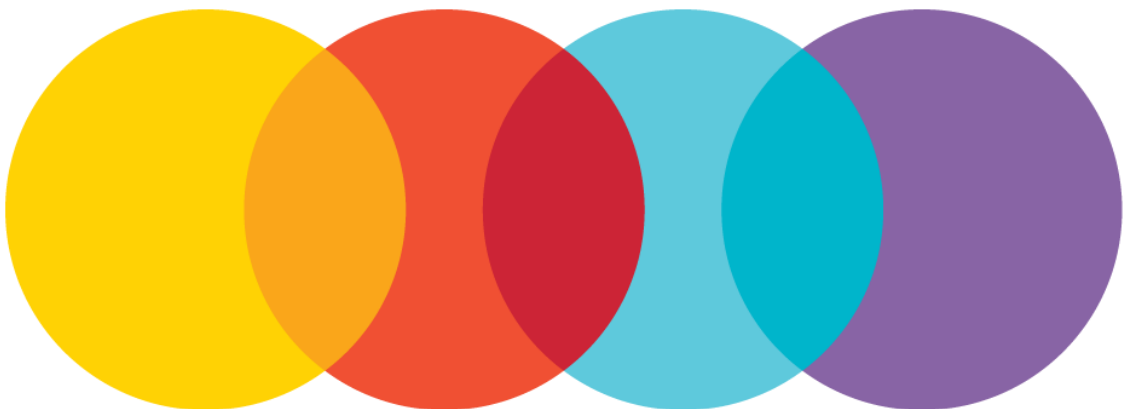




International  
School of  
**Berne**

## ISBerne Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy





**International School of Berne • Educating for life in the heart of Switzerland since 1961.**

### **ISBerne Mission**

#### **We welcome and connect**

Our community values respectful and collaborative relationships.

#### **We nurture and inspire.**

Our community cares for its members and encourages them to reach their potential.

#### **We challenge and prepare.**

Our community offers rigorous programmes that prepare global citizens for tomorrow.

### **ISBerne Definition of Intercultural Understanding**

ISBerne believes that International Mindedness is a profound appreciation of our diversity and recognition of our global responsibility as embodied in the IB Learner Profile.

### **ISBerne Definition of High Quality Learning**

Life-long learning starts with curiosity and leads to inquiry and personal growth through the development of knowledge, skills and understanding.

*We challenge and prepare.*

### **ISBerne Learning Principles**

- Engagement: Learners are actively engaged and develop an understanding of themselves as learners.
- Risk Taking: Learners explore the unfamiliar, consider a range of perspectives and take informed risks. Mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning.
- Collaboration: Learners learn with one another in safe environments when they are connected through positive, caring relationships.
- Inclusive: Each learner engages in learning opportunities that are significant, relevant and challenging.

## IB Learner Profile

ISBerne aims to develop the attributes as described in the IB Learner Profile, with the goal of developing “internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.” (International Baccalaureate, 2013). The IB Learner Profile also promotes intercultural understanding and the development of global citizens.

As IB Learners we strive to be:

<b>Inquirers</b>	We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
<b>Knowledgeable</b>	We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
<b>Thinkers</b>	We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
<b>Communicators</b>	We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
<b>Principled</b>	We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
<b>Open-minded</b>	We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
<b>Caring</b>	We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
<b>Risk-takers</b>	We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
<b>Balanced</b>	We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
<b>Reflective</b>	We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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## 1. Purpose of the Policy

This document outlines the International School of Berne's (ISBerne) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. It applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Commit to safeguarding and to protect all children from any form of child abuse
- Provide the necessary definitions and assessment tools for clear identification and recognition of child abuse
- Ensure an exemplary standard of safeguarding and child protection at ISBerne
- Ensure that all actions on child protection will be taken in the interests of the child
- Define procedures and establish clear reporting guidelines
- Outline processes and protocols for ISBerne, in connection with the local community, indicating agencies for child protection support

ISBerne endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which provides a statutory framework for the rights of all children under 18 years old. In particular, article 19 establishes the rights of children to be protected from all forms of abuse.

**Article 19** - “[...] *Protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.*”

The Civil Code of the Swiss Federal Law, **article 314d** states that educators have the obligation to alert Child Protection Authorities if there are concrete signs that the physical, psychological or sexuality integrity of a child is under threat (Swiss Civil Code)

In addition, ISBerne considers the international safeguarding standards of The International Task Force on Child Protection, to review school wide policies and recruitment standards to ensure good practice within safeguarding and child protection of all its' students.

## 1.1 Definitions

### Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to promoting welfare for all children enrolled at ISBerne. That includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children receive consistent safe and effective care

### Child Protection

Child protection refers to the effective processes to prevent and respond to any type of abuse, violence and exploitation against children.

## 1.2 Primary Responsibilities

ISBerne believes that safeguarding and promoting welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Our primary responsibilities are:

1. Safeguarding: ensuring proactive measures are in place to prevent any form of harm
2. Child Protection: reporting and recording all child protection concerns
3. Supporting: students and adults when there is a child protection concern and/or incident.



## 2. Child Protection team

**The Child Protection Response Team** will come together when there is a safeguarding concern or disclosure. The reported concern will be recorded and acted upon if necessary. This team consists of:

- Child Protection Officer: **Naomi Vibrati**
- School Director: **Denise Coates**
- HR Manager: **Margrit Schuerch**
- The relevant Programme Coordinator or Principal

Additional members could include any other teachers deemed essential to support the response to the situation. Child protection issues are reported to the Board quarterly through a regular agenda item.

### **3. Commitment to Safeguarding**

All adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school must read and sign the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff members will be asked to review and sign the policy at the start of every academic year.

Any questions about safeguarding and child protection should be directed to the Child Protection Officer.

#### **3.1 Staff Recruitment**

ISBerne adheres to CIS Safer Recruiting Practices when hiring all faculty and staff. This includes:

- Appropriate criminal background checks for all employees. These are performed through a third party: Schrole
- Formal references of the suitability of candidates to work with children and young people
- Safeguarding and Child Protection requirements in job descriptions and questions as part of the interview process
- Safeguarding and Child Protection training for all new staff, yearly refresher training for existing faculty and staff members
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Staff Code of Conduct is signed by all new employees
- Declarations as part of the ISBerne application process

#### **3.2 Staff Code of Conduct**

At ISBerne we have expectations of high standards of behaviour from ourselves and each other. We model the IB Learner Profile attributes, adhere to the CIS Code of Ethics and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and act with integrity, honesty, respect and responsibility at all times. We take pride in ourselves, our work and our learning community.

The ISBerne Code of Conduct is included in the Professional Growth policy and procedures. Faculty and staff members read the Code of Conduct alongside the ISBerne Employment Regulations and individual contracts.

#### **3.3 Staff Training**

The Child Protection Officer will organise training sessions for all faculty and staff members, in regards to:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Yearly Safeguarding and Child Protection professional development training

#### **3.4 Parent Education**

The following will be accessible to all parents of ISBerne students:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Guidelines for appropriate use of technology for their children
- Parent workshops held by the School Counsellor, in regards to issues like: positive parenting techniques, social and emotional support for their children

#### **3.5 Students – Age-appropriate curriculum**

The pastoral curriculum is integrated at all levels in age-appropriate ways. In PYP this is led by the PYP Coordinator and Pastoral Leader, in MYP/DP the curriculum is led by the Middle School Principal, the Upper School Principal, School Counsellor and University/College Counsellor.

Students are taught language to protect their rights from an early age with reference to the schoolwide agreement: “Respect yourself, respect others, respect the environment”.

## **4. Definitions of abuse**

### **4.1 What is Child Abuse?**

Child abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Children who have been abused can experience serious and potentially devastating long-lasting effects that can continue into adulthood.

### **4.2 Types of Child Abuse**

There are four main types of child abuse. Child abuse can be:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglectful behaviour towards a child

Child abuse can and does happen to children from any background, culture, class, ethnicity or faith. It is important that people working with children and young people know how to spot abuse and neglect and know what to do if they have concerns. Children and young people generally do not tell others about abuse and neglect directly but may signal indirectly via their emotional states and behaviour.

## Forms of abuse

### 4.3 Physical Abuse

Children often get bumps and bruises during their everyday play or social interaction, but it doesn't mean that they are being abused. All injuries need to be considered in the light of the age of the child, their stage of development, their social background, where injuries are on their body and any explanation given.

#### **Physical abuse** can include:

- Hitting
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Drowning
- Burning or scalding
- Poisoning
- Suffocating

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child. It can also include inappropriate use of restraint.

#### **Possible physical signs:**

- Bruising on any area of the body where bruises are unlikely to appear in everyday play
- Injuries that are in several stages of healing suggesting that a child has experienced repeated maltreatment over time
- Injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation given
- Injuries reflecting shape of article used (belt, electric cord, hand etc)
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation

#### **Possible behavioral signs:**

- Inability to recall how injuries occurred
- Avoiding getting changed for sport or other activities
- Reluctance to go home
- Excessively eager to please
- Being aggressive or withdrawn
- Attempts to run away
- Being sad, frequently crying
- Drug and/or alcohol misuse
- Behaviour that is not consistent with a child's stage of development.

#### 4.4 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves someone forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. This may not necessarily involve a high level of violence and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening.

Sexual activities may involve physical contact, including:

- Assault by penetration
- Non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

It may also include non-contact activities, such as:

- Watching sexual activities
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- Inappropriate role play
- Involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

##### **Physical signs include:**

- Stomach pains
- Genital soreness, bleeding or discharge
- Recurring genital-urinary infections
- Discomfort in walking or sitting
- Sexually transmitted infections

##### **Behavioral signs may include:**

- A change in behaviour
- Not wanting to undress
- Sexual knowledge, language and behaviours beyond their age
- Self-harming
- Being withdrawn
- Unexplained amounts of money
- Disturbed sleep
- Sexualised drawings and change in handwriting.

#### 4.5 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe adverse effects on the child's health and emotional development. It is sometimes referred to as psychological abuse.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

##### **Emotional abuse may involve:**

- Conveying to a child they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only because they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the child the opportunities to express their views
- Deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child
- Rejecting or ignoring a child completely
- Using degrading language or behaviours towards them
- Preventing the child from interacting socially with other children or adults
- Experiences of bullying
- A child seeing or hearing the ill treatment or serious bullying (including cyberbullying) of another
- Causing children to feel frequently frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children

##### **Physical signs may include:**

- Self-harm marks
- Erratic weight or growth patterns
- Delayed development, either physically or emotionally
- Erratic behaviour.

##### **Behavioural signs may include:**

- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Inappropriate attention-seeking
- Being withdrawn
- Unexplained underachievement at school
- Self-harming
- Bed-wetting
- Disturbed sleep.

Emotional abuse also includes radicalising a child or young person who may be subsequently drawn into terrorist- related activity. Young people may also experience emotional abuse through their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse can be face-to-face or online, by an individual or by a group.

#### 4.6 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. A child who is neglected will often be subjected to other forms of abuse.

**Neglect** may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Respond to a child's basics emotional needs.

**Physical signs** may include:

- Unattended medical or dental problems
- Lack of energy due to inadequate food intake and/or poor nutrition
- Poor personal hygiene/unwashed clothing
- Inadequate clothing (not having warm clothes in winter)
- Untreated skin or hair problems (rashes, sores, flea bites, head lice)
- Very thin or swollen stomach
- Constantly hungry
- Lack of muscle tone
- Constant tiredness.

**Behavioural signs** may include:

- Demanding constant attention and affection
- Difficulty in making friends
- Missing or irregularly attending school
- Frequent lateness
- Stealing or begging food from others
- Emotional withdrawal
- Lack of aspirations
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Developmental delay (weight, language, social skills).

## 4.7 Grooming

Grooming is the deliberate process a child perpetrator undertakes to build a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked. Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Children and young people can be groomed online, in person or both - by a stranger or someone they know. When a child is groomed online, groomers may hide who they are by sending photos or videos of other people. Sometimes this will be of someone younger than them to gain the trust of a "peer". The relationship a groomer builds can take different forms, this could be:

- A romantic relationship
- As a mentor
- An authority figure
- A dominant and persistent figure

### Signs of grooming

Some of the signs you might see include:

- Being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online
- Older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Having money or new things like clothes, mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- Underage drinking or drug taking
- Being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- Sexualised behaviour, language or an understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age
- Spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time

### Effects of grooming

Grooming can have both short and long-term effects. A child or young person might have difficulty sleeping, be anxious, struggle to concentrate.

They may live with:

- Anxiety and depression
- Post-traumatic stress
- Self-harm
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Feelings of guilt and shame
- Relationship problems
- Eating disorders
- Difficulty coping with stress
- Suicidal thoughts
- Pregnancy
- Drug and alcohol problems

#### 4.8 Peer-on-peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional and financial. This type of abuse is not tolerated or normalised. Peer-on-peer abuse can include but is not limited to:

- Bullying
- Victimisation or discrimination (in relation to race, religion, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability)
- Gender and sexuality-based violence (homophobia, biphobia, transphobia)
- Sexual assaults
- Sexting
- Coercive control

Indicators of peer-on-peer abuse may be:

- Missing school
- Being withdrawn
- Requesting to change class
- Being aggressive and argumentative
- Self-harm
- Increasing anxiety
- Alcohol and substance abuse

#### 4.9 Online abuse

Computers, tablets and smartphones give children and young people access to a wealth of information and opportunities for communication. ISBerne ensures that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place. Within the schoolwide pastoral curriculum, students are taught how to be safe online from a young age.

Online abuse can include and is not limited to:

- Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- Personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm
- Online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams
- Pressure or coercion to create, send or share sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others.

#### 4.10 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

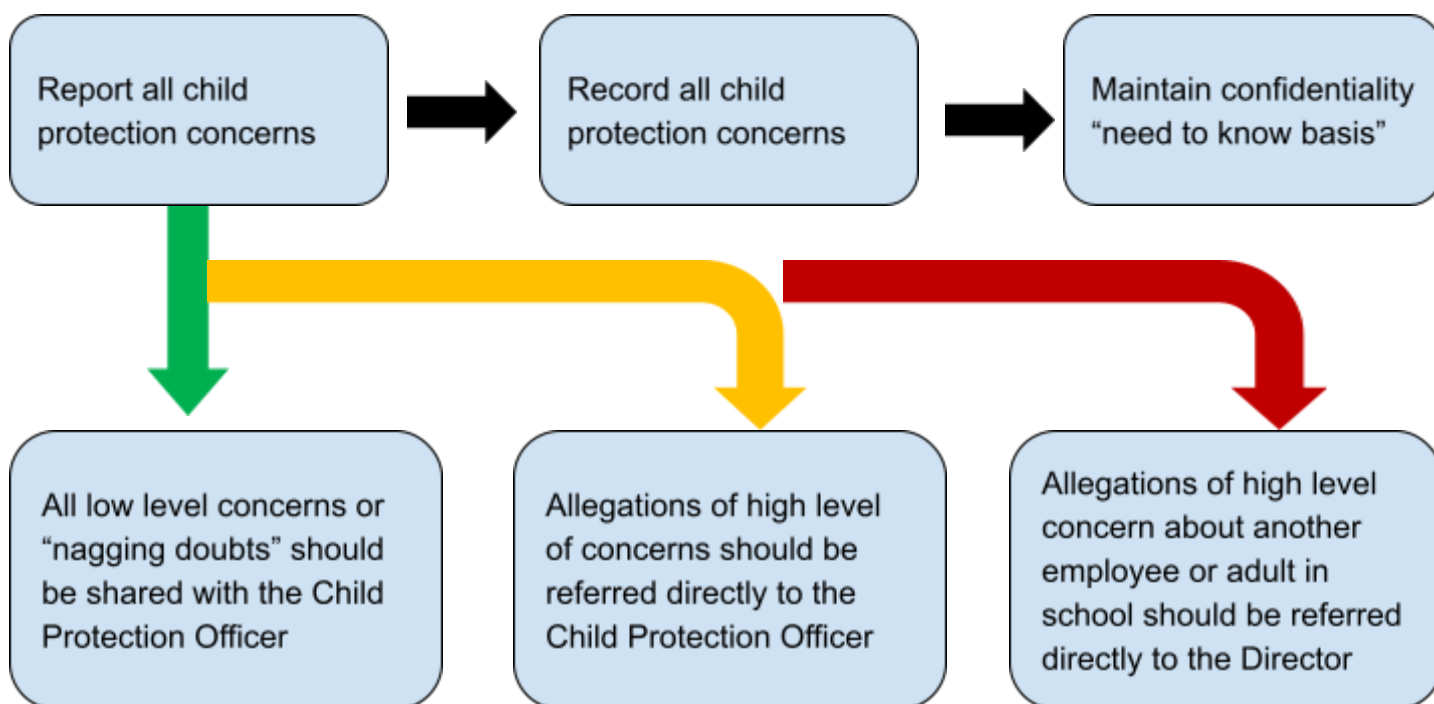
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The procedure may be carried out when a girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, most cases are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight, and therefore girls between these ages may be especially vulnerable. It is not required by any religion. UNICEF describes FGM as a violation of girls' and women's fundamental rights.

Indicators of FGM include:

- Being withdrawn from education
- Feeling unable to disobey their parents, as a result, may suffer emotionally
- Not attending health appointments
- Having extended absence from school
- Going to school but absent from lessons, possibly spending prolonged periods of time in the toilets
- Being anxious leading up to holidays
- Generally anxious or depressed
- A sudden decline in performance, aspiration or motivation

## 5. Procedures for reporting

All ISBerne's employees have a duty to:



### Levels of Concern

ISBerne recognizes three different levels of concerns marked by the "traffic light" arrows in the above graph.



**Level 1:** This is considered a low level of concern or a doubt about a situation which could potentially put a child or children in a vulnerable situation but it does not constitute immediate risk or danger. Level 1 concerns are dealt with internally as per non-emergency situations.



**Level 2:** This is an escalated concern which puts a child or children in a position of significant or immediate danger. This might involve referrals to medical professionals, child protection authorities, police.



**Level 3:** All concerns or allegations regarding gross misconduct by an ISBerne employee or adult in school should be raised directly with the Director. Gross misconduct can include:

- Harming a student (physical, sexual, emotional abuse or negligence resulting in harm)

- Behaviour or relationship with students deemed as inappropriate (i.e., grooming, physical punishment etc.)
- Behaviour towards a student that may constitute an offence under the Swiss Law
- Behaviour towards another employee or adult in the school deemed as inappropriate (i.e., aggressive/violent behaviour, bullying, discrimination, harassment etc.)

All concerns or allegations regarding gross misconduct by the Director, should be raised directly with Martha Burnige (Board member - Safeguarding and Child Protection Representative).

### 5.1 Handling a disclosure

If a concern or disclosure is brought to an ISBerne staff and faculty member, it is important to know how to respond. Here is the guidance, regardless of the age of the child, to follow:

**1 – Receive:** the information without judgement and with an open mind. Listen to the child/young person. Remember you are not to question what the “truth” is or investigate.

**2 – Reassure:** thank the student for opening up or reporting the disclosure.

**3 – React:** listen to the student without interrupting them and before the conversation ends, repeat back what they have told you to ensure your understanding of the disclosure. It’s important that you do not look shocked, panicked or angry. Do not promise confidentiality.

**4 – Record:** complete the child protection form with the date, time, place and exact words used.

**5 – Report:** pass all the information to the Child Protection Officer for level 1 & 2 concerns, or directly to the Director for level 3 concerns.

### 5.2 Procedure for emergency situations

Immediate action is required if:

A child is thought to be in **immediate danger**: the Child Protection Officer and/or Team will inform the appropriate organisation (KESB, Psychiatric service, Police). The parents should be informed.

A child has **physical injuries** caused by suspected abuse: the student must be taken to the hospital. The Child Protection Officer/Team will report the case to the Child Protection Authority. The parents should be informed.

See Appendix II for the relevant services in the Canton of Bern.

### 5.3 Procedure for non-emergency situations

If concern or disclosure is reported to the Child Protection Officer but there is no immediate danger, internal data will be collected.

- **Observations:** observation of the student(s) and written records will be kept of relevant incidents/communications. Collaborate and support the parents during this process. Do not contact the suspected offenders.
- **Internal Inquiry:** continue to gather information, contact local advice agencies, monitor the wellbeing of the student.
- **Decide:** if there is insufficient ground for concern, the individuals involved will be supported. If there is reasonable cause for concern, KESB (Kinder-und Erwachsenenschutzrecht) will be contacted.

If the concern relates to the Director, it should be reported to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Representative of the Board: Martha Burnige.

No employee will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine concern about unsafe practice, provided that they do so in good faith.

No employee, or student, may be harassed for “whistleblowing” or in any way subjected to personal or other disadvantages. Complaints or reports made with malicious, slanderous or abusive intent, without any basis in fact, are exempt from this rule. Abuse of the right to lodge complaints or of the reporting channel will result in disciplinary measures including sanctions, warnings, termination without notice or expulsion.

**Publication date: December 2021**

**Review date: December 2022**

**I have read and understood the above policy.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place:** \_\_\_\_\_

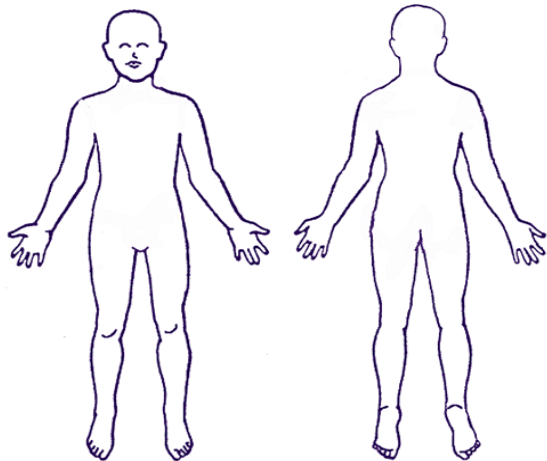
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDICES

### Appendix I – Child Protection Form

#### **CHILD PROTECTION RECORD OF CONCERN** (to be completed by adult who has first point of contact by child)

Child's Name, Date of Birth and Class:	
Date and Time of Concern :	
Details of concern, please describe the issue fully including dates, names, reported allegations, observations of behaviour, injuries etc:	
Details of an physical injuries:	
Please indicate any markings on body outline:	
Your Name :	
Your Signature :	
Your Position in School :	
Date and Time of this Recording :	

Form passed to Child Protection Officer (CPO): Yes / No

Agreed action with CPO:

Signature of staff completing form:

Name: .....Date:.....

Action taken by CPO:

Form discussed with Child Protection Team/Director: YES/NO

Action agreed:

Signature of CPO:

Name: .....Date:.....

## **Appendix II – Signposting information**

### **Canton of Bern**

#### **General emergency number**

144 Ambulances  
145 Toxicology Centre  
117 Police  
118 Fire Brigade  
147 Free Helpline for children and adolescents

#### **EchoSOS – The Emergency App**

Worldwide application with correct official emergency numbers from 128 countries.

#### **KESB (Kinder-und Erwachsenenschutzrecht)**

Weltpoststrasse 5  
3015 Bern  
Tel. 031 635 20 00

#### **Victim Assistance Bern**

Seftigenstrasse 41  
3007 Bern  
Tel. 031 370 30 70  
Fax 031 370 30 71  
[beratungsstelle@opferhilfe-bern.ch](mailto:beratungsstelle@opferhilfe-bern.ch)  
[www.opferhilfe-bern.ch](http://www.opferhilfe-bern.ch)

#### **Women's Refuge in Bern**

All women's shelters offer counselling and temporary accommodation to women and their children who are mentally and physically abused, threatened or persecuted.

Women's shelter Bern  
PO Box 2126  
3001 Bern

24-hour hotline AppElle! 031 533 03 03

[info@frauenhaus-bern.ch](mailto:info@frauenhaus-bern.ch)  
[www.frauenhaus-bern.ch](http://www.frauenhaus-bern.ch)