



International Community School

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (Whole School)

International Community School (ICS) fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students as an overriding priority. The well-being of each student is paramount in all aspects of school life.

Statement of Aims

This policy applies to all staff, management and volunteers working in the school. The five main elements to our policy are to:

1. Ensure we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children by complying with procedures and practice laid out in Safer Recruitment in Schools 2010.
To this end a central record of all checks and disclosures maintained by the Human Resources Department will attest to this practice.
2. Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
This is achieved through the school curricula, training in health and safety and developing the students' understanding of the School as a Safe Zone.
3. Develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.
Induction programmes form part of the training to ensure all concerned are aware and knowledgeable about abuse. The school's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme places Child Protection issues on the agenda of all formal faculty meetings including training programmes.
4. Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with the agreed child protection plan.
In such cases staff will be guided by the designated Child Protection Designated Officer and supported by the School's Student Support Department who will draw up and/or amend the student's existing International Independent Learning Plan (IILP).
5. Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop:
Students are encouraged to report any concerns however small, to their class teacher and/or designated member of pastoral staff. Small classes facilitate a more vigilant staff and more frequent interaction with students. The staff to student ratio is high and is instrumental in helping us maintain a safe environment for students in our care.
6. Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the school will be taken seriously and followed up and in all proper circumstances, as set out in this policy, will be referred to an external agency such as the Social Services Department (SSD), of

the Local Authority, the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), the Child Protection Unit of the police (CPU) or the NSPCC. In each case, the matter will be referred to Westminster Child Protection Advisors.

Detecting and Reporting Abuse

ICS follows best practice in appreciating that abuse may happen in a number of ways:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Sexual Abuse
3. Neglect
4. Emotional abuse

All staff are trained in detecting the signs and symptoms of abuse, which can take many forms but are usually divided into four categories:

Physical Injury: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Sexual Abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, 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.

Emotional Abuse: 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 insofar as they meet 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, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. This ranges from rejecting a child, refusing to show a child love or affection or deliberately making a child unhappy by continually belittling her/him or verbally abusing her/him.

We recognise that, because of their day-to-day contact with children, staff are well placed to observe signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

1. Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried: *the student induction programme will name the designated people and other members of staff they can approach.*
2. Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to:
Students are able to represent their views through the curriculum e.g. the secondary school Health and Social programme, through the student council (both schools) and are encouraged to review behaviour plans and school rules and provide feedback to the staff and Principal.
3. Include opportunities in the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse:
As well as the work done through the curriculum and the Health and Social programme, the school encourages regular visits from the Local Community Police Liaison Officers and members of the Local Authority's Children's Social Care team. Secondary bias
4. Be alert to the medical needs of children, in particular those with medical conditions:
Medical information is sought through the school's admissions' procedures and is then disseminated to all relevant staff members. Form tutors (Secondary School) and class teachers (Primary School) have a particular responsibility in this area.
5. Be alert to the needs of students in host family accommodation:
In the case of students aged 12 and above there is an appointed person in the school who has a liaison role between students and the Homestay Provider. She makes regular checks with students in host family accommodation and plays an active role in monitoring and reporting on the students' well being.
6. Operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance abuse:
This is effected in particular through the Social and Health programme and the Community and Service components of the school curriculum.
7. Follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Designated Professionals

The Principals of both the Primary and Secondary school are the named individuals responsible. In their absence, their deputies take on this responsibility. Child protection issues and incidences are reported directly to the designated person.

*Brenda Murray, Secondary School Principal is the Designated Child Protection Officer.
Michelle O'Connell, Primary School Principal is the Designated Child Protection Officer.*

In the absence of the Designated Officers:

*Alexandra Moreno Hemming will deputise for the Secondary School Principal
Lynne Horrobin will deputise for the Primary School Principal*

Maryam Thawfeega is the appointed liaison officer for Homestay Accommodation.

Students are assisted in being confident and open in expressing their views through:

- Form tutors (Secondary) and Class teachers (Primary)
- Laura Muir, Head of Student Support (Secondary)
- Melanie Pappas, Head of Student Support (Primary)
- Alan Andrew, Director of Student Support

Form Tutors and Class Teachers and school staff

Form tutors and class teachers have a special responsibility towards students as they meet students on a daily basis during registration. They play key roles in developing a safe and supportive learning environment, one where students are listened to and actively cared for.

The school will ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection by:

1. Setting out its obligations in the respective School Handbooks and school website for parents/guardians and school staff alike.
2. Notifying social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the Child Protection Register.
3. Developing effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences.
4. Ensuring the designated members of the Child Protection Team will undertake regular training to remain abreast of changes in Children's Social Care and are committed to discharging their responsibilities in this area effectively.
5. The school is committed to maintaining records of any incidences or events both in the absence of serious concerns and in the event that they may signal more serious concerns.
4. Ensure all records are kept securely and separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

Safeguarding Training

The lead professionals in the schools undertake training at least every two years in safeguarding children. They are also committed to attending conferences in respect of safeguarding during the academic year.

School staff are given training at the start of each academic year and, with the support of Trainers with expertise in this area, at least every two to three years. This training is supplemented by our in-service programme, which runs throughout each academic year.

All temporary staff are given a document which covers all key areas of Safeguarding and/or face to face training. Access to this information is available online through the teachers' handbook.

Safeguarding children who have been abused

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

1. The content of the curriculum paying due attention Government guidance on the **Every Child Matters** Programme;
2. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued;
3. The school Behaviour and Sanctions and Anti-Bullying Policies, which support vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
4. Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAHMS), Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service;
5. Ensuring that, where a pupil on the Child Protection Register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

The school complies with London Child Protection Procedures commissioned by the London Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and ensures that the students in school can achieve their potential and optimal outcomes throughout childhood throughout their teenage years into adulthood. These procedures set out how agencies (including the school, parent and Services) and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The outline and structure that follows is based on the 3rd edition of the *London Child Protection Procedures 2007* and incorporates Government guidance on the **Every Child Matters** Programme. *The standards include the following:*

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being
- Not cause harm to others

The policy is considered alongside:

- Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Student Support Guidelines
- Health & Safety Policy

- ICT Policy (incorporating E-safety)
- Whistleblowing Policy

Designated Officer for Child Protection Role and Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the Designated Officers are:

- To be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection.
- To be fully conversant with the Local Authority and school Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- To be available to all staff of the school community for consultation on child protection issues.
- To co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the school.
- To maintain an ongoing training programme for all school employees.
- To monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection.
- To liaise with the Child Protection Officer appointed by the SSD (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- To ensure that appropriate action is taken in the school and that procedures are followed in actual or suspected cases of child abuse.
- To contact the duty social worker or the duty education welfare/social worker within twenty four hours to seek advice on concerns brought by staff. To also check whether or not the family involved is known to the SSD.
- To monitor records of pupils in the school on the Child Protection Register (CPR) to ensure that this is maintained and updated as notification is received.
- To liaise with other professionals to ensure that children on the CPR are monitored.
- Where appropriate, to take part in the child protection conferences or reviews. In the case of non-attendance to ensure that a key member of staff attends. Where this is not possible to provide a written report to the conference from the School. (It is acknowledged that this should occur rarely as the involvement of school staff is vital given the close involvement with the child.)
- To inform the SSD Child Protection Co-ordinator in writing when a child on the CPR moves to another school and to inform the new school of the child's status on the CPR.

The designated officers' contact numbers:

Primary School Tel: 0207 935 1206

Secondary School Tel: 0207 402 9273

If the designated teachers are unavailable or are the subject of a complaint, her/ their duties will be carried out by the Director of Student Support.

Procedures

Staff guidelines for the Initial complaint

A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:

1. Must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place;

2. Must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer (“was it your father?” or “did this take place on Tuesday when you were away?” Instead ask non-leading questions e.g. Can you tell me how this happened?);
3. Must reassure the child that they have done the right thing in speaking to you about it, but that they cannot give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Officer who will ensure that the correct action is taken;
4. Must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record should include **the date, time and place** of the conversation and the essence of what was said **and done by whom and in whose presence**. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the Designated Officer. Please note it is **not** appropriate to take photographs as records e.g. of injuries.

Preserving Evidence: All evidence (e.g. scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing and computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

Recording information

1. Make brief notes as soon as possible after the meeting. This may be possible in the meeting itself.
2. Write up your notes in full and include time, date, place and signature.
3. Describe observable behaviour e.g. child was shaking, continued to cry, constantly moved around the room. (Do not interpret these features)
4. Record the actual words spoken by the child wherever possible.

Reporting: All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Officer, or, if the complaint involves the Designated Officer, to the Senior Management Team.

Action by the Designated Officer:

The action to be taken will take into account:

- a) The local inter-agency procedures of the Westminster Safeguarding Children Board;
- b) The nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the SSD or the police without further action within the school;
- c) The wishes of the pupil who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil's wishes;
- d) The wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some

circumstances. If the Designated Officer is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, s/he will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose;

- e) Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable;
- f) The lawful rights and interests of the school community as a whole including its employees and its insurers, whilst ensuring that a child's interests are paramount;
- g) If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Officer may consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis without identifying the family.

However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made within 24 hours. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Officer will confirm the referral in writing to SSD within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Officer will contact Social Services again.

Referral guidelines: A referral to the SSD or police will not normally be made where:

1. A referral would be contrary to the wishes of a pupil complainant who is of sufficient maturity and understanding and properly informed, and contrary also to the wishes of the complainant's parents;
2. The case is one that can be satisfactorily dealt with under the School's internal procedures, the parents being kept fully informed, as appropriate. However, if during the course of the internal procedures and it appears that the situation is more serious, the Designated Teacher will again consider whether a referral should be made in accordance with the procedures already stated.

External agencies:

Whether or not the school decides to refer a particular complaint to the SSD or the police, the parents and pupil will be informed in writing of their right to make their own complaint or referral to the Social Services Department or the Child Protection Unit of the police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

Monitoring of Low Level Child Protection Concerns in School

All concerns a teacher has regarding a child protection issue must be discussed with the Designated Officer (with the exception of concerns about the Designated Officer, where the Senior Management Team should be approached instead). There may be insufficient grounds or evidence to suggest referral to an outside agency. However, it must be stressed that this is not sufficient reason to ignore a concern. In case of doubt the Designated Officer will contact either the duty social worker or the duty education welfare/social worker/ LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) to seek clarification on what action should be taken.

Allegations Against Staff Members

The school has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures follow the guidance in chapter 5 of Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007.

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:

- a) the safety and welfare of the pupils or pupil concerned; and
- b) the need for a full and fair investigation.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Designated Officer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head of School/ owner.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Head of School/ owner, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Senior Management Team/Proprietor.

If the school ceases to use the services of a member of staff because they are unsuitable to work with children, a compromise agreement will not be used and there will be a prompt and detailed report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School.

Agencies:

OFSTED:

Royal Exchange buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7LA, Tel: 0845 640 4040
(Children's Services) enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Westminster Social Services Child Protection Advisors:

64 Victoria Street
London SW1 E 6QR

Tel: 0207 641 7525

Metropolitan Police Child Abuse Investigation Team:

2-4 Harrow Road
London
W2 1XJ

Tel: 0300 123 1212

NSPCC:

42 Curtain Road
London EC 2A 2NH

Tel: 0808 800 5000

Childline:

Tel: 0800 1111

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA):

PO Box 181
Darlington DL 1 9FA

Tel: 0300 123 111

Parentline (Opus):

Westbury House
57 Hart Road
Thundersley
Essex SS7 3PD

Tel: 01702 559 900

St Mary's Hospital:

73 Praed Street
Paddington London W2 1NS

Tel: 0207 706 3051

Reviewed November 2010

Next review date: November 2011