



ISTANBUL
INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

IICS Child Protection Policy

Last updated April 2016

Introduction

Mission Statement

Through its challenging curriculum and strong staff-student relationships, IICS provides a caring environment that inspires each student to excel and to be inquisitive, creative, compassionate, balanced and internationally-minded.

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Child Protection Policy

Rationale

Child abuse and neglect are among the world's most serious concerns, with millions of cases reported to various children's protective service organisations each year. However, it is also estimated that much abuse is underreported either because the victims are afraid to tell anyone what has happened, or the adults who observe or suspect the abuse are unsure of what to do.

Our goal is to build and maintain a proactive environment that protects children by either preventing child abuse before it occurs or by ensuring its earliest possible detection, intervention and reporting. Our strategy is to ensure that all IICS personnel from professional faculty and staff, to student teachers, interns, volunteers, students and parents understand the issues of child abuse and neglect; know how to recognise its signs and symptoms; are familiar with reporting procedures and their responsibilities.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to support the above goal by providing information to the school community concerning child protection at IICS.

Summary

It is everyone's responsibility to be aware of signs and symptoms of child abuse and to voice suspicions or report incidents to the appropriate person immediately. At IICS this is either to Brenda St. George secondary counselor or Vivian Huizenga school psychologist. They will then lead the process of investigation and support for all concerned. It is the responsibility of the school leadership to report any incidents to the appropriate authorities and to ensure that the processes and procedures are in place to ensure that children are protected. This is key in areas such as recruitment and communication of expectations of behaviour from all members of the community.

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Roles and responsibilities

Definition of terms

Child Protection is a broad term used to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In this document the term “child protection” applies to protection of children in international schools. **Please note that this definition also includes harm to self.**

Child protection concerns include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed, or witnessed abuse of a child by anyone associated within or outside the school which must be investigated and followed by appropriate action.

Child Abuse – According to the World Health Organization, child abuse constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional (e.g. school) or community setting; children may be abused by individuals known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. Often children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously, further complicating the problem.

Most child abuse is inflicted by someone the child knows, respects or trusts. International school communities have unique characteristics of which school personnel must be aware in terms of the individuals who are around our children. School personnel should be knowledgeable of the potential reasons why children may not be able to talk about any victimization they might have experienced.

To increase the IICS community’s awareness, this Handbook focuses on four main categories of abuse and provides basic information about the physical and behavioural signs associated with each type.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These symptoms could also indicate harm to self, such as, cutting and suicide ideation.)

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child’s emotional development. It may involve: conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; causing children frequently to feel frightened; or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Children involved in commercial sex work are victims of sexual abuse, whether they perceive themselves as victims or not.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Signs of physical abuse

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home or of parent being contacted
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant
- Chronic running away

Signs of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situation
- Low self-esteem
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Lying

Signs of sexual abuse

- Pain or irritation to the genital area
- Vaginal or penile discharge
- Difficulty with urination
- Infection, bleeding
- STs
- Fear of people or places
- Aggression
- Regressive behaviours, bed wetting or stranger anxiety
- Excessive masturbation
- Sexually provocative
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Being unusually quiet and withdrawn or unusually aggressive
- Suffering from what seem to be physical ailments that can't be explained medically
- Showing fear or distrust of a particular adult
- Mentioning or receiving special attention from an adult or a new "secret" friendship with an

- adult or young person
- Refusal to continue with school or usual social activities
- Age inappropriate sexualized behaviour or language

Some indicators of neglect

- Medical needs unattended
- Lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger
- Inappropriate dress
- Poor hygiene
- Inadequate nutrition
- Fatigue or listlessness
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Extreme loneliness
- Extreme need for affection
- Failure to grow
- Poor personal hygiene
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug or alcohol abuse

In addition to knowing the signs of victimization, below are some early warning signs to look out for in potential offenders:

Signs of offenders (students)

- Unusual interest in sex, sexualizing inanimate objects and activities
- Does not stop sexual misbehaviour when told to stop
- Uses force and coercion in social situations
- Unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality
- Socializes with children much younger
- Gives gifts, requires secrecy in relationships

Signs of offenders (adults)

- Has "favourite" student or child
- Attempts to find ways to be alone with children
- Inappropriate language, jokes and discussions about students/children
- Sexualized talk in the presence of students/children
- Gives private gifts or has private chats on Facebook/internet

Roles and responsibilities

Board of Directors

- Develops and maintains a Child Protection Policy as part of Board policy manual.
- Holds the Head of school accountable for ensuring policies and practices outlined in the manual are adhered to by the school.

Head of School

- Creates and supports the school-based child protection team.
- Ensures incidents are handled according to the CP policy and reported to the appropriate external organisations.
- Ensures all departments of the school are acting in accordance with the CP policy.
- Communicates the CP policy to parents.

Principals

- Support the inclusion of CP training for staff within annual professional development.
- Support the inclusion of CP guidance for students within the curriculum
- Include CP issues within practices for evaluating safety and appropriateness of school activities such as trips, residential home stays.

Counselor and school psychologist

- First responders to whom suspected cases of child abuse are reported
- Lead CP team
- Organise the training and information to IICS staff members
- Organise the communication systems to inform volunteers
- Develop relationships with external local, and international child service agencies
- Review the CP policy and practice and make recommendations for development to the Head of School

All staff members

- Ensure they are familiar with the CP policy, accept their responsibility to communicate any concerns or suspicions of child abuse, and know who to go to.
- Engage with training offered in this area.
- Support others in understanding their responsibilities

Child Protection Team

Counselor – Brenda St. George

Psychologist – Vivian Huizenga

Nurse – Bilge Cosar

Primary Representative – Angela Steinmann

Secondary Representative – Joe Lumsden

Operations Manager – Pinar Demirkan

Intervention

Responding to disclosures

A child disclosing experience of child abuse

Staff member should follow guidelines below and communicate to school counselor or school psychologist immediately.

A child or adult disclosing suspicion of child abuse

Staff member should inform school counselor or school psychologist within 48 hours unless it is obvious it must be sooner.

Allegations concerning Staff Members should be dealt with as above

Allegations involving members of the CP team or Leadership Team should be reported to the Board Chair

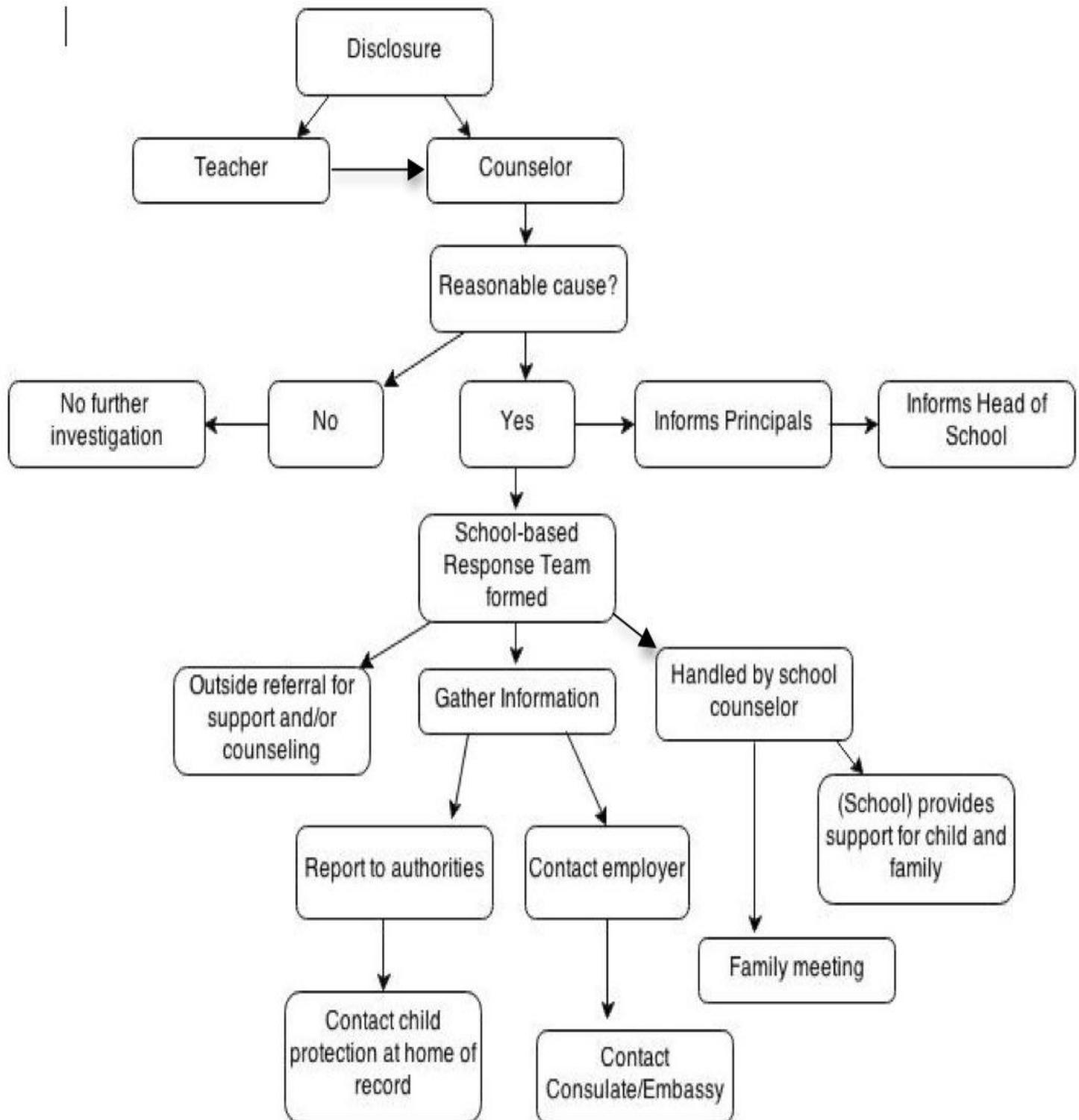
Guidelines for Responding to a Child's Disclosure

- Do not let a child swear you to secrecy before telling you something. You may need to report, which the child will view as breaking your trust with them.
- If a child asks to speak with you, try to find a neutral setting where you can have quiet and few interruptions.
- Do not lead the child in telling; just listen, letting him/her explain in his/her own words. Don't pressure for a great amount of detail.
- Respond calmly and matter-of-factly. Even if the story that the child tells you is difficult to hear, it is important not to register disgust or alarm.
- Do not make judgemental or disparaging comments about the abuser – it is often someone the child loves or with whom he/she is close.
- Do not make promises to the child that things will get better.
- Do not confront the abuser.
- If the child does not want to go home, this should be considered an emergency. Report and handle immediately by contacting the school counselor, psychologist or leadership team member. Do not take the child home with you!
- Respect the child's confidence. Share with the Child Protection Team, but limit information from and with other staff.
- Explain to the child that you must tell someone else to get help.
- Let the child know that someone else also will need to talk with him/her and explain why.
- Empower the student by, as much as possible, allowing the child to be a part of the process.

Flow chart for what happens next

Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report their suspicions to the counselor, or to the principal. In all cases, the principal and the counselor will be notified. It is the responsibility of the principal to inform the Head of School of the suspected case of child abuse or neglect.

All staff, faculty and administrators are mandated to report incidences of abuse and neglect. All IICS employees are also required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect. All reports of abuse and neglect must be made to the counselor within 48 hours for immediate response.



Prevention

Recruiting Procedures

Safe Recruiting

The school operates a thorough background check on all employees prior to appointment.

The school ensures that any outsourced company maintains the equivalent level of rigor for the staff they provide.

This is overseen by the Operations Manager who maintains the documentation of these checks. These would include:

- For those appointed from the UK or who have worked in the UK, Criminal Record Bureau checks.
- For those appointed from other countries, the relevant police or other check from that country is required.
- For Turkish citizens, a certificate from the Public Prosecutor's Office in their area of residency or the General Directorate for Criminal Records in Ankara, is required.
- A written application and statement of suitability requiring a signature stating that the applicant knows of no reason or prior circumstance that would preclude him or her working with children
- A credential check
- A personal interview – video conferencing is acceptable
- At least two written references, one of which must be most recent employer
- Personal conference with one referee – either face to face, telephone or video conference

Ensuring safe practices

- Principals will maintain an overview of activities conducted in their divisions, identify any with CP potential risk and ensure appropriate procedures are in place.
- Principals will ensure staff members maintain the agreed code of conduct with regard to behaviour with children.

Risk activities would include:

- Residential trips
- Home-stay experiences
- Those involving visiting practitioners

Tutoring

Staff members tutoring IICS children must inform and gain the approval of the Head of School. Outside tutors may use school premises at the discretion of the Head of school, provided that;

The sponsoring parent provides

- A written request
- A current cv including references
- A letter of reference
- A local police check

Training

- Counselor or school psychologist will provide training for new staff members in CP
- Counselor or school psychologist will provide reminder or updated information regarding CP to all staff members annually.
- Counselor or school psychologist will ensure their own levels of current knowledge and expertise are maintained

Communication

- CP policy will be accessible on the IICS website
- CP curriculum accessible to parents on the school website (date tbc)
- CP team will meet at least once annually

Education

- The counselor for Secondary and school psychologist for Primary offer a simple program which is included in the school's guidance curriculum.
- Parents are informed before this takes place and the curriculum outline is available via the school website.

Appendices

- Code of conduct for IICS
- Code of conduct for volunteers
- Code of conduct for outside providers
- IICS Child Protection Counselor Intake Form
- IICS Child Protection follow up

Code of conduct for IICS staff members

IICS is proud of its strong student staff relationships and warm caring community. The following code of conduct seeks to support this.

Code of Conduct

IICS is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, volunteers and students who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

The public and private conduct of faculty, staff employees, students and volunteers acting on behalf of IICS can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact, or can cause great harm if inappropriate. Staff members must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work.

Adults should be aware of their own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth, and be particularly aware that they are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional and sexual boundaries in such interactions. They must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviours with those for whom they have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures, bringing up sexual topics, sharing photos as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses.

Discretion should be shown before touching another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. IICS personnel and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual comfortable for the recipient and otherwise appropriate. Generally, one-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open.

Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between IICS parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers and minors:

- Communication between IICS staff (including volunteers) and minors should be public and open
- Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.
- Electronic communication that takes place over a school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.
- Faculty, staff and volunteers who use any form of online communications, including social media (Facebook, twitter, etc.) and text messaging, to communicate with minors should only do so for activities involving school business.

Code of conduct for volunteers

Dear (Volunteer) – name,

Thank you so much for contributing your time in support of the students and staff of IICS. It is much appreciated by all of us.

Out of due care for our students, we kindly ask that you read the following then sign and return it to the Primary/Secondary Principal.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.

Warm regards,

Jane Thompson
Head of School

Working with IICS students

- We ask that you model the expectations of our school's mission and values in all interactions with students and staff members.
- Please familiarise yourself with the school's safety and emergency procedures
- Maintain confidentiality regarding progress or behavior of IICS students. Discuss any concerns about a child with the homeroom teacher or counselor only.
- Follow the school's behaviour management protocols; physical disciplining of any kind – including pushing or grabbing is prohibited.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism or comparison when working with students.

Code of Conduct for outside providers of services such as activity leaders

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in IICS programmes.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities without another adult being notified.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of IICS and with the IICS policy to report suspected child abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride home alone.
- Accept gifts from, or give gifts to, children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, email, Facebook, Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of IICS, I am subject to a criminal history background check. My signature confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children and youth I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from IICS.

Name:

Signature/Date: