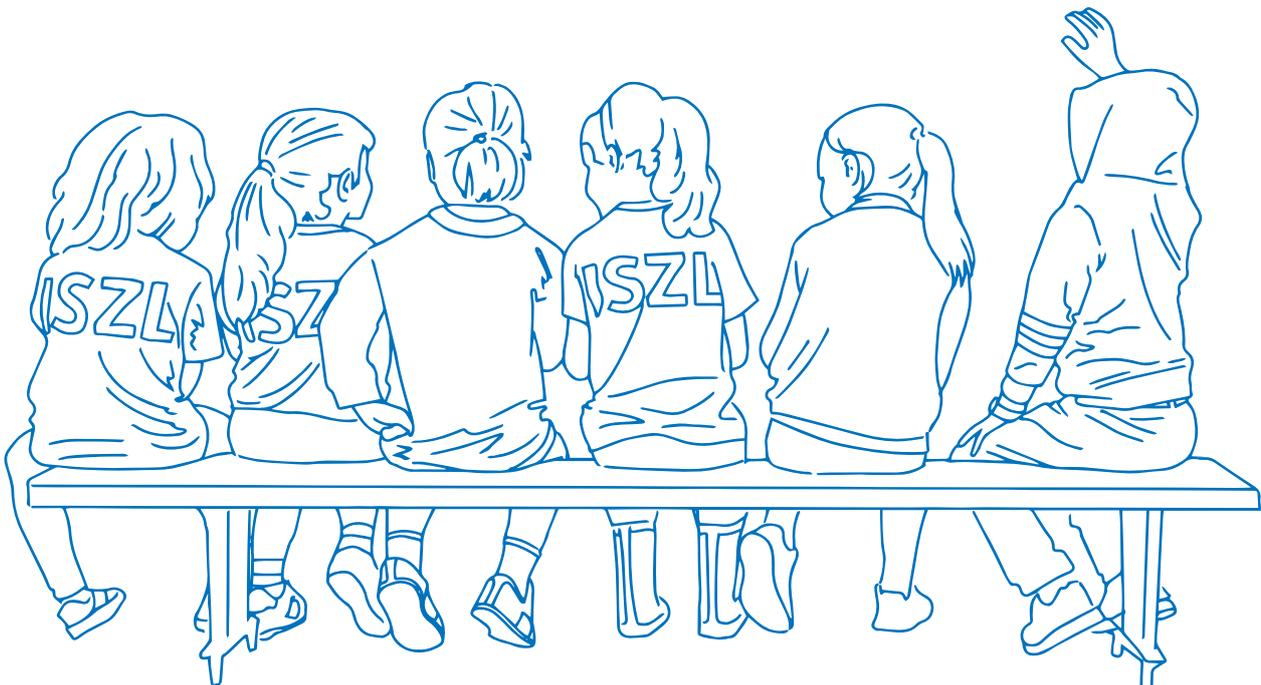
If someone is hurting you or you are worried, speak to an adult you trust:

- Your Teacher
- A Counsellor
- Your Principal
- A School Nurse
- Your Parents

Or email concern@iszl.ch

No secrets

- Some things must not be a secret. If someone is hurting you or a friend – you must tell someone.
- Similarly, if adults are concerned about you, they are also expected to tell a Child Protection Officer.
- We are here to help and support you.
- We promise to do so discreetly but if it is serious, we'll need to talk to other people who can help



Child Protection in the ISZL Curriculum

Child Protection education is taught in every grade level at ISZL. The programme is based on the Keeping Safe syllabus of the South Australian Government. It is enhanced with specific additional material to suit the needs of ISZL's international environment, and the age range at our school. In Primary School, the programme is incorporated into the PYP units of inquiry. In Middle School, the programme is delivered during dedicated PSHE lesson time. In High School it is an integrated part of the homeroom program. The Child Protection curriculum at ISZL includes a focus on the following areas:

- Safe and unsafe situations
- Bullying
- Relationships and trust
- Secrets
- Touch - appropriate and inappropriate
- Trust networks
- Protective strategies

For further information on child protection in the ISZL curriculum, refer to our curriculum documentation.

Reference Documents

Parents

For additional information the following reference documents can be found in the Child Protection section of the ISZL Parent Portal (Directory section - login needed).

- ISZL Policy for the Handling of Student Bullying Issues
- Signs & Symptoms of Child Abuse or Neglect
- ISZL Volunteers Policy
- ISZL Student Responsible Use Agreement (Educational Technology)
- ISZL Parent Absence Policy
- ISZL Parent Absence Form

Faculty & Staff

Additional documentation regarding operational procedures can be found on the Staff Portal under "Child Protection".

Support Agencies

Police: 117

Medical emergency: 144

Swiss toxicological information centre: 145

Helping hands: if you need to talk to someone anonymously: 143

Heart2Heart: <https://www.heart2heart.143.ch/>
Anonymous English-speaking helpline open 7 days a week, 18:00–23:00

Office for Child and Adult Protection Zug (KESB)
<https://zg.ch/de/direktion-des-innern/amt-fuer-kindes-und-erwachsenenschutz>

Helpline for children and young people (Pro Juventute): 147
Pro Juventute – supporting young people: <https://www.projuventute.ch/>

Victim support: free, confidential and anonymous support to adults, adolescents and children in 5 languages (DE, FR, IT, EN, RM) <https://www.opferhilfe-schweiz.ch/en/>

International Social Service: ISS Switzerland defends the rights of children, families and migrants and offers them assistance in social, legal and professional matters alongside its network of partners in 120 countries. <https://www.ssi-schweiz.org/en/node/11>

