Safeguarding and Child Protection Handbook

International School Dhaka

(Reviewed January 2025)

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International School Dhaka

1999 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

ISD is the premier international school of Bangladesh preparing students for global citizenship and academic success through a dynamic IB curriculum supported by a diverse community.

VISION STATEMENT

ISD will empower our students through innovative learning to achieve academic excellence for impactful global citizenship.

ISD VALUES

These statements are supported by the newly-defined school values which we know are important for the achievement of our mission and vision.

WELLBEING

Our community is dedicated to supporting everyone's learning and balanced growth, both individually and as a group.

KINDNESS

Our community values respect, empathy, and compassion in our relationships with each other and in our roles as active global citizens.

RESPONSIBILITY

Our community takes action to help local and global communities, aiming for a more inclusive, fair, sustainable, and peaceful world.

ISD CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy 7.6023

ISD CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The International School Dhaka is committed to the safety and protection of children and all members of our ISD community. This Child Protection Policy and the related Child Protection Guidelines apply to all staff, employees, volunteers, and students who represent ISD and interact with children or young people in either a direct or unsupervised capacity.

The school aims to provide protection from and preparation for potentially abusive encounters. It is, therefore, the duty of all school personnel to be vigilant to signs of abuse and report their suspicions immediately to the CPT. Such matters are of great sensitivity and must be dealt with confidentiality. Students and teachers who report suspected abuse and neglect cases will be protected and supported by the Board. It is the duty of the Director to implement the Child Protection Guidelines promptly so the children under the care of ISD are protected and supported, and all suspected incidents are thoroughly investigated.

নীতিমালা ৭.৬০২৩

শিশু সুরক্ষা নীতিমালা

বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্যঃ এই নীতিমালার খসড়াটি আইএসএস এর দ্বারা গঠিত সর্বশেষ শিশু সুরক্ষা নীতিমালা এবং আইএসডি'র মলূ নীতিমালা অনসরণ . করে সংশোধন করা হয়েছে। এই নীতিমালার অ্যাপেন্ডিক্স এম-এ একটি সম্পূর্ণ নির্দেশিকা সংযুক্ত করা হয়েছে।

ইন্টারন্যাশনাল স্কুল ঢাকা আমাদের আইএসডি কমিউনিটির সকল শিশু এবং সদস্যের নিরাপত্তা ও সুরক্ষা নিশ্চিত করতে বদ্ধ পরিকর। শিশু সুরক্ষা নীতিমালা এবং অ্যাপেন্ডিক্স এম-এ উল্লেখিত শিশু সুরক্ষা নির্দেশিকা সকল স্টাফ, স্বেচ্ছাসেবক এবং ছাত্রছাত্রী যারা আইএসডির প্রতিনিধিত্ব করে ও যারা প্রত্যক্ষ বা পরোক্ষভাবে শিশু ও তরুণদের সাথে যুক্ত তাদের সবার জন্য প্রযোজ্য।

যেসব ক্ষেত্রে অবমাননাকর পরিস্থিতির সম্ভাবনা রয়েছে স্কুলের লক্ষ্য হচ্ছে, সেইসব ক্ষেত্রে সুরক্ষা প্রদান করা এবং প্রস্তুতি গ্রহণ করা। অতএব, স্কুলে কর্মরতর্ম সবার কর্তব্য হল, যে কোন ধরনের নির্যাতনের লক্ষণ সম্পর্কে সজাগ থাকা এবং কোন ব্যাপারে সন্দেহ হলে অবিলম্বে উপযুক্ত স্কুল প্রধানকে জানানো। এই জাতীয় বিষয়গুলি অত্যন্ত সংবেদনশীলতার সাথে এবং অবশ্যই গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করে সমাধান করতে হবে। যে শিক্ষার্থী এবং শিক্ষকগণ নির্যাতন এবং অবহেলার সন্দেহজনক ঘটনাগুলি রিপোর্ট করবে তাদেরকে বোর্ডের মাধ্যমে সহায়তা এবং সুরক্ষা প্রদান করা হবে। শিশু সুরক্ষা নির্দেশিকাগুলি অবিলম্বে বাস্তবায়ন করা স্কুলের ডিরেক্টর বা স্কুল প্রধানের দায়িত্ব, যাতে আইএসডির তত্ত্বাবধানে থাকা শিশুদের সুরক্ষার সহায়তা নিশ্চিত করা যায় এবং প্রতিটি সন্দেহভাজন ঘটনার বিশদভাবে তদন্ত করা হয়। শিশু সুরক্ষা নির্দেশিকাগুলির জন্য অ্যাপেন্ডিক্স এম দেখুন।

Introduction

Image credit: Council of International Schools

Values, Laws, Aims, Applicability, Review

The International School Dhaka (ISD) takes responsibility for taking all our students very seriously. We strive to provide a safe and supportive learning environment to maximize their learning and well-being. Both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Bangladesh is a signatory, and the Bangladesh Act No 24, provide the background for establishing a set of transparent ISD practices, procedures, and guidelines for child protection and safeguarding. All forms of child abuse violate children's human rights and impede their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child-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."

The Bangladesh Children's Act, 2013-Act No. 24 of 2013

"The Act changes the legal definition of a child from being a person under the age of 14 to one under the age of 18. It criminalizes any kind of cruelty inflicted on children while they are working in both the formal and informal sectors. In addition, the Act will prescribe punishments for using or exploiting children in begging, in brothels, and in carrying drugs, arms, or other illegal commodities".

The framework outlined in this document seeks to guide ISD's faculty, staff, volunteers, and families in child protection and safeguarding matters. This handbook should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct, safe technology use, and the school's curriculum supporting emotional, social, and physical health. The handbook includes roles and responsibilities, procedures, protocols, and key definitions based on worldwide best practices. ISD is committed to providing a safe environment with open communication for faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers and families.

Faculty, staff, parents or volunteers may directly witness child abuse or have disclosures or allegations relayed to them made by a child or an adult. There may also be disclosures of abuse that have occurred prior to attending ISD. Sustained abuse of children can have significant long-term effects on all aspects of children's health, development, wellbeing, and ability to sustain stable and meaningful

relationships in the future. ISD commits to ensuring that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities aligned with child protection and safeguarding. This is achieved through training during orientation on ISD practices, protocols, and procedures related to child protection and safeguarding. This training is facilitated by the ISD counselors. Additionally, training conducted by external providers is offered every two years.

As referenced in the parent handbook, in order for a student to reach her/his full potential, Maslow (Motivation and Personality 1954) identifies a list of needs that a child has ranging from essential to more higher-level. All of the level of needs above should be addressed in order for a child to succeed in a school setting and beyond. There are actions that all invested parties can be taking in order to support the wellbeing of students at ISD that relate directly to these needs.

Definitions

Safeguarding: Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. (NSPCC)

Child Protection: Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child. (NSPCC)

Child: For this document, a child is any person under the age of 18 or any person enrolled at ISD as a student, even if that person has reached their 18th birthday.

Abuse: According to the World Health Organization, "Child maltreatment, sometimes referred to as child abuse and neglect, includes all forms of physical and

emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, development or dignity."

Within this broad definition, four subtypes can be identified:

- **Neglect,**
- **Physical abuse,**
- **Psychological abuse,**
- **Sexual abuse.**

NEGLECT: Failure to provide for a child's basic physical, medical, psychological or educational needs.

Examples include:

Physical: Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or lack of appropriate supervision - this would include failure to provide proper adult guardianship, such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period. (For details on ISD's guardianship policy, see the next section).

Medical: Failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment.

Psychological: inattention to a child's emotional needs and failure to provide psychological care.

Educational: Lack of interest or involvement in a child's academic performance. Failure to respond to repeated communications from the school. Failure to adequately support a child's academic progress at home.

Possible Indicators of Neglect:

- Child is unwashed, exhibits a lack of sleep, or appears uncared for
- Child does not want to go home
- Both parents or legal guardians are absent from the home for any period longer than 24 hours.
- Parents cannot be reached in case of emergency
- Stealing or scavenging compulsively
- Frequent tardiness or absence
- Untreated medical/psychological issues or recurring illness or infection
- Child is excessively attention-seeking or overly affectionate with adults

PHYSICAL ABUSE: Causing internal or external physical injury, not accidental.

Examples include:

Hitting, kicking, shaking, suffocating, burning, biting.

Possible Physical Abuse Indicators:

- Unexplained injuries including bruises, cuts, scrapes, burns, or fractures on any part of the body
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Head of brain injuries
- Blackened eyes or any damages on the face
- continuous or multiple injuries
- Physical aggression or quick to anger
- Emotionless when hurt
- Habitually absent
- Unusual fear of parental contact from school
- Exaggerated startle response or wary of physical contact
- Dressing inappropriately for the weather (e.g., long sleeves when hot outside)

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE: A pattern of behavior where a child is subjected to continuous and hurtful non-physical abuse that may diminish their sense of identity, dignity and self-worth.

Examples include:
Excessive criticism, constant disapproving, belittling, extreme teasing, humiliation, negative comparisons, insults, harmful threats, inappropriate expectations, verbal assault, silent treatment, excluding child, lying/withholding important information, confinement, and/or not respecting boundaries or child's development.

Possible Psychological Abuse Indicators:

- Fear of failing
- Fear of consequences
- Lying
- Mood swings, withdrawal/lacking emotion or aggressiveness
- Overly sensitive to criticism
- Mental or emotional developmental lags
- Social isolation
- Low self-esteem, depression
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g.,headache, nausea, stomach aches)
- Bedwetting and/or diarrhea
- Reports of humiliation, or intimidations, and bizarre punishments

- Refuses appropriate affection or praise
- Acts older than age.

SEXUAL ABUSE: Any act where an adult or a more powerful person includes a child in sexual activity.
Examples include:
Inappropriate sexual comments, developmentally inappropriate conversations about sexual material, asking a child to pose in seductive ways, showing private parts by an adult, facilitating a child to watch sexual acts, or pornographic material, oral, anal or genital penetration.

Possible Sexual Abuse Indicators

- Is quiet or more distant than usual
- Starts to wet or soil themselves
- Asks questions about secrets
- Seems aggressive or angry
- Says head and tummy hurt
- Not interested in playing, or avoids people and places
- Unusual sexualized behaviors
- Doing less well in school
- Emotional or clingy

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Parents/Guardians:

- Read the Child Protection and Student-Parent Handbooks yearly
- Understand definitions and indicators of child abuse
- As a parent, you have primary responsibility for protecting and caring for your children and supporting them to build relationships that are safe.
- Have a chat with your child and make sure that he or she knows that no one is allowed to threaten, hurt or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Children are most likely to initially disclose abuse to either a parent or same-aged friend. It is possible that the perpetrator is known to you and may even be a family member. It is the parent/guardian's

responsibility to immediately remove the child from this threat and take necessary action against the perpetrator.

- For a child who discloses that he or she is currently being abused, the immediate priority is safety and protection from further abuse.
- Listen to and support the child; reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by reporting.
- If the CPT contacts parents after a disclosure has been made at school, parents are expected to cooperate and communicate with CPT earnestly.
- It is highly encouraged to communicate with the CPT if the child is experiencing behavioral concerns after an abuse disclosure has been made at home.

Role of ISD employees:

It is the primary responsibility of faculty and staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of potential or actual abuse and report any disclosures, suspicions, or allegations immediately. If an employee suspects or has evidence of abuse, they must report this information to the respective social emotional counselor/CPT within 24 hours of the initial concern. Faculty and staff are responsible for the initial referral and should not engage in any further involvement, potentially compromising the investigation. In addition to other duties, each employee must:

- Read the Child Protection Handbook and stay informed on where it can be located.
- Attend bi-annual school provided training, and any required supplemental training, to be informed on child protection and safeguarding
- Understand definitions and indicators of child abuse
- Follow reporting procedures and protocols
- Maintain confidentiality
- Sign a pledge stating your commitment to upholding ISD practices, procedures, and policy regarding child protection and safeguarding
- Immediately inform CPTs of disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm.
- Staff are expected to maintain appropriate boundaries with current students in and outside of school. This includes both in-person and online situations.

Role of the Child Protection Team (CPT)

The CPT includes divisional principals, social and emotional counselors, special needs coordinator, and the director.

Responsibilities relevant to child protection and safeguarding are as follows:

- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is effectively implemented throughout ISD.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and have access to complete copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse (covered in the Child Protection Handbook).
- Ensure that all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children effectively. This is kept up-to-date by refresher training at two yearly intervals.
- Be personally responsible for ensuring that they receive refresher training every two years to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date.
- Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken. These records will be kept separate from student's records for confidentiality.
- Establish a close link with the relevant local agencies, as needed, to ensure clear and effective communication and be a recognized contact within ISD for agencies to contact regarding concerns.
- Work closely, as applicable, with parents in the inquiry and safeguarding process.
- Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concern
- Decide upon the appropriate level of response to specific concerns about a child, if needed.

Role of the Director:

- Consult with the Board of Directors, as needed, with regards to further action to be taken.
- Provide up-to-date child protection training to all faculty and staff.
- Be informed and invited to informational and action-based meetings with all stakeholders.
- Have available all relevant data from all stakeholders to assist in the inquiry.
- Interview and investigate faculty and staff who are accused of any wrongdoing concerning child welfare.
- Determine final outcome and plan of action of an inquiry. This may include a conference with students involved, parent notification, meeting with parents, meeting with others pertinent to the case, including the alleged perpetrators, psychological assessment, mandatory counseling sessions,

suspension or termination of employment or any other action supporting the child.

Role of the Social Emotional Counselor:

Responsibilities relevant to child protection and safeguarding are as follows:

- Develop and/deliver PSHE/SEL curriculum for homeroom lessons
- Host parent workshops
- Deliver training on Child Protection concerns, abuse, disclosure, and reporting
- Maintain and safely store disclosure reports
- Maintain confidential counseling records in support of child protection
- Provide external resources and referrals as needed
- Provide supportive counseling to children and solution-focused counseling to parents/caregivers as needed.

Role of the ISD School Nurse

Responsibilities relevant to child protection and safeguarding are as follows:

- Have clinical knowledge of the indicators for child abuse and report any concerns or suspicions immediately to the CPT.
- Make student medical records available, as needed, to the CPT.
- Keep all information strictly confidential
- Document all visits and provide a weekly report to CPT.

Role of the Head of Human Resources:

Responsibilities relevant to child protection and safeguarding are as follows:

- Ensure that all staff are recruited and employed per the guidelines identified in the Employment Policy to identify those people safe to work with children.
- Require and collect Staff Employment Declarations from all newly hired staff

Role of Head of Security:

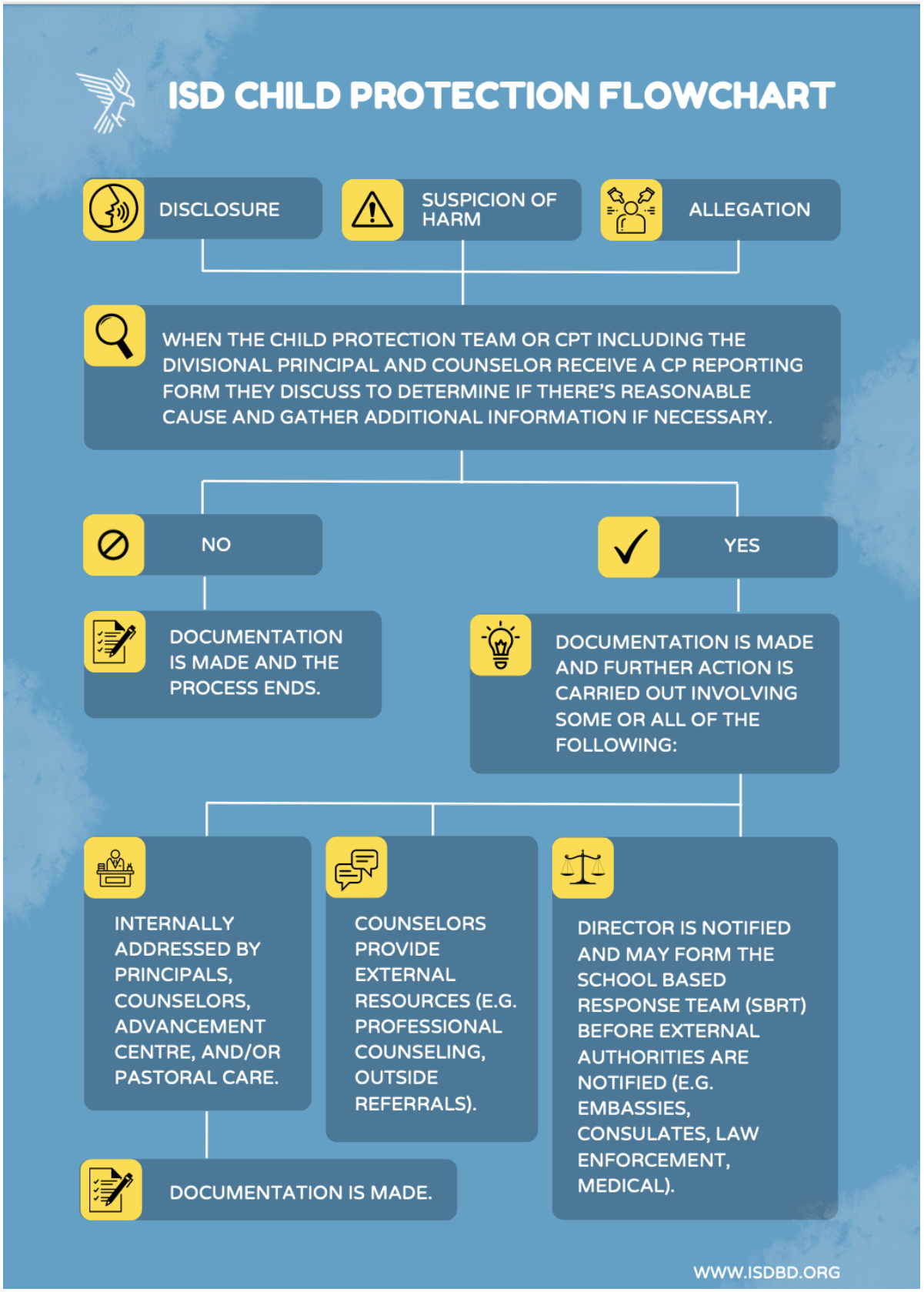
Responsibilities relevant to child protection and safeguarding are as follows:

- Oversee the entry and exit procedures to ensure only appropriate and cleared persons are on campus at all times and students arrive and depart with a trusted, identified adult.
- Ensure that no contractors, vendors and service providers operating on-site during school operating hours will be left with unsupervised access to students.
- Consult with the Director about local laws and reporting any criminal allegations to local authorities.

- Ensure campus is secure to ensure child protection and safeguarding
- Annually review and conduct crisis procedures and drills, including lockdown, evacuation, bomb/terrorist attacks, fire, earthquakes, and other natural catastrophes.

Reporting and Response

ISD Disclosure Flowchart and Procedures



Child Abuse Reporting:

All employees at ISD have a duty and a responsibility to act if they have reasonable cause for concern about a child's welfare. If an employee suspects or has evidence of abuse or receives a disclosure, they must report this information to a CPT as soon as possible and within 24 hours.

ISD internal inquiries may be reported to the Department of Social Services, Embassy, and/or police based on the level of risk assessed by CPT.

Responding to a Disclosure:

ISD Student Protection Reporting form will be completed if a suspicion of harm, allegation, or disclosure is made. The person receiving the disclosure should not record the meeting digitally, nor ask leading questions, and should not criticize the alleged perpetrator. The person cannot promise confidentiality as it might be necessary to refer to a CPT. The person receiving the disclosure should do the following:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Allow the child to talk freely and only ask questions to clarify
- Explain what will be done next and who needs to be informed
- Record, in writing, the disclosure with detail and record the date and time
- Inform the Child Protection Team

Open-ended questions:

You may need to ask more questions to clarify what is being reported. Avoid leading questions that imply or contain their own answer. Open-ended questions are non-leading. These are questions that start with:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where

Examples of open-ended questions are:

- How did it happen?
- What happened?
- Who was there?
- How often does it happen?

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality, data protection, and human rights principles must be adhered to when obtaining, processing, or sharing personal or sensitive information or records.

Storage of Records:

All records of child protection concerns are treated as sensitive information and are kept together securely and separately from the child's general school records.

Key Contact Information

Director
Steve Calland-Scoble
+8801322881316

Primary Principal
Michael Palmer
+8801896045676

Secondary Principal
Chris Boyle
+8801847277993

SEN Coordinator
Heather Nesbit
+8801730495804

Primary Counselor
Bryn Stillwell
+8801847481674

Secondary Counselor
Giuseppe Tagliarini
+8801847277984

Training, Education, and Engagement

Training:

Teachers and staff will be trained regularly regarding how to identify and report abuse and neglect. This document will be reviewed and updated annually to keep up to date with best practice and the latest training.

Comprehensive and Coordinated Education - ISD Wellness Program:

ISD understands that at the heart of keeping all students safe on our campus is a twofold process - a set of well-developed Child Protection policy and procedures is necessary, but also required is an education program that teaches all students the essential skills to engage in healthy relationships and to learn to advocate for themselves.

The school offers a wellness curriculum to all students from Preschool to Grade 12. These concepts are explored at age-appropriate levels and where the learner is developmentally ready. The overarching understanding is that all children deserve respect, learning social emotional skills enhances academic learning, self-control and knowing how to protect themselves and feel safe.

School counselors provide social-emotional education both in classrooms and individually during counseling sessions based on student need. If abuse is suspected or reported, counselors will work with both the student and family.

Recruitment Practices:

ISD follows the Board of Directors approved policy in the recruitment of staff and faculty. All volunteers, outsourced contractors, and employees are screened to ensure that they are suitable to work with children as far as is practicable. For locally hired staff, ISD requires a range of documentation that includes police clearance and written references from at least two previous employers. When hiring internationally, ISD always attempts to interview face to face and checks multiple references by phone call and /or email. ISD will not pursue or hire any candidate with a criminal record relating to child safety or exploitation.

As part of the ISD teacher contract, all teachers receive a list of expectations that explicitly states that “All teachers at the International School Dhaka are required to demonstrate a professional commitment to the school, its students, and parents.” With specific reference to students, the following statements are included:

- Remember that student wellness and safety is the highest priority of the school and the teacher. If you have concerns about the welfare of any child, or the behavior of any teacher/staff member with a child, it is your absolute responsibility to register such concern with a social emotional counselor or administrator.
- Teachers will maintain clear and appropriate roles with students. Avoid acting as a peer or a parent. Be a role model at all times.
- Teachers will maintain personal boundary awareness. Remember that, although we are friendly to students, we are NOT their friends.

Staff Employment Declaration:

When hired at ISD, individuals must complete the following declaration:

I_____hereby declare that:

I have not been convicted of any criminal offense.

I have not been dismissed or have voluntarily left any school following accusations of inappropriate behavior with a student.

I am not on any national or educational register prohibiting me from working with children.

I accept that International School Dhaka has the right of investigation to verify these statements, and if this Declaration is found to be false, I will be subject to immediate dismissal for cause.

Signature _____
Printed Name_____ Date _____

Resources

Local Resources/ Specialists/Agencies

Breaking the Silence:

Breaking the Silence (BTS) is a Child Rights based organization established by a committed group of activist to combat sexual abuse of children in Bangladesh: http://breakingthesilencebd.org/

Psychological Health and Wellness Clinic (PHWC):

Mental health care and counseling resource provided in person in Dhaka: https://phwcbd.org

Linden Group:

Online mental health care and counseling: https://www.linden-education.com/

Truman Group:

Online mental health care and counseling: https://trumangroup.com/

Bangladesh Child Help Line (1098):

The Social Center is equipped with telephone lines where helpline staff receive phone calls from the children in need round the clock. The helpline responds to a call by counseling the child or guiding the child into making a decision by him/herself. The emergency calls are addressed by the helpline members through immediate spot visit and rescue support: http://www.aparajeyo.org/1098

References and Sources

International School Dhaka acknowledges and appreciates the support of the following publications and resources that have assisted in producing this document.

Association of International School in Africa Child Protection Handbook - https://aisa.or.ke/resources/aisa-child-protection-handbook/

International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children - http://www.icmec.org/education-portal/

International Taskforce on Child Protection - http://www.cois.org/page.cfm?p=1898&_cldee=dG96ZWRAaXNtYW5pbGEub3Jn&urlid=3

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children - https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchilldfriendlylanguage.pdf

WHO - http://www.who.int/en/

WHO & IPSCAN - https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/preventing-child-maltreatment-a-guide-to-taking-action-and-generating-evidence

Staff Pledge

I confirm that I have read the Child Protection Handbook and understand my role and responsibilities towards child protection and safeguarding.

I agree to follow all practices, procedures, and policy in support of child protection and safeguarding.

I understand any failure to fulfill my role and responsibilities may result in disciplinary action.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____