



# Child Protection & Safeguarding Handbook

International School of Dakar  
2023

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# An Important Note for the School Community

Dear ISD Community,

The International School of Dakar recognizes that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in each of the school's policies, practices, and activities.

The ISD Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is drafted in consideration of international and local Senegalese law (Childcare, Protection, and Justice Bill of 2010) and is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of which Senegal is a signatory. These two key articles from the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child are important and we wish to draw your attention to them:

## **Article 19 – Protection from abuse and neglect**

The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

## **Article 34 – Sexual exploitation**

The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

As a member of the ISD community, you agree to work in partnership with the school and abide by the policies adopted by the school. We genuinely value our partnership with you in providing for the safety and care of our students. It is for this reason that the ISD Board of Trustees has endorsed a Child Protection Policy that defines the standards by which all our students should be treated with respect and dignity at all times.

As part of our overall educational programs and specific to our shared responsibility to educate children and to ensure a safe environment in which all children can learn and grow, ISD will:

- Provide age-appropriate lessons for all grade levels to help students understand personal safety, needs, and rights.
- Provide parent materials and information sessions to help you better understand our programs and procedures.
- Annually train faculty and staff to recognize and report issues of abuse and neglect.

Working together as a community, at home and at school, we will ensure that our students are safe and knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities to themselves and to each other so they can grow and learn, free of fear, in a safe and supportive environment.

I thank you for your support of our efforts and I invite you to contact the school's Child Protection Officer, counselors, or principals regarding any specific questions you may have in this regard.

Sincerely,  
Sandy Mackenzie  
Director

# Statement on Child Protection and Safeguarding

At the International School of Dakar, our primary commitment is to foster a secure learning environment for all students, with a particular emphasis on those vulnerable to mistreatment or neglect. Guided by our Board Policy on Child Protection (section 3000.2), we are dedicated to preventing, intervening, and repairing harm related to identity, always placing the safety and welfare of our students at the forefront.

Our commitment to child protection involves comprehensive measures to prevent and address situations where children may be at risk of harm, neglect, or abuse. Safeguarding goes beyond mere protection; it aims to create a positive and nurturing environment for students' academic, social, and emotional development. This commitment extends beyond our school walls, necessitating collaboration between the school and our parent community.

We recognize that identity-based harm can take various forms, including microaggressions, hate speech, online harassment, child-to-child abuse, physical violence, and social exclusion. We acknowledge that targeting a person based on identity markers such as race, color, ethnicity, caste, religion, gender identity, gender expression, sexual identity, national origin, citizenship status, socioeconomic status, age, language, or ability constitutes harm and abuse.

At ISD, we treat these instances of identity-based harm as concerns of Child Protection.

Moreover, our school is dedicated to collaborating with teachers, principals, and parents to incorporate trauma-informed restorative practices when addressing identity-based harm, when appropriate. This approach aims to uphold the agency and dignity of the targeted individual while fostering responsibility and accountability for those responsible for the harm.

Educators, given their unique position to observe and engage with children over time, hold a professional and ethical responsibility to identify those in need of assistance and protection. Every ISD staff member is mandated to report suspected incidents of abuse, neglect, and identity-based harm. Our professional development programs ensure comprehensive training and access to resources for recognizing and responding to incidents.

We value parents as partners and believe we all play a vital role in reinforcing the principles of child protection at home and school, ensuring a seamless extension of a safe and supportive environment.

Building on our commitment to child protection, we've enhanced efforts, including the appointment of a dedicated Child Protection Officer. This role encompasses policy development, staff training, reporting and inquiry procedures, risk assessment, prevention strategies, collaboration with external entities, and support for students and families. For inquiries or concerns, please contact the Child Protection Officer, Elmeka Henderson, at [elmekah@faculty.isd.sn](mailto:elmekah@faculty.isd.sn) or call +221 33 825 08 71 Ext. 114.

By fostering an environment of awareness, communication, and support, we strengthen our collective ability to protect and nurture every child in our community. Together, we create an atmosphere where children feel safe, heard, and empowered, ensuring their well-being and fostering a culture of openness and trust.



## **Responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer (CPO)**

The school has identified one person designated as the Child Protection Officer to support the director and principals. The CPO's purpose is to work to ensure the safety, well-being, and rights of students.

This role is guided by two principles:

- The welfare of the student is always paramount.
- Confidentiality should be respected as far as is reasonably possible.

Being guided by these principles, the CPO will:

- Spearhead the development and implementation of robust child protection policies within the school.
- Provide appropriate training to all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, in addition to their basic training, to enhance awareness and understanding of responsibilities in safeguarding and child protection.
- Play a key role in ensuring that the school takes immediate and effective action to support any student who may be at risk.
- Collate and maintain accurate, confidential records of any concerns about students and coordinate inquiries when necessary.
- Proactively identify potential risks and implement preventive measures to create a safe school environment.
- Coordinate with other Child Protection Officers and Safeguarding Leads, fostering collaboration and sharing best practices.
- Ensure a seamless transfer process for students moving to other international schools.
- Provide support to students and families involved in child protection matters, offering guidance and assistance as needed.
- Uphold the principles of confidentiality and ethical conduct throughout the child protection process.
- Ensure that the entire school community is aware of the CPO's role, whether in their setting or remotely, and how to contact them.
- Promote awareness of local regulations, procedures, and agencies that offer support for safeguarding matters.

## **Responsibilities of the Director and the Leadership Team**

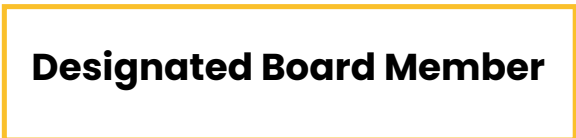
- Ensure the implementation of the child protection and safeguarding policy, along with these procedures, across the entire school, fostering a commitment to child protection among all staff and volunteers.
- Foster a school culture that encourages the sensitive and confidential handling of concerns raised, creating an environment where individuals feel comfortable reporting child protection matters.
- Ensure that safeguarding principles are seamlessly integrated into the curriculum, emphasizing the importance of students' safety and well-being.
- Guarantee the physical security of the school site, implementing measures that create a safe and secure environment for all students and staff.
- Ensure compliance with local legislation, guidance, and supportive agencies, including clarity on legal duties to report any child protection issue to local authorities.
- Implement safe recruitment procedures, ensuring that only staff with unsupervised contact with children are employed following rigorous protocols.

# Responsibilities of the Child Protection Response Team

The purpose of the Child Protection Response Team is to support the Child Protection Officer in responding to allegations of abuse and neglect. They are tasked with addressing and managing situations involving child protection concerns. The composition of this team includes individuals in the school with specific expertise in the safeguarding of children, such as members from the counseling department, principals, assistant principals, the school nurse, communications or IT department. The Director, Human Resources, or a designated Board Member might be involved if the allegation is toward an employee.

The key responsibilities of the Child Protection Response Team are:

- Respond promptly to reports or incidents of child protection concerns.
- Coordinate efforts among relevant stakeholders to address the situation effectively.
- Conduct thorough inquiries into reported incidents, ensuring a fair and comprehensive examination of the facts.
- Provide immediate support and resources to the child or children affected, as well as their families.
- Maintain accurate and confidential records of all actions taken, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Communicate with relevant parties, including staff, parents, and external authorities, while maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity.





## Prevention Measures

Our commitment to child protection extends beyond reactive measures to proactive strategies aimed at preventing harm and fostering a safe, supportive environment.

Our collaboration with teachers and families is a cornerstone of this initiative. We work closely with educators and parents to identify students who may require additional support or those who may be at risk of harm. By doing so, we create a supportive network that ensures a holistic approach to student well-being.

## Personal Safety Curriculum

Key to this approach is our comprehensive Personal Safety Curriculum, which operates on multiple fronts to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of personal boundaries, safe interactions, and potential risks.

- To address the emotional and developmental needs of our students, we have integrated a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program from Pre-K to Grade 5. This involves weekly lessons delivered by our experienced counselors. These lessons are designed to enhance students' self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
- To specifically safeguard our students against harm and abuse, we have incorporated child protection and personal safety lessons into our SEL curriculum. These lessons empower students with crucial knowledge, such as understanding appropriate names for private parts, recognizing safe and unsafe touch, and responding if they feel uncomfortable. Students also learn how to establish a safe network of trusted adults, fostering a sense of agency and support.
- Students in Grades 6 – 12 are provided Child Protection training at the beginning of the school year, engaging in open and informed conversations that extend beyond conventional discussions of boundaries and personal safety. Recognizing the evolving needs of students in these grade levels, our approach goes further to empower their voices and cultivate a sense of agency.
- Advisory is also designed with their unique developmental needs in mind. The curriculum delves into not only traditional concepts of personal safety but also explores topics relevant to the evolving social dynamics and challenges faced by adolescents.

## Safe Hiring Practices

- The school engages in rigorous recruitment procedures, emphasizing the importance of selecting staff who are committed to child protection and have undergone thorough background checks.
- ISD reserves the right to conduct background screening of employees at any time after employment has begun – and will do so periodically. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in the information provided, whenever discovered, may result in termination of employment with the organization.
- All staff must agree to and sign a Code of Conduct, which details the school's expectations of how faculty and staff members should behave in their interactions with children.
- Ongoing training in child protection is provided to all faculty and staff, ensuring they are well-versed in child protection policies, procedures, and relevant laws. Training is also offered to all volunteers and external hires who are on campus and interact with our students.
- Additional professional development opportunities are offered to staff throughout the school year to enhance their knowledge and skills in promoting a safe and supportive learning environment.
- It is a requirement that outside service providers sign an agreement as part of their contract with the school, confirming that they will inform their employees of our policies and ensure compliance.

# Physical Environment and Security

- Security measures are in place to ensure a safe school environment, including access control, surveillance systems, and emergency response plans.
- Mechanisms for reporting and responding to concerns related to the physical environment are in place, thus ensuring timely resolution and prevention of potential risks.

## Toilets and Changing Rooms

It is strictly mandated that adults and students utilize separate toilet facilities and changing rooms, recognizing the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries and ensuring the privacy and well-being of our students.

## Self-harm and Suicide Prevention and Intervention

We recognize that self-harm and suicidal thoughts are serious issues that can affect some individuals. We have a proactive and supportive approach to addressing these concerns. If any student, parent, or staff member becomes aware of a student exhibiting signs of self-harm or expressing thoughts of suicide, we take immediate action to ensure their safety. This includes pathways for confidential reporting, intervention by trained professionals, counseling, and communication with parents and guardians.

We believe in fostering an open, non-judgmental environment where students can seek help and support when facing these difficult challenges. Our primary goal is to protect and support every student's emotional well-being and mental health.

## Guidelines for Responding to a Child’s Disclosure

### Do:

- Assure the child they are doing the right thing in telling you.
- Respond calmly and matter-of-factly. Even if the story that the child tells you is difficult to hear, it is important not to register disgust or alarm.
- Let the child know this is not their fault and they did nothing wrong.
- Accept what the child is saying and document what you can.
- Explain to the child that you must tell someone else to get help.
- Try to let the child know that someone else also will need to talk with him/her and explain why.
- Respect the child’s privacy. Share with the Child Protection Team, but limit information from and with other staff.

### Do not:

- Do not promise a child you will keep a secret for them. You may need to report, which the child will view as breaking your trust with them.
- Do not lead the child in telling. Just listen, letting him/her explain in his/her own words.
- Don’t pressure the child for a great amount of detail.
- Do not make judgmental or disparaging comments about the abuser – it is often someone the child loves or with whom he/she is close.
- Do not make promises to the child that things will get better.
- Do not confront the abuser.
- If the child does not want to go home, this should be considered an emergency. Report and handle immediately by contacting your school counselor or the Child Protection Officer. Do not take the child home with you!



# Types and Signs of Abuse

The identification of signs of abuse and neglect is a complex and sensitive matter that requires careful consideration. It's important to recognize that individual circumstances vary, and cultural, social, and contextual factors can significantly influence perceptions and interpretations. The signs discussed here are general indicators and may not definitively indicate abuse or neglect. Cultural diversity plays a crucial role in shaping parenting practices and community norms. Any concerns about potential abuse or neglect should be approached with cultural sensitivity and assessed within the specific context.

**Child Abuse**, according to the World Health Organization, involves all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment, as well as commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity within the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. Abuse may manifest through the infliction of harm or by the failure to act to prevent harm. It's crucial to recognize that these forms of abuse are often interconnected, and the impact on the child can be profound.

**Physical abuse** involves the intentional use of force that results in, or has the potential to cause, bodily harm or injury to a child. This form of abuse may include actions such as hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, shaking, throwing, burning, biting, or any other act that causes physical harm. Physical abuse is often characterized by an imbalance of power, where a person in a position of responsibility or trust inflicts harm on a child, leading to immediate or long-term negative consequences for the child's health and well-being.

Possible signs of physical abuse in children may include:

- Unexplained injuries such as bruises, welts, burns, or fractures that cannot be explained by the child or that are inconsistent with their developmental abilities.
- Injuries with clear patterns, such as belt marks, handprints, or burns from specific objects.
- Presence of injuries in different stages of healing, suggesting repeated trauma.
- Injuries on areas of the body that are not commonly injured accidentally, such as the back, buttocks, or genitals.
- Sudden changes in behavior, such as withdrawal, aggression, anxiety, or excessive fear.
- A decline in academic performance or engagement in school activities.
- A child may shy away from physical contact or flinch at sudden movements.
- Expressing fear or reluctance to go home or be in the presence of specific individuals.
- Inconsistent or vague explanations for injuries or reluctance to explain how injuries occurred.
- Frequent absences from school without plausible explanations.

**Identifying signs of abuse and neglect in children is crucial for their safety and well-being. However, it's important to note that these signs may not definitively indicate abuse, and they can also be associated with other issues. If you observe multiple signs or have concerns, it's crucial to seek support from the school counselors or Child Protection Officer.**

**Emotional abuse** involves behaviors or actions that cause emotional harm to a child. This may include constant criticism, humiliation, intimidation, or the withholding of love and affection. Emotional abuse can have a significant impact on a child's mental and emotional well-being, affecting their self-esteem, social development, and overall psychological health.

Possible indicators of emotional abuse in children may include:

- Persistent feelings of worthlessness, inadequacy, or a lack of self-confidence.
- Social withdrawal, avoiding peers, or isolating themselves.
- Displaying heightened fear, anxiety, or excessive worrying, especially about pleasing others.
- Exhibiting behavior that is more typical of a younger age, such as bedwetting or thumb-sucking.
- Acting out aggressively or sudden and unexplained changes in behavior, mood, or personality.
- Delays in the development of language, motor skills, or other milestones.
- Overly compliant behavior, where the child is excessively eager to please and avoid conflict.
- An extreme fear of making mistakes, coupled with an intense desire to be perfect.
- Extreme shyness or fear of social interaction.
- A child avoiding eye contact or being excessively watchful and wary of others.

**Sexual abuse** refers to any non-consensual sexual activity or exploitation involving a child. This includes but is not limited to molestation, rape, indecent exposure, and the production or distribution of child pornography. Sexual exploitation may involve forcing or coercing a child into engaging in sexual activities for the gratification of others. These forms of abuse can have severe and lasting consequences on a child's physical and mental health.

Possible signs of sexual abuse in children may include:

- Sudden and unexplained changes in behavior, such as becoming withdrawn, overly compliant, or excessively aggressive.
- Regression to younger behaviors, such as bedwetting or thumb-sucking.
- Heightened fear or anxiety, especially around specific people, places, or activities.
- Frequent nightmares, sleep disturbances, or a sudden fear of going to bed.
- Demonstrating knowledge or interest in sexual acts or pornography that is inconsistent with their age.
- Engaging in explicit sexual play or demonstrating age-inappropriate sexual behavior.
- Avoidance of specific individuals, especially adults, without an apparent reason.
- Unexplained genital infections, pain, bleeding, or discomfort.
- Expressing self-harming behaviors or thoughts of suicide.
- Complaints of pain or discomfort when walking or sitting.
- A sudden decline in academic performance or engagement in school activities.
- Excessive secrecy or inappropriate knowledge of sexual behaviors.
- Creating drawings, stories, or play activities with sexual content that is not age-appropriate.

**Cultural diversity plays a crucial role in shaping parenting practices and community norms. Any concerns about potential abuse or neglect should be approached with cultural sensitivity and assessed within the specific context.**



**Neglect** occurs when a caregiver fails to provide the necessary care and attention required for a child's well-being. This can include inadequate supervision, failure to provide essential medical care, insufficient nutrition, or lack of appropriate shelter. Neglect can hinder a child's physical, emotional, and cognitive development, leading to long-term consequences for their health and overall quality of life.

Possible signs of neglect in children may include:

- Persistent issues with personal cleanliness, such as dirty or unwashed clothing, body odor, or untreated health conditions.
- Consistently appearing underfed or malnourished, with signs like frequent hunger, weight loss, or stunted growth.
- Wearing inappropriate or inadequate clothing for the weather, or repeatedly wearing dirty or torn clothes.
- Lack of medical care for ongoing health issues, dental problems, or chronic illnesses.
- Repeated and unexplained absences from school, as a result of neglecting to ensure the child's attendance.
- Decline in academic performance due to a lack of support, resources, or involvement from caregivers.
- Leaving a child alone for extended periods, especially when the child is too young to care for themselves.
- Failing to provide emotional support, love, and affection, leading to emotional neglect.
- Persistent untreated injuries or medical issues, indicating a lack of attention to the child's health and safety.

**Child-to-child abuse**, often recognized as relational aggression or bullying, involves intentional behaviors designed to harm others through the manipulation of social standing and relationships. This form of aggression encompasses a variety of actions aimed at damaging social connections, including:

- Spreading rumors
- Overt and/or subtle exclusive behaviors
- Making threats of violence or outing
- Sending threatening, upsetting, or abusive messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- Trolling or sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms, or online games
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking, or stealing online identities to embarrass someone or cause trouble using their name.

At ISD, we are dedicated to promptly identifying and addressing child-to-child abuse, providing support and intervention to ensure the well-being of all our students. This commitment is an integral part of our broader mission to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive school environment. We firmly believe that every student deserves to feel respected and valued, free from any form of harm, including identity-based harm.

Our approach extends beyond addressing immediate concerns, encompassing proactive measures to foster understanding, tolerance, and respect for diverse identities within our school community. By actively promoting an atmosphere of acceptance, we aim to eliminate instances of child-to-child abuse and identity-based harm, ensuring a positive and secure experience for every student at ISD.

# Commonly Held Myths vs the Realities About Child Abuse & Neglect

## MYTHS

- **Child abuse is carried out by strangers.**
- **Learning about child protection is harmful to your children.**
- **Abuse is a matter of culture; physical or sexual abuse falls within the norms of some cultures and is acceptable.**
- **Child abuse is a result of poverty and only happens in low socioeconomic circumstances.**
- **International Schools do not have to report abuse to local authorities.**

## FACTS

Research indicates that 90% of abuse is from domestic causes and is committed by individuals known to the child. International school communities tend to have families that move often and are separated from their extended families in their home-of-record. When abuse is within the family, the transient life-style then increases the risk to international school students who tend not to have access to outside resources, and therefore cannot get help.

Research indicates that developmentally appropriate education makes children more confident and able to react to dangerous situations. Teaching using a specific population context increases protective behaviour.

The reality is that there is no excuse for child abuse. No culture supports harming children.

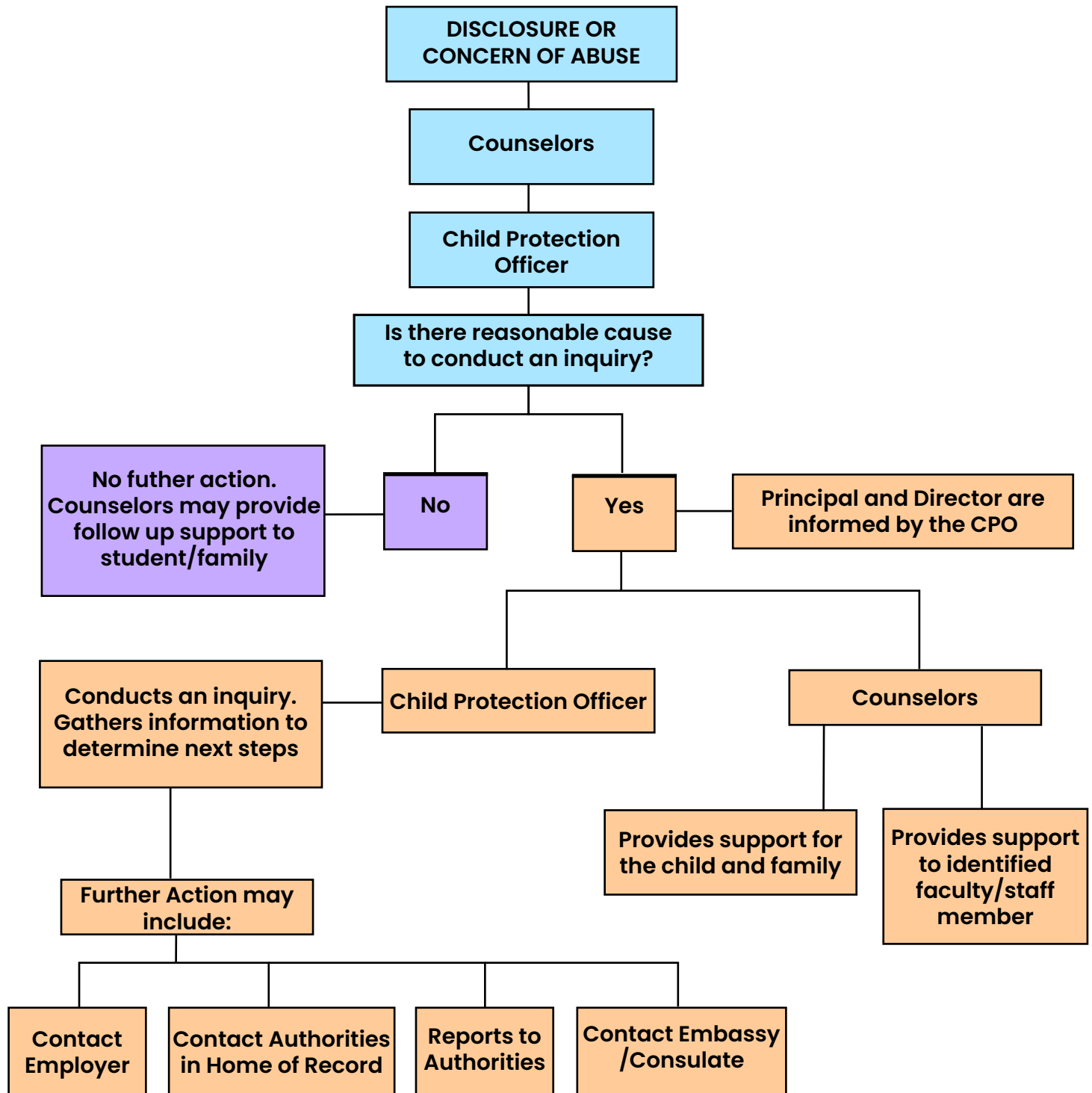
Research indicates that child abuse occurs in all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural sectors of society. A common characteristic of an abusive family is isolation, such as that commonly found in our international school families who move often or are separated from their extended families at home.

International schools are bound by the laws of the host country and as such international schools must be knowledgeable and compliant with the child protection laws in their locale. Furthermore, international schools are legally and ethically liable for any violation of existing laws related to reporting of cases of abuse or neglect; there are cases now pending where schools are facing legal action in regard to non-compliance.

# Procedures for Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect

Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report their suspicions to the counselor, or to the Child Protection Officer (CPO). In all cases, the CPO will notify the Principal and Director.

All ISD employees are also required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect. All reports of abuse and neglect must be made within 24 hours for immediate response.



## Step 1: Initial Response and Inquiry

- Upon receiving a report or suspecting abuse, the teacher or staff member contacts the grade-level counselor or Child Protection Officer (CPO) within 24 hours.
- The counselor gathers information and informs the CPO for further inquiry.
- The CPO may form a response team involving key personnel such as the school nurse, counselors, and the principal.
- Follow-up activities are conducted with strict confidentiality and may involve:
  - Interview relevant staff and document case information.
  - Consult with school personnel to review the child's school history.
  - Report the case status to the Director.
  - Determine the course of follow-up actions.

It may be determined at this stage that there is no reasonable cause to conduct an inquiry. In these cases, it will be labeled a low level concern. Support will be offered to support the child and family and the situation will be monitored by the counselor and CPO.

## Step 2: Development of Action Plan

If there is reasonable cause to conduct an inquiry, an action plan is developed to assist the child and family.

- Actions may include discussions between the child and counselor, in-class observations, meetings with the family, referral to external professional counseling, and notifications to relevant authorities.
- School counselors handle most cases, addressing issues like student relationships, parenting support, and student-parent relationships.
- Cases that require more comprehensive care may be referred to outside resources or the school's mental health counselor.
- Extreme cases prompting concerns about the child's safety may involve reports to the consulate, employer, or the child welfare officer in the family's home of record.

## Step 3: Post-Inquiry Support

After a reported or substantiated case, the counselor maintains contact with the child and family, providing support and guidance.

- Ongoing support is offered to the child's teachers and the principal.
- Resources, materials, and strategies are provided for teachers to support the child.
- The counselor remains in contact with outside therapists, if applicable, to update them on the child's progress in school.

## Responding to Allegations Concerning ISD Employees

At the ISD, we are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring the safety, well-being, and rights of every child under our care. This commitment extends to our response to any allegations against staff members that involve behaviors potentially harmful to children. Allegations that a staff member has behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offense related to a child, posed a risk of harm to children, or demonstrated unsuitability to work with children are taken with utmost seriousness.

Our response protocol may include, but is not limited to:

- Upon receiving the allegation, the school will initiate an immediate and impartial inquiry to gather all relevant facts.
- The staff member in question may be temporarily reassigned to a non-student-facing role during the inquiry to ensure the safety of our students and support will be offered to the staff member throughout the process.
- Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation to protect the privacy of all parties involved.
- In cases where the nature of the allegations warrants, the staff member may be suspended pending the outcome of the inquiry.
- Support will be provided to the child or children affected, as well as their families, throughout the investigative process.
- If allegations involve criminal offenses, we will promptly report them to the appropriate legal authorities.
- We will communicate transparently with the school community, providing updates as appropriate and ensuring that accurate information is shared responsibly.
- Should the inquiry substantiate the allegations, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of employment.



The ISD Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is a comprehensive framework designed to ensure a safe and nurturing educational environment. It recognizes the individuality of each child, the importance of family support, and the collective responsibility of the entire school community in fostering a secure and conducive learning atmosphere. This approach underscores the school's commitment to holistic child development and the promotion of a supportive community for all its members.



# Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Our commitment to confidentiality and record keeping is not only a legal responsibility but a moral one. We recognize the utmost importance of confidentiality in safeguarding the well-being of our students. Our commitment to maintaining the privacy and dignity of all parties involved in child protection inquiries is paramount.

## Confidentiality Protocol

- All documentation related to child protection inquiries will be securely maintained by the designated Child Protection Officer. This includes investigative records, statements, and any pertinent information.
- All documentation concerning suspected or reported cases of abuse or neglect will be thoroughly documented by the school and confidentially stored using the online safeguarding database, the Child Protection Online Monitoring System, CPOMS.
- Separate counseling notes, if generated, will be kept in the divisional counselor's office in a confidential file. This file will be transferred to the next divisional counselor when the child progresses to the next academic level.
- Information may be shared within the professional community on a need-to-know basis to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. This sharing will be conducted with the highest regard for privacy and ethical considerations.

## Records Follow the Child

- Child protection records are designed to follow the child, particularly in cases where issues persist within the family. This ethical obligation compels us to take every measure to assist the next educational community in protecting the child's welfare.
- This may involve proactive contact with the next school, sharing relevant records, and providing any necessary context to support a seamless transition for the child.

## Review

This Policy and its associated procedures undergo an annual review and update, considering the diverse needs of our student body and taking into account the unique risks associated with and impacting ISD students.

**As valued members of the ISD Community, we share a collective responsibility for the safety and well-being of every student on our campus. If you ever have concerns regarding the neglect or abuse of a child, we encourage you to promptly inform a school counselor or the Child Protection Officer. Alternatively, you can use the provided code to fill out a concern form, ensuring a swift response.**



**Your input is vital in maintaining a safe and nurturing learning environment. All concerns are treated with the utmost sensitivity and seriousness.**

