

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support and protection. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and are in correspondence to the principle derived from the United Convention on the rights of the child.

- It is the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Children who are and feel safe make more successful learners
- Representatives of the whole-school community of students , parents and staff will be involved in policy development and review
- Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.
- Policy statement

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children. This is from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe, effective, and nurturing care and undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Due to teachers day-to-day contact with children, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and to recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in the school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and understand the local procedures for reporting and acting upon their concerns.

Aims

- The school will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all school activity
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance
- All students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the senior management of the school who will follow this policy guidance in doing so
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school

- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children

Procedures

Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Recognising abuse
Bullying
Indicators of abuse
Impact of abuse
If you suspect a child is at risk
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Appendices

- 1 Code of ethical practice for school staff
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- 3 Images consent form
- 4 School welfare concern form
- 5 Record of concern

Key personnel

The **Designated Senior Person** for child protection in this school is:

Ms. Sara Osama Hassan – Girls Counselor

Contact details: counselorgirls@bips.ae

The **Deputy Designated Person** in this school

Mr. Ajeeb Abbas – Boys Counselor

Contact details: counselorboys@bips.ae

The Principal

Contact details: principal@bips.ae

The school has ensured that the DSP (Designated Senior persons)

- is appropriately trained
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of UAE procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, but kept separately from the child's general file
- ensures that when a child with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the child's social worker is informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences in accordance with local procedure and guidance
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans¹
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- Make this policy available to parents.

The **deputy designated person(s)** is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

- a DSP for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in child protection training
- child protection policy and procedures that are consistent UN convention requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Principal

A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Principal, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSP should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals

Date of last DSP/ DDP training:

Date of staff training:

The Principal:

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's procedures
- Ensures that child's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the school community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving children in decision-making which affects them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in child's behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding all of the school's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact, e-safety plans and information-sharing
- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students to ensuring its suitability in a school setting
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

Abuse of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards all children must be beyond reproach. All staff will undergo a thorough police check.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children are at an increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living transient lifestyles
- living in neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- Don't have Arabic as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.

Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support the children and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- Counselling support within school

Complaints procedure in respect of poor practice behaviour

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action.

If you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some adults do pose a serious risk to children's welfare and safety and we must act on every allegation made. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Principal. Allegations against the Principal should be reported to the Board of Directors.

Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff will receive training during their induction.

Safer recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance with the Ministry of Education.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be police checked
- be interviewed.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy (see: appendix 2).

Extended school and off-site arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place. When our children attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

The official approval from **SPEA** need to be taken for any activities either inside or outside the school

Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We must ensure that we have some safeguards in place to protect children and we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or social media)
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed

For an example image consent form, see: appendix 3.

E-Safety

The school recognises that technology plays an important role in the education of children and is committed to safeguarding children in the virtual world. To support parents, the school has e-safety policy to help keep your children safe both in school and at home.

The school endeavours to block access to inappropriate sites, each student will have a personal id to log on to their work. Regular reviews regarding the security arrangements in place by the IT staff.

The safeguarding team should be trained in e-safety issues and be aware of the potential for serious child protection / safeguarding issues to arise from:

- sharing of personal data
 - access to illegal / inappropriate materials
 - inappropriate on-line contact with adults / strangers
 - potential or actual incidents of grooming
 - cyber-bullying
- Safeguarding is paramount.

The School provides a safe learning environment where access to inappropriate material and sites is controlled and policies and procedures are put in place to monitor and eliminate cyber bullying. The School recognises its responsibility to protect sensitive data and ensures that appropriate procedures are in place to secure data and restricts access to such data on a strict need to know basis. Where appropriate, technology is deployed to provide site and building security.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or hot drinks within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely exploitation of a child by involvement in sexual activities without informed consent or understanding, or that violate social taboos or family roles

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress.

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- display knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

The impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- report your concern to the DSP by the end of the day
- if the DSP is not around, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the school that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to Child protection
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you suspect a child is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no ‘real’ evidence. The child’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

Use the welfare concern form (see: appendix 4) to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section ‘If a child discloses to you’.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

If a child telling information to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being neglected and or abused. They may feel ashamed, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that **you must** pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the child may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it

till the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the child:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child’s mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid telling off the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

A record of concern form is provided in appendix 5.

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSP will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from child Protection.

Parents/ Guardians are expected to:

- Cooperate with the school administration and staff, answer all inquiries related to the student’s behaviour, academic performance and respond to their feedback and guidance.
- Attend all scheduled school parent meetings.
- Communicate any concerns, observations, or changes in their child’s behaviour to the school administration or to the concerned school staff.

Referral to children’s protective service or Involvement of outside agencies

The DSP will make a referral to child Protection if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The child (subject to their age and

understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

(Sharjah child protection hot line 800700)

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person, Principal or Board of Directors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- secure.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. (red colour for CP register)

Appendix 1

Code of ethical practice for school staff

All school staff are valued members of the school community. Everyone is expected to set and maintain the highest standards for their own performance, to work as part of a team and to be an excellent role model for our children.

All school staff should:

- place the safety and welfare of children above all other considerations
- treat all members of the school community, including children, parents, colleagues and governors with consideration and respect
- adhere to the principals and procedures contained in the safeguarding policy and in teaching and learning policies
- treat each child as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual need
- demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to non-discriminatory practice
- recognise the power imbalances between children and staff, and different levels of seniority of staff and ensure that power and authority are never misused

- be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm
- encourage all children to reach their full potential
- never condone inappropriate behaviour by children or staff
- take responsibility for their own continuing professional development
- refrain from any action that would bring the school into disrepute

Staff name:

Signature :

Date :

Appendix 2

Confirmation of receipt of safeguarding children and child protection policy

Name:

.....

Date of joining school:

.....

Post:

.....

Date of induction:

.....

Name and designation of staff member responsible for induction:

.....

I confirm that I have received and read the school child protection policy.
I have been made aware of my duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
The procedure for reporting concerns about a child has been explained to me.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please sign and return this form to the designated senior person

Appendix 3

Photographic Consent Form (Under 18s)

At the **Brilliant International Private School** we take the issue of child safety very seriously, and this includes the use of images of Students under the age of 18 years old.

Please complete, sign and return this form to **section Supervisor at the school**.

I consent to photographs and digital images of the child named below, appearing in **Brilliant International Private School** printed publications and social media. I understand that the images will be used only for school purposes and that the identity of my child will be protected unless I have agreed to the publication of my child's full name. I also acknowledge that the images may also be used in and distributed by other media, such as CD or DVD, as part of the promotional activities of the school.

Name of child:

Name of parent/carer:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 4

School welfare concern form

Use this form to record any concern about a child's welfare and give it to the designated senior person for child protection:

If you suspect the child may be suffering abuse or neglect, or you have received a disclosure of abuse from a child, or you have heard about an allegation of abuse, you must complete the child protection record of concern form instead, and hand it to the designated person today.

Child's full name:

Grade:

Date of this record:

*Why are you concerned about this child?

.....

.....

.....

*What have you observed and when?

.....

.....

.....

*What have you heard and when?

.....

.....

.....

*What have you been told and when?

.....

.....

.....

*Have you spoken to the child? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what did he/she say? Use the child's own words

.....

.....

*Have you spoken to anyone else about your concern? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, who?

*Is this the first time you have been concerned about this child? ☐ Yes ☐ No

*Date and time you handed this form to the designated person:

.....

Your name and designation:

Signature:

Appendix 5

Record of concern: Brilliant International Private School:

Details of those with parental responsibility:

Name(s):

Relationship to child:

Address:

Contact No.:

Child's details

Full name:

Grade:

Address:

Date of birth:

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Details of any siblings:

.....

Who has parental responsibility for the child?

.....

Date child first registered with the school?

.....

Ethnicity and culture

Does the child have any disability or special educational need?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, Please specify

.....

Preferred language of child/ parent

Is any type of language support required to converse with the child?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, Please specify

.....

Does the child know this form has been completed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, why not?

.....

If yes, what did the child say?

.....

Why are you concerned about this child?

.....

.....

What have you observed and when?

(This relates to anything you have personally witnessed)

.....

.....

What have you been told and when?

(Write here anything you have been told by the child or any other person. Be clear about who has said what)

.....

.....

What have you heard and when?

(This may be third-party information that is relevant but as yet unsubstantiated)

.....
.....

Do those with parental responsibility know this form has been completed?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, why not?

.....

If yes, what did they say?

.....

NOTE: Those with parental responsibility should not be contacted by anyone in the school if this could place the child at risk. Speak to the designated person first.

Does the child have any visible injury, or have they told you they have been injured?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, has medical advice been sought?

.....

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern? (for example, child taken out of class, first aid)

.....

Date and time of this record

.....

Your details

Full name:

Position:

Name and position of the person this record was handed to:

Date and time the above person received this record:

If this record has been handed to anyone other than the designated person please explain why:

If you have used additional sheets to complete this record of concern, please staple them to this form and write the number of additional sheets here (.....)

Hand this form to the designated person before you go home. If the designated person is unavailable, hand it to the Principal or your line manager.