CIS Beijing
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

CISB Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy: Policy No: **CISB004**

Subject: **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**

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SCHOOL MISSION

Developing Learners into Passionate Leaders

SCHOOL VISION

Compassionate

Inquisitive

Successful

Balanced

SCHOOL VALUES

Community

Integrity

Resilience

Respect

Trust

SCHOOL MOTTO

Together is Better!

Preface:

For the purposes of this document, the contact details of our emergency contacts are:

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SECTION ONE: Introduction

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and protection of all students within our school. We are committed to creating and maintaining a secure environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive free from harm. This policy outlines the responsibilities, procedures, and protocols in place to safeguard children and respond to child protection concerns effectively. It serves to protect students from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm, whether they occur within the school, at home, or in the wider community.

This policy is designed to:

- Prevent harm by implementing proactive safeguarding practices
- Recognize and respond swiftly to concerns of abuse or neglect
- Ensure that all staff and stakeholders are clear on their responsibilities in protecting children
- Promote a culture of vigilance, respect, and care within the school

Legal Framework

This policy aligns with international and local laws and conventions aimed at safeguarding children, including but not limited to:

- Chinese Laws and Regulations:

  The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors (2020): This law outlines the rights of children and the responsibilities of society, schools, and families in ensuring children's safety and wellbeing.

  Compulsory Education Law (2006): Establishes the right to free and safe education for all children and emphasizes the role of schools in protecting students from harm.

  Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China: Provides legal recourse for various forms of abuse, including sexual exploitation and physical violence against minors.

- International Conventions:

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989): We adhere to the principles of the UNCRC, recognizing every child's right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and to education in a safe environment.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 16.2): Committed to ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against children.

This policy also follows best practices from international safeguarding guidelines, including the *UK's Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidance, adapted to our local context of Beijing, China.

Policy Applicability

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy applies to all members of the school community, whether on or off campus, including:

- **Staff**: All teaching, administrative, and support staff, whether full-time, part-time, or temporary.
- **Students**: All students enrolled in the school.
- **Parents and Guardians**: All individuals who hold parental responsibility for students attending the school.
- **Volunteers and External Contractors**: All volunteers, guest lecturers, or contractors who interact with students on school premises or during school-sanctioned activities.
- **Visitors**: Any visitors to the school who have direct or indirect contact with children, including external service providers.

Each individual is responsible for understanding their role in ensuring the safety and protection of children and must comply with this policy at all times.

CISB's Commitment to Safeguarding

The values at CISB demonstrate that safeguarding must be central to how we operate. CISB is fully committed to ensuring that safeguarding is embedded in every aspect of school life.

Our priority is to create an environment where:

- The welfare of children is paramount: Every decision, action, and interaction is made with the best interest of the child in mind.

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: All staff and stakeholders are empowered to act if they have concerns about a child's wellbeing. Reporting concerns is a duty, not an option.
- A culture of openness and trust is promoted, where children feel safe, respected, and supported.
- Preventative education is integrated into the curriculum to teach students about staying safe, online and offline.
- Policies and procedures are clear and consistently applied, ensuring swift action in the event of concerns about a child's welfare.
- Staff are trained regularly to recognize signs of abuse, understand safeguarding procedures, and know how to respond effectively.

Through this policy, we affirm our commitment to creating a safe and nurturing environment where children's rights are respected and their wellbeing is safeguarded.

SECTION TWO: Key Definitions
Safeguarding vs Child Protection

Safeguarding and child protection are often used interchangeably but have two definitions and roles as part of a wider approach to keeping children safe.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to the overall actions taken to promote the welfare of all children and to prevent harm before it occurs. It covers all the proactive measures designed to create safe environments for children and protect them from harm, ranging from unsafe practices to abuse. Safeguarding is a comprehensive term that includes:

- Promoting children's health, safety, and wellbeing through initiatives like homeroom practices and circle time.
- Ensuring secure and inclusive environments where children can thrive by regular checks on safety practices.
- Preventing any impairment to children's mental, emotional, and physical development by meeting to discuss student wellbeing.
- Taking action to prevent harm to children and to respond swiftly when concerns are raised.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers, and members of the school community must work together to create a protective culture that promotes children's welfare.

Child Protection

Child protection is a subset of safeguarding, focusing specifically on the actions needed to protect individual children who are at risk of significant harm or who are already suffering harm. It involves:

- Recognizing and responding to instances of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Investigating concerns and taking appropriate protective actions
- Supporting children who have been harmed or are at risk of harm
- Working with external agencies, such as the police or embassies, to ensure a child's safety

In practice, child protection measures begin when a specific concern is raised about the safety or wellbeing of a child. Safeguarding, on the other hand, applies to all children at all times, and includes the ongoing efforts to ensure their protection from risks.

By having strong safeguarding practices, CISB aims to reduce the need for child protection interventions. However, when safeguarding efforts are not enough to prevent harm, child protection processes are vital in ensuring immediate and targeted action to secure the safety of a vulnerable child.

Definitions of Abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual, Neglect

Abuse refers to any action by another person—adult or child—that causes significant harm to a child. Abuse can take various forms, and it's essential that all staff are aware of the different types of abuse and how to recognize them. The four main categories of abuse are physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves causing physical harm to a child. This can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or otherwise inflicting harm. Physical abuse may also involve fabricated or induced illness, where a parent or caregiver causes or exaggerates a child's illness.

Examples of evidence of possible physical abuse include:

- Unexplained injuries, bruises, burns, or fractures
- Injuries in unusual locations or inconsistent with the story behind them
- Fear of adults or reluctance to go home
- Attempts to cover injuries with clothing, even in warm weather

Physical abuse is often the most visible form of abuse, but staff must remain vigilant and understand that injuries do not always appear immediately or may be concealed.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, which can severely impact their mental and emotional development. It may involve belittling, humiliating, or intimidating the child, making them feel unloved, inadequate, or only

valued because of what they can achieve. Emotional abuse may also occur when children are exposed to inappropriate expectations or prevented from forming healthy relationships with others.

Examples of emotional abuse include:

- Constant criticism, threats, or rejection
- Ignoring or not responding to a child's emotional needs
- Intimidating or bullying behavior
- Preventing a child from expressing their views, making them feel 'worthless'
- Causing children to feel frightened or in danger, such as through witnessing domestic violence

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify but can manifest through behavioral changes such as low self-esteem, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This includes both physical contact and non-contact activities. Children of any gender or age can be sexually abused, and the perpetrator may be an adult or another child.

Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Physical acts such as assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts like touching, kissing, or masturbation
- Non-contact activities such as making a child look at, participate in, or produce sexual images or videos
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming them for future abuse

Children who are sexually abused often struggle to disclose what is happening, and staff must be aware of both physical signs (e.g., pain, bleeding, or infections in the genital area) and behavioral indicators (e.g., age-inappropriate sexual behavior or knowledge).

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, and psychological needs, which can result in serious harm to the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy due to substance abuse or after birth, and it often involves failure to provide essential care, protection, and supervision.

Examples of neglect include:

- Failing to provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- Failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Not ensuring access to appropriate medical care or education
- Leaving children unsupervised for long periods or exposing them to dangerous situations

Signs of neglect may include poor hygiene, frequent absences from school, constantly hungry or malnourished, and developmental delays. Neglect can have long-term consequences, including impaired brain development, emotional instability, and difficulty forming healthy relationships.

Exploitation

Exploitation is the manipulation or coercion of an individual for profit or personal gain. This form of abuse happens when there is a power imbalance in the relationship. Exploitation can take many forms, and often involves deception, grooming, or threats.

Sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation or forced labor exploitation are the most common categories. Exploitation can often go unnoticed by younger victims as they are unaware that is it not normal behavior. It can go unreported when a victim receives some sort of "reward" for their participation in the form of money, time to do an activity, or some other action seen as a positive.

Online harm

Online harm refers to the digital environment that children are exposed to. This includes the internet, social media and gaming platforms. Online harm can come in the form of exposure to inappropriate content, harmful actions, or illegal or unsafe behaviors online. This can include grooming, cyberbullying, sharing or coercing others into making pornographic material.

Peer-on-peer abuse

peer-on-peer abuse refers to situations where children are harmed by other children. This can include:

- Physical abuse (e.g., hitting, kicking)
- Sexual abuse and harassment (e.g., unwanted touching, sexting)
- Emotional abuse (e.g., bullying, coercion)
- Exploitation and coercive control (e.g., manipulation in relationships)

CISB staff are expected to recognize peer-on-peer abuse as a serious issue and respond with the same level of concern and action as any other form of abuse. The policy indicates that safeguarding training includes raising awareness of peer-on-peer abuse, and the DSLs are responsible for updating staff about such current issues regularly.

Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies

A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior member of staff who is given the primary responsibility for overseeing all safeguarding and child protection matters within the school. CISB operates with two DSLs, one for each section of the school. The DSL for Early Years and Elementary is Hisham Farghaly, the Elementary Vice Principal. The DSL for Middle and High School is David Bremner, the MSHS Vice Principal. Our DSLs plays a critical role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students by implementing safeguarding policies, providing guidance to staff, and liaising with external agencies. The DSLs have appropriate training and knowledge of child protection issues and keep updated on best practices.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

The core responsibilities of the DSLs include:

Managing Referrals:

- Act as the main point of contact for all safeguarding concerns within the school.

- Respond to safeguarding concerns by assessing the level of risk and determining whether further action is needed, including referral to the police, or to embassy teams.
- Maintain close contact with external agencies, such as other international schools and embassies, ensuring all necessary information is shared.
- Ensure all referrals are made promptly and follow up on any referrals that have been made to confirm appropriate actions are being taken.

Training and Raising Awareness:

- Provide safeguarding training to all staff members, ensuring they understand their responsibilities and know how to recognize and respond to signs of abuse or neglect. CISB uses TES Develop as a base for this safeguarding training, but regular discussions would be held throughout the year.
- Regularly update staff on new safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring they are familiar with current issues such as online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, and exploitation. This is usually done through The Weekly in each section, and in Friday PD sessions.
- Make sure all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, receive induction training covering basic safeguarding principles and know the school's safeguarding procedures.

Support for Staff:

- Provide advice and support to staff on child protection issues. This includes guiding them on how to handle concerns, how to approach children sensitively, and how to deal with complex safeguarding situations.
- Encourage a culture of vigilance, ensuring staff feel confident in reporting concerns about a child's wellbeing or safety.

Record Keeping and Reporting:

- Maintain detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns, ensuring these are kept securely and in compliance with data protection regulations.
- Ensure that all records are comprehensive and include details of the concern, actions taken, and any follow-up required.
- Share information with the appropriate agencies where necessary, ensuring that the child's best interests are always the primary consideration.

Policy Implementation and Review:

- Lead the development, implementation, and regular review of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure that safeguarding policies are applied consistently across the school, including in any extra-curricular activities or off-site events.
- Ensure safeguarding policies reflect current legal requirements and best practices, and make recommendations for updates as needed.

Liaising with External Agencies:

- Coordinate with local authorities and external safeguarding bodies to ensure a collaborative approach to child protection.
- Represent the school at multi-agency meetings where necessary, including child protection conferences, and provide relevant information about the school's role in safeguarding.

Monitoring Attendance and Welfare:

- Monitor the attendance and welfare of students who are considered vulnerable or at risk of harm, ensuring appropriate interventions are in place.
- Ensure that the school maintains close contact with families and external services where necessary to support the child's needs.

Deputies to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is supported by **Deputy Safeguarding Leads**, who are trained to the same level as the DSL and are available to act when the DSL is unavailable. The responsibilities of the deputies include:

Supporting the DSL in managing referrals, overseeing safeguarding issues, and providing advice to staff.

Taking on the responsibilities of the DSL in their absence, ensuring that safeguarding matters are handled effectively without delay.

Contributing to staff training by ensuring that all team members are aware of safeguarding processes and receive up-to-date guidance on how to identify and report concerns.

Availability of the DSL and Deputies

The DSL and deputies must always be accessible during school hours and during any extracurricular or off-site activities. Clear procedures should be in place for staff to contact the DSL or a deputy when urgent safeguarding issues arise, including during school holidays or outside of normal school hours.

In cases where immediate action is required, the DSL and deputies must ensure a swift and coordinated response, prioritizing the child's safety and wellbeing. This may involve working closely with external agencies to secure immediate protection for the child.

Role of Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers have a crucial role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They must remain vigilant, act on any concerns, and follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Key responsibilities include:

Recognizing Signs of Abuse: Understand and identify the signs of abuse, neglect, and other safeguarding concerns, including online harm and peer-on-peer abuse.

Responding to Concerns: Act immediately when concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing arise. This includes reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their deputies without delay.

Maintaining Confidentiality: Handle safeguarding information with sensitivity and share it only with those who need to know to protect the child.

Promoting a Safe Environment: Ensure that classrooms, extracurricular activities, and other school spaces are safe and inclusive for all students.

Participating in Training: Attend safeguarding training sessions to stay updated on best practices and legal obligations.

Leading by Example: Model appropriate behavior and interactions with students, maintaining professional boundaries at all times.

Temporary staff and volunteers must receive an induction covering safeguarding policies and procedures before starting their role.

Parental Responsibilities

Parents and guardians play a vital role in safeguarding their children and working collaboratively with the school to ensure their wellbeing. Their responsibilities include:

- **Providing Essential Information**: Share accurate contact details, medical history, and any relevant information that may affect their child's safety or wellbeing.
- **Supporting School Policies**: Understand and comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection policies, including online safety and behavior policies.
- **Monitoring and Guiding Behavior**: Be aware of their child's online activities, social interactions, and any potential risks they may face.
- **Reporting Concerns**: Report any concerns about their child's safety, wellbeing, or interactions with others to the school immediately.
- **Attending Meetings and Training**: Engage with the school's efforts to promote safeguarding by attending relevant parent meetings or workshops.

Parents are partners in safeguarding and are encouraged to communicate openly with the school about any challenges their child may face.

Responsibilities of Students

Students have a key role in creating a safe and supportive school environment. Their responsibilities include:

- **Treating Peers with Respect**: Foster a culture of kindness, inclusion, and mutual respect, avoiding bullying, harassment, or harmful behaviors.
- **Reporting Concerns**: Speak to a trusted adult, such as a teacher or the DSL, if they are worried about their own safety or the safety of a peer.
- **Understanding Safeguarding Practices**: Participate in age-appropriate safeguarding education provided by the school, including online safety and healthy relationships.
- **Avoiding Harmful Behaviors**: Avoid engaging in activities that could endanger themselves or others, such as sharing inappropriate content or engaging in risky behaviors online.

The school encourages students to play an active role in promoting a safe community by reporting concerns and seeking help when needed.

External Agencies and Their Role

In China, external agencies such as law enforcement and local authorities provide some context for how schools can work with families to support their children. The school aims to work closely with these agencies to ensure effective responses to safeguarding concerns. The school is committed to maintaining strong partnerships with external agencies and ensuring timely communication and information sharing to protect children effectively.

Recognizing and Responding to Abuse

Signs of Abuse and Indicators

Staff and volunteers must be aware of the signs that could indicate a child is experiencing abuse or neglect. Abuse may manifest in physical, emotional, or behavioral changes. It is crucial to understand that these signs may not be definitive proof of abuse but should prompt further investigation.

Physical Abuse:

Indicators: Unexplained bruises, burns, bite marks, or fractures; injuries in unusual locations or in various stages of healing.

Behavioral changes: Flinching when approached, reluctance to go home, wearing excessive clothing to cover injuries.

Emotional Abuse:

Indicators: Delayed emotional development, self-harm marks, erratic behavior, or frequent expressions of fear or worthlessness.

Behavioral changes: Withdrawal, aggression, difficulty forming relationships, or a sudden drop in academic performance.

Sexual Abuse:

Indicators: Genital pain, infections, or bleeding; recurring urinary tract infections.

Behavioral changes: Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior, withdrawal, fear of a particular person or place.

Neglect:

Indicators: Poor hygiene, malnutrition, unattended medical needs, or inadequate clothing for the weather.

Behavioral changes: Frequent absences, stealing food, or extreme fatigue.

Procedures for Identifying Children at Risk

The school adopts a proactive approach to identifying children at risk by:

Observing Behavior: Regularly monitor students for changes in behavior, appearance, or academic performance. Any student who a staff member feels is at risk should use the form "[Keeping Everyone Safe](#)" to record their concerns.

Communicating with Students: Create a safe environment where children feel comfortable sharing concerns.

Engaging Parents and Guardians: Work closely with families to understand contextual factors that may influence a child's wellbeing.

Children identified as being at risk are prioritized for early intervention to address concerns before harm escalates.

Child in Need vs. Child Protection: Thresholds and Responses
Understanding the distinction between a *child in need* and a *child requiring protection* is essential for appropriate action:

Child in Need:

Defined as a child who requires additional support to achieve a satisfactory level of health or development or who has a disability.

Action: Offer support services such as counseling, academic interventions, or referrals to external organizations. No immediate danger is present, but there is a need for support to prevent future harm.

Child Protection:

Defined as a child suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm due to abuse or neglect.

Action: Immediate safeguarding measures are required, including contacting social services, law enforcement, or emergency medical intervention.

Thresholds for action are determined based on the severity and immediacy of the risk. If in doubt, staff should err on the side of caution and consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Recording and Reporting Concerns: Step-by-Step Guidance

Accurate and timely recording and reporting of concerns are vital for effective safeguarding. Follow these steps:

Recognize:

Identify signs of abuse or neglect, noting any physical or behavioral indicators.

Listen carefully if a child discloses abuse, avoiding leading questions.

Record:

Document your observations or what the child has disclosed as soon as possible, using the child's exact words where appropriate.

Include the date, time, and location of the observations or disclosure, along with your name and signature.

Avoid speculation or assumptions; stick to factual information.

Report:

Share the recorded information immediately with the DSL or deputy DSL.

For urgent cases where the DSL is unavailable, report directly to the head of school.

Follow Up:

Ensure you receive confirmation that the concern has been addressed, and any necessary actions are underway.

Be available for additional inquiries or meetings regarding the child's welfare.

Confidentiality:

Keep all information confidential and share only with those directly involved in safeguarding the child.

The school provides ongoing training to ensure that all staff and volunteers are confident in recognizing, recording, and reporting concerns. These measures form a critical part of safeguarding practices to ensure every child's safety and wellbeing.

Reporting Procedures
How to Report Concerns Internally (to DSL or Principals)

Immediate Reporting:

Any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing must be reported directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL as soon as possible.

If the DSL and deputies are unavailable, staff should escalate their concerns to the school principal.

Providing Details:

Clearly state the nature of the concern, including any observations, conversations, or disclosures. Record the information accurately and factually, avoiding assumptions or interpretations.

Follow-Up:

Ensure that the concern is logged in the safeguarding records.

Follow up with the DSL or principal to confirm that the concern has been reviewed, and appropriate actions are underway.

Emergency Situations:

In cases of immediate danger, such as a child being at risk of significant harm, call emergency services directly, then inform the DSL.

External Reporting Procedures (police, embassy where applicable)

Police:

If there is an immediate threat to a child's safety, contact the local police. This includes situations involving criminal behavior, such as physical or sexual abuse, trafficking, or exploitation.

Embassy Support:

For cases involving international students or expatriate families, the relevant embassy or consulate may provide additional support, particularly in navigating cross-border legal and welfare considerations.

Confidentiality and Anonymity for Reporters

All information related to safeguarding concerns must be treated with strict confidentiality.

Only those involved in handling the concern, such as the DSL, external agencies, or law enforcement, should have access to the information.

Staff can report concerns anonymously if they are uncomfortable disclosing their identity. However, anonymity may limit the investigation if further clarification is needed. The school encourages open reporting but ensures that individuals are protected from retaliation or negative consequences for reporting in good faith.

The school upholds a whistleblowing policy, protecting individuals who report concerns about child welfare or unsafe practices.

Legal Obligations for Mandatory Reporting

Under Chinese law and international conventions, individuals working with children must report concerns about abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Failure to report may result in legal consequences for the individual and the organization.

Chinese Law on the Protection of Minors (2020): Requires professionals, including teachers, to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect. International Obligations: Staff must also adhere to any legal mandates under their home country's jurisdiction, particularly for expatriates.

Ensure all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting obligations.

Provide regular training on recognizing and reporting abuse.

Maintain clear communication channels for reporting concerns and complying with legal requirements.

Ensure that all reports, whether internal or external, are documented comprehensively and securely. Records should include the date, details of the concern, actions taken, and follow-up outcomes.

Action Following a Report

When a safeguarding concern is reported, CISB follows a clear, structured process to ensure the child's safety and address the issue effectively. This involves immediate protective actions, thorough investigation, ongoing support, and collaboration with external agencies as necessary.

Strategy Discussions and Immediate Protection Measures

Once a concern is raised, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their deputy convenes a strategy discussion to determine the next steps. This involves:

Reviewing the details of the report, including the nature of the concern and any immediate risks.

Identifying whether the child is at significant harm or immediate danger.

Deciding on urgent measures to protect the child while further steps are considered.

Immediate Protection Measures:

Separating the Child from Harm: If the concern involves immediate physical or emotional danger, ensure the child is removed from the harmful environment.

Example: If a child discloses physical abuse at home, arrange for temporary safe housing or notify the appropriate child welfare agency. If there is an accusation

Supervision and Monitoring: Increase adult supervision of the child to ensure their safety during school hours.

Engaging Parents or Guardians: Where appropriate and safe, contact the parents to discuss the concern and agree on immediate protective actions.

Investigation and Referral Procedures

For lower-level concerns that do not meet the threshold for external intervention, the DSL may:

- Gather information from staff, witnesses, or the child in question.
- Assess the validity of the concern through interviews and observations.
- Document all findings thoroughly.

For more serious concerns, the DSL must make a referral to the appropriate external agency, such as law enforcement, or healthcare providers. This includes:

Completing a Referral: Submit detailed documentation outlining the concern, actions taken, and any supporting evidence.

Collaborating on Investigations: Work with the agency by providing requested information and participating in interviews or assessments.

Timeliness:

Referrals should be made immediately for cases involving significant harm or imminent danger. In less urgent situations, referrals must still be made within 24 hours.

Risk Assessments and Ongoing Support for the Child

A comprehensive risk assessment determines the severity of the concern and the necessary level of intervention. This process involves:

Identifying potential risks to the child's safety and wellbeing.

Evaluating the protective factors in the child's life, such as supportive relationships or stable environments.

Creating a risk management plan tailored to the child's needs.

After the initial response, the school ensures that the child receives continued support:

Emotional and Psychological Support:

Access to counseling services, either in school or externally.

Regular check-ins with a trusted member of staff to provide reassurance and monitor wellbeing.

Academic Adjustments:

If necessary, provide accommodations to reduce stress, such as a modified schedule or additional academic support.

Family Engagement:

Work with the family to address any underlying issues, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Involvement of External Agencies and Collaboration

Collaboration with external agencies can be helpful in addressing complex safeguarding concerns. The school looks to build strong partnerships with relevant organizations to ensure comprehensive support for the child.

Healthcare Providers: Offer medical assessments or treatment for physical injuries and emotional trauma.

Law Enforcement: Investigate criminal activities such as physical or sexual abuse, trafficking, or exploitation.

Local Education Bureau: Oversee safeguarding protocols and provide resources or training for the school.

Cross-Border Cases:

For international or expatriate families, liaise with embassies, consulates, or international child protection organizations to address jurisdictional challenges.

Record-Keeping and Documentation

Accurate and secure record-keeping is a vital part of safeguarding and child protection. The Safeguarding and Child Protection (SG&CP) team uses a structured file system to organize and categorize concerns about student welfare. This system ensures that all records are appropriately managed, updated, and accessible to relevant team members while maintaining strict confidentiality.

Level 1 – Of Concern

This is the base category and is to collect and track ongoing observations that may later contribute to identifying patterns or additional concerns.

This category is for students with minor or isolated concerns that do not require an active response from the SG&CP team but need monitoring. It serves as a repository for information that may contribute to a broader understanding of a student's wellbeing over time.

Examples:

A teacher notes that a student appears withdrawn over several days but has no specific disclosures or incidents.

A student's grades suddenly drop, but there are no other behavioral or emotional signs.

Reports of occasional conflicts with peers that do not escalate into bullying.

Level 2 – Active Response

This folder is for students who require direct intervention or monitoring by a member of the Safeguarding and Child Protection (SG&CP) team. Assigned team members

conduct check-ins or follow-ups based on the student's situation. Contact with parents may occur, except where such communication might exacerbate the issue.

Examples:

A student reports feelings of sadness and isolation, prompting regular check-ins from the counsellor.

Teachers observe concerning behaviors like frequent absences or declining academic performance, requiring intervention.

In this folder, documentation should include:

- Scheduled follow-up dates and outcomes
- Notes from meetings with the student or parents
- Actions taken to support the student, such as referrals to counseling or adjustments to the learning environment

<u>Level 3 – Critical Response</u>

This folder is designated for cases that require coordinated action beyond the SG&CP team. Students in this category typically need a formal safety plan or support from multiple staff members. Information in this folder may be shared with relevant teachers or staff members, as appropriate, to ensure a cohesive response. Meetings with parents are essential unless their involvement could worsen the situation.

Examples:

A student reveals experiencing bullying that affects their emotional and physical wellbeing, requiring both in-class support and external counseling.

A student discloses experiencing neglect at home, requiring the involvement of social services and the development of a safety plan.

Documentation for this category includes:

- The student's safety plan
- Meeting notes with staff, parents, or external agencies
- Progress updates and evaluations of the interventions in place

Level 4 – Emergency Response

This folder is reserved for situations where a student faces immediate risk of harm. These cases require urgent action, including notifying law enforcement, medical services, or contacting others outside the school. Priority is placed on the child's safety, and all actions must be documented in detail.

Examples:

A student has disclosed a detailed plan for suicide or has made a recent attempt on their life.

A student shows visible signs of severe physical abuse and is in immediate danger if sent home.

For this level, documentation should include:

- Detailed records of the emergency disclosure
- Immediate actions taken (e.g., contacting emergency services or removing the child from a harmful environment)
- Follow-up actions and safety measures implemented to protect the student
- Communication logs with parents or guardians (if appropriate) and external agencies

Supporting Children

Preventative Measures (e.g., safeguarding awareness programs for children)

Preventative measures are essential for eveloping a safe and supportive environment where children feel empowered to protect themselves and others. The school implements comprehensive safeguarding awareness programs through homerooms in EY/ES and advisory in MS/HS that educate children about their rights, recognizing unsafe situations, and seeking help when needed.

Key Initiatives:

Age-Appropriate Safeguarding Education:

Lessons on topics such as body autonomy, consent, and recognizing abuse.

Digital safety modules covering topics like online grooming, privacy, and handling inappropriate content.

Workshops and Seminars:

Regular sessions on topics like anti-bullying, online safety, and healthy relationships.

Interactive workshops encouraging children to role-play scenarios and practice assertive communication.

Student Engagement:

Peer-led programs on promoting kindness, respect, and inclusion.

"Trusted adult" initiatives where students can identify staff members they feel comfortable approaching for help.

Example: A weekly assembly dedicated to themes like anti-bullying or online safety, followed by classroom discussions to reinforce learning.

Managing Allegations Against Students

Allegations of misconduct or harm involving students require a sensitive, impartial, and structured approach. This ensures the safety of all parties while upholding principles of fairness and safeguarding.

Key Principles

Safety First: The immediate priority is to ensure the safety of all students, including the alleged victim and the accused. Measures should prevent further harm while the case is investigated.

Confidentiality: Information related to the allegation should be shared only with those directly involved in handling the case to protect privacy and prevent unnecessary distress.

Impartiality: All allegations must be investigated without bias, ensuring that the rights of all students are respected.

Procedures for Managing Allegations

Immediate Action:

Protective Measures: Separate the students involved, if necessary, to prevent further interaction until the case is reviewed.

Inform the DSL: The allegation must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their deputy immediately.

Initial Assessment:

Fact-Finding: The DSL gathers preliminary information about the incident, including accounts from those involved and witnesses. This step is not about determining guilt but assessing whether further investigation is needed.

Risk Assessment: Evaluate whether the alleged behavior poses an ongoing risk to any student. If so, implement temporary measures such as increased supervision or adjusted seating arrangements.

Parental Communication:

Notify the parents or guardians of the alleged victim and the accused student as soon as possible, unless doing so would put the child at further risk.

Provide clear information about the steps being taken and the support available for their child.

Investigation:

Internal Investigation: For minor incidents, the school may conduct its own investigation led by the DSL or other senior staff.

External Involvement: For serious allegations (e.g., physical assault, sexual harassment, or criminal activities), the school must involve external agencies such as law enforcement.

Maintain a clear record of all steps taken, including interviews, findings, and decisions.

Support for the Students Involved:

For the Alleged Victim:

Provide counseling or emotional support as needed.

Keep the child informed about the progress of the investigation and any protective measures in place.

For the Accused Student:

Ensure they are treated fairly and not presumed guilty before an investigation is complete.

Provide support to help them cope with the process, such as access to a counselor or trusted adult.

Resolution and Actions:

Minor Incidents: Resolve through restorative practices, such as mediated discussions or behavior contracts, where appropriate.

Serious Incidents: Depending on the outcome of the investigation, actions may include disciplinary measures such as suspension or expulsion, referrals to external agencies, or legal action.

Communicate the outcome to all relevant parties while respecting confidentiality.

Follow-Up and Monitoring:

Regularly check in with the alleged victim to ensure they feel safe and supported.

Monitor the behavior and wellbeing of the accused student to facilitate their reintegration into the school community, if applicable.

Online Safety and Protection from Cyberbullying

In an increasingly digital world, ensuring online safety is a critical component of safeguarding children. The school is committed to protecting students from the risks associated with online activities, including cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and online exploitation. By educating, monitoring, and responding effectively, the school aims to create a safe and supportive digital environment.

Monitoring and Technology Safeguards

Filtering and Monitoring Systems:

CISB uses Fortinet and Sangfor for Firewall and Internet Access filters to block access to inappropriate or harmful websites.

Teachers are expected to watch out for and flag concerning behavior via the reporting QR code, such as searches related to self-harm or contact with unknown individuals.

Device Management:

All CISB teachers are instructed to use Apple Classroom to help monitor the use of devices to ensure safe browsing and prevent unauthorized downloads.

CISB regularly updates software to protect against security vulnerabilities.

Staff Training and Safer Recruitment

Safeguarding Training Requirements (induction and ongoing)

During the induction week at CISB, all staff have their safeguarding courses checked and renewed where appropriate. CISB chooses to use the TES Develop platform, and DSL in conjunction with school leadership and the SG&CP team identify what courses should be required by each section/department.

Safer Recruitment Practices (vetting, background checks, police clearance)

All international teachers are required to undergo formal security clearance to obtain a work visa in China. This includes a mandatory Police Check from within the last 6 months. CISB conducts standard background checks on all its staff.

Vetting and Background Checks

Identity Verification

Confirm the applicant's identity through government-issued documents, such as a passport or ID card. HR collects the information to help with confirmation by the Foreign Expert Bureau.

Verify the right to work in China or the relevant jurisdiction.

Criminal Record Checks:

Obtain a police clearance certificate or equivalent background check from the applicant's country of residence.

For expatriates, require checks from all countries where the candidate has lived or worked as per local authority requirements. This is part of the confirmation by the Foreign Expert Bureau.

References:

Principals contact at least two professional referees, including the most recent employer, to verify the applicant's suitability for the role. The principal should check details such as job performance, interactions with children, and any disciplinary actions related to safeguarding concerns.

Code of Conduct for Staff

Can refer to handbooks

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Managing Allegations Against Staff

Allegations of abuse or misconduct involving staff members are taken extremely seriously to ensure the safety of children while upholding principles of fairness and due process. A clear, transparent, and legally compliant framework guides the management of such cases.

Procedures for Handling Allegations Against Staff Members

Immediate Action:

Report Allegations:

All allegations must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the head of school.

If the allegation concerns the head of school, it should be reported directly to the governing body or board of directors.

Protect the Child:

Ensure the immediate safety of the child or children involved by implementing protective measures, such as temporary separation from the staff member.

Initial Assessment:

Assess the Nature of the Allegation:

Determine whether the allegation indicates potential harm or abuse.

Consider whether the staff member's behavior violates the school's safeguarding policies, even if it does not constitute criminal activity.

Low-Level Concerns:

For minor breaches of conduct, manage the issue internally through retraining, supervision, or written warnings.

Serious Allegations:

If the allegation suggests potential harm to a child, escalate the matter to external authorities (e.g., law enforcement or child protection services) for further investigation.

Suspension:

Risk-Based Decision:

Decide whether to suspend the staff member while the investigation is ongoing to ensure the safety of children and the integrity of the process.

Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply guilt.

Investigation:

Internal Investigation:

Conduct a thorough internal inquiry if the case does not meet the threshold for external referral. Interview witnesses, review records, and gather evidence while maintaining confidentiality.

External Involvement:

If the case involves potential criminal activity or significant harm, cooperate fully with external agencies, such as child protection services or law enforcement.

Communication:

Parents:

Inform the parents of any child involved in the allegation, ensuring they understand the steps being taken and the support available.

Staff Member:

Notify the accused staff member of the allegation and provide information about the process and their rights.

Support for Staff Accused of Abuse

Being accused of abuse can be distressing and challenging for the staff member involved. The school ensures that they are treated fairly and provided with appropriate support during the investigation.

Access to Information:

Clearly explain the allegations, investigation process, and expected timelines.

Identify an assigned point person from the HR team to be their communication contact.

Provide updates as the case progresses.

Emotional Support:

Offer access to counseling or an employee assistance program.

Designate a neutral contact person within the school to provide updates and address concerns.

Confidentiality:

Protect the staff member's identity and limit knowledge of the allegation to those directly involved in the investigation.

Legal Rights:

Ensure the staff member is aware of their right to legal representation. Support can be offered via their point of contact.

Disciplinary Actions and Referrals to Authorities

If the investigation confirms misconduct or abuse, take appropriate disciplinary actions, such as:

Written or final warnings for minor breaches.

Dismissal for gross misconduct or violations posing risk to children.

Restorative Actions for low-level concerns, providing retraining, additional supervision, or mentoring to prevent future issues.

Disclosure to Regulatory Bodies: If a staff member's behavior indicates they are unsuitable to work with children, report them to the relevant professional body (e.g., teaching certification authority) for potential sanctions or revocation of licensure.

Legal and Criminal Referrals: If the allegation involves criminal activity, refer the case to law enforcement and cooperate with their investigation.

Safeguarding Database: Add the staff member's details to any local or international safeguarding databases, if applicable, to prevent further harm in future roles.

Documentation

Maintain comprehensive records of the allegation/s, investigation, and outcomes, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. These records may be required in case of legal proceedings or future employment references.

Review of the Policy

 Frequency of Policy Review (e.g., annual updates)

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with:

Updates to local and international child protection laws and regulations.

Guidance from external safeguarding authorities, such as local child protection services or international safeguarding bodies.

Evolving best practices in safeguarding and child protection.

Process for Updating the Policy

How Feedback from Staff, Parents, and External Partners is Incorporated

Appendices

Flowcharts for Reporting and Referral Processes

Contact Information for Safeguarding Leads and External Agencies

Glossary of Terms