Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

January 2024

Introduction

The ISE places our students' safety and well-being as a high priority, and we have a responsibility to ensure our students' rights and their best interests are met. We will act whenever safeguarding issues have been identified or suspected. We also believe it is important to empower and educate our students on their rights, personal safety and steps they can take if there is a problem.

We ensure that all ISE staff are regularly informed about safeguarding matters and undergo annual child protection for international schools training. All adults who are employed, volunteers or individuals who are regularly on the school campus must go through a criminal check (VOG - *verklaring omtrent het gedrag*).

Child protection is the safeguarding of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. It involves identifying signs of potential harm, responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse, providing support and services to protect children.

All adults who either directly or indirectly work with children play an important role in the protection of our students. Children who experience safeguarding situations must be helped and supported as established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The abuse (or unsafe situation) must be stopped and the developmental phase of the specific child must be rectified. All staff members of the ISE who work with children have a responsibility to be aware of the signs of the different forms of child abuse (mistreatment) and the correct procedures to take as described in this policy.

The ISE is a Dutch international school and therefore must adhere to legal expectations in the Netherlands. We also adhere to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) . This is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

This policy details the protocols to identify and respond to concerns regarding the safety and well-being of our students. Furthermore, it establishes a framework for individual responsibility. This policy ensures that all protocols are followed, and that neither emotions nor conflicts of interest influence any procedures.

Fundamental Principles

Every child has the right to develop physically, mentally and socially in a safe and secure environment. Children develop and learn effectively if their physical, mental health and social well-being is positively stimulated.

At the ISE, we believe our whole community is responsible for providing the conditions for our students to develop and thrive. As a school we provide effective education and support for our students which focuses on their physical, social and emotional well-being. We work together with parents to promote positive parenting and provide the support where needed. The school regularly updates parents on safeguarding matters through communication documents, workshops and information sessions. We also

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make connections to external contacts, when appropriate. In order for our students to feel safe we make the most of these community relationships and ensure we respect the identity and cultures of our students and families.

The school has invested in the training and expertise of child protection officers. Both the primary and secondary departments are responsible for the training of child protection officers as well as wider awareness training for staff.

Teachers are expected to stay up to date with the appropriate Child Protection training and behave in accordance with the staff code of conduct and the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy. In order to preserve the safety of the staff member and the student, all interactions between the staff member and the student must take place in a visible area.

Procedure

When a staff member becomes aware of a safeguarding issue or has a concern regarding a student, they will communicate with the Safeguarding Officers of the relevant departments on the same day. Communication should ideally be in person.

When a student discloses a safeguarding issue to a staff member, the staff member should not promise confidentiality. The student will always be told that the information has to be shared and cannot be kept a secret. It will also be stated that parents will most likely be informed. Secondary students will be reassured that no steps will be taken without their knowledge, and that their safety is of paramount importance.

The safeguarding officer who has received the information regarding a safeguarding issue will take action and follow up on the disclosure. They will also collaborate with a member of the Safeguarding committee. The disclosure may trigger the steps established in SILFO's Protocol for Reporting to *Veilig Thuis.* Due to privacy the staff member who reported the safeguarding issue might not receive any feedback on the disclosure.

Safeguarding Officers must be communicated to all staff at the beginning of the school year. Staff members who report safeguarding issues will be protected in accordance with the parameters of SILFO's Whistleblower Policy.

External Visitors, Volunteers and After School Activity Coaches

At the ISE we have a variety of people who visit the campus and have direct contact with our students. To ensure their safety, the following measures are in place:

Anyone who is not employed by the ISE must complete the online Cooperation agreements form (paper form available at reception for external visitors that do not work with students) before starting on campus. There are several staff members for overseeing that these forms have been completed. The back office will be responsible for supporting the process and collecting a current police clearance/child protection certificate (Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag, VOG). The safeguarding committee will review this overview during their bi-monthly meetings.

The ISE outlines in a cooperation agreement the expectations of visitors with specific reference to safeguarding practices which they sign to accept the terms.

After-school activity coaches and supervisors, volunteers who support in class, lunch club members and bus volunteers need to complete a child protection course and provide a criminal check (VOG). The ISE supports them in this process. They must sign in and out at reception and wear an ID badge at all times.

External visitors who regularly visit the campus, who are employed by an external (educational) company must show evidence of their VOG at the initial meeting. They should wear an ID badge at all times while on campus. The exception to this are the contract partners of the consortium (PDX, Vebego, Blankers, Idverde, Mansveld, Spie) who are contracted to work for the consortium. The consortium has systems in place to ensure that their contract partners have been checked and have the relevant documentation. When they are working at the campus it is not necessary to wear an ID badge as they wear company clothing with a logo depicting the company that they work for.

Student teachers and interns need to provide a VOG before their starting date. However, if the VOG process has not been finalized, they must be under the supervision of a member of ISE staff. They are required to sign in and out at reception and wear an ID badge at all times.

External visitors and volunteers who do not work alone with students do not need to provide a VOG. However they must be under the supervision of a member of ISE staff. External visitors must sign in and out at reception and wear an ID badge at all times.

Parent committee members who regularly visit the campus need to provide a VOG before their starting date. The ISE supports them in this process. Parent committee members must sign in and out at reception and wear an ID badge at all times.

Safe Touch

For the purpose of this policy, "safe touch" is defined as physical contact that, if otherwise avoided, would be inhumane, unkind and potentially emotionally or physically damaging for the student. Sensitivity to a student's personal boundaries must be respected at all times.

The school understands that the following examples are instances of safe touch which may occur between staff and students:

- Comforting an upset or distressed student.
- Physical restraint when a student or others are in immediate danger.
- Hugs (on a student's initiative).
- Congratulating or praising a student.
- Holding the hand of a student to guide them, such as when crossing a road.
- Giving first aid to a student.
- Demonstrating exercises or techniques during practical lessons.
- Administering medicine or medically necessary touch, such as removing a splinter, cleaning a wound, etc.
- Affirmative touch such as a pat on the back, a high five, a handshake, etc.
- Assisting a student with changing after a soiling or wetting incident.

Changing Room & Toilet Protocol

In general we recognise that changing rooms are private spaces in which students are particularly vulnerable. Therefore the balance between supervision from responsible adults and allowing appropriate privacy for students must be carefully considered and evaluated regularly. The safety of students must never be compromised. Due to the developmental needs of different age groups, a distinction in policy is required between primary and secondary departments.

Secondary

- Teachers should avoid entering changing rooms unless an incident occurs. Under general circumstances this means no male teachers in female changing rooms, no female teachers in male changing rooms. If there is a risk to safety, teachers may enter these spaces.
- Students may not use their phones in the changing rooms or toilets.
- The school will offer the use of a third changing room for trans and/or gender non-conforming students.

Primary

Students in groups Upper Foundation to group 3 will change collectively in their classroom. The class teacher or teaching assistant will assist when needed. Students from group 4 onwards change in their designated changing rooms. A class teacher may enter this changing room when asked for assistance or when teacher intervention is necessary due to behaviour.

Online Safety & General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Child safeguarding also extends to considerations of protection of children online. Schools and students spend a substantial amount of time using digital resources, and it is essential schools protect children's well-being online. For this, the ISE takes several measures to create a safe and productive online environment for students. The following school practices aim to prevent and/or limit student's online exposure to: illegal, harmful, or inappropriate materials; harmful interactions; financial or commercial exploitation; and harmful personal behaviors.

Permissions: Parents or legal guardians must provide permissions for students to use school education platforms (such as Google Education, Toddle, or other school platforms). Parents or legal guardians must provide permission for the school to use a child's face, name, or work on internal and external school sites, digitized print materials, and/or social media. These permissions are requested and updated annually at the beginning of the school year.

Data Protection: Student records are accessible by associated teachers and support staff who directly work with specific students. Permissions to these records are granted by school leadership when required, and access to this information is limited based on staff relationship to the child. School-wide permissions for student records are also for necessary school staff, such as office administration, school leaders and the school nurse. School staff may only use confirmed SILFO email accounts to access sensitive student information. External accounts from SILFO cannot have access to student records except for required government documentation requests. Data agreements with third-party applications must be approved by SILFO prior to use, particularly for applications that manage student data. The ISE complies to the European GDPR regulations in consultation with the Silfo School Group.

Email & Website Access: Students are provided with school email addresses. The login and the picture of these email addresses cannot be changed except by an administrator. These email addresses are used to access school learning platforms, and to use school devices. Only students with registered school email accounts can access school digital resources. Website access in Primary is white-list only (i.e., specific sites are open), and Secondary is black-list only (i.e. specific sites are blocked). These access lists are reviewed annually and updated as needed. These lists are monitored by the IT department.

Curriculum: Alongside safeguards for protecting student safety online, the school provides training and support to students about how to safely navigate digital space. In both Primary and Secondary, the school uses the Common Sense digital citizenship curriculum, which covers topics such as

Media Balance & Well-being, Privacy & Security, Digital Footprint & Identity, Relationships & Communication, Cyberbullying, and News & Media Literacy. Additionally, the school participates in Safer Internet Day (SID) to promote online child safety.

Policies: There are several school policies that parallel the child safeguarding policy in regards to online safety and well-being. These include the [Anti-Bullying](#) policy (related to cyber-bullying), the [Academic Integrity policy](#) (related to plagiarism and copyright), and the [Information Security and Privacy policy](#) (related to data management, compliance, and risk). In tandem, these policies provide detail for promoting online safety at the ISE.

Curriculum

The Primary International Department uses the jigsaw Social and Emotional Learning programme. This programme incorporates personal, social, health and relationship education. The Jigsaw programme includes classroom-based instruction that helps all students:

- Explore who they are & how they fit in
- Identify & manage emotions in a prosocial manner; foster resilience; and develop empathy
- Solve problems
- Better meet behavioural expectations
- Understand & respect their (changing) bodies
- Make healthy choices regarding nutrition, emotional health, drugs & alcohol
- Build & maintain healthy relationships
- Celebrate similarities, differences, diversity & individuality
- Explore dreams, goals & ambitions

Themes related to bullying, student rights and responsibilities, online safety, relationships, mental health, and managing feelings and emotions are included in the learning units in jigsaw. Each year group teaches one lesson per week covering 6 units over a period of 36 weeks.

In the secondary department, the year tutor programme encompasses social, emotional, digital and health education. The premise of the programme is to focus on the students' well-being and for students to feel empowered to make informed and healthy decisions and to set their own boundaries.

Topics include but are not limited to social media safety, stress management, sexual education, drug/alcohol/vaping education, personal relationships and being a positive member of a community.

Monitoring and evaluating

This policy is monitored by the safeguarding committee. They meet throughout the year to ensure all aspects of this policy are being carried out. The safeguarding committee is made up of the school

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leadership team, learning support coordinators from both primary and secondary and a leader for learning from both primary and secondary.

Appendices

1. [Reporting to *Veilig Thuis*](#)

2. Definitions

Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse is every form of threatening or violent interaction (physical, psychological or sexual), a child undergoes from parents, other adults or peers with whom this child interacts. This can be actively or passively imposed, resulting in a threat of and/or actual serious physical or psychological harm to the child.

Types of Child Abuse

Here are a number of examples, this list is not exhaustive.

Physical Abuse

This includes all forms of physical violence used against a child such as hitting, kicking, biting, pinching, scratching, causing burns and letting children fall. An exceptional example is 'factitious disorder imposed on another (FDIA)' whereby parents deliberately make their child sick or claim that they are sick.

Psychological Abuse

Psychological or emotional abuse occurs when parents or other guardians through their behavior or attitude reject and/or treat children with hostility. This may involve a form of verbal abuse, repeatedly stating that they are not wanted and/or deliberately intimidating them. Psychological or emotional abuse may also consist of denigrating remarks about the child, made in the presence of others.

Physical Neglect

Physical neglect is a passive form of child abuse in which the child does not receive the care and attention they need. Essential physical needs such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene and medical care are denied or not adequately provided.

Psychological Neglect

Psychological neglect occurs when parents or guardians do not provide sufficient positive attention for their child. Consequently, the basic needs of the child, love, warmth, protection and support are

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structurally denied. Affluent neglect is a sub-form of neglect in which the child's material needs might be met but they are denied sufficient attention and emotional support.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a person forces a child to participate in any form of sexual activity. Children cannot consent to sexual activity. Children are particularly vulnerable to adults due to emotional pressure, physical and relational strength, compulsion and violence. As a result of this a child may be forced to submit to sexual acts, to commit sexual acts, to witness sexual acts of others, watch pornographic materials and or being photographed or recorded inappropriately.

Witness to Family Violence

The child witnesses violence to a family member in their own home. Violence is hereby defined as an attack upon the personal integrity of the victim, which can include verbal, physical or psychological abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation

Mutilation of the external female sexual organs, in the form of cutting or burning of the vulva.

Peer on peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse along with coercive control, which is carried out within young people's relationships. This can include romantic relationships, friendships and wider peer associations. Bullying, sexual harassment and violence, dating violence, hazing (humiliating, degrading behaviour) and prejudice - based harm can all fall under this umbrella.

Identity-based harm

Identity-based harm is defined as targeting a person based on identity markers such as race, color, ethnicity, caste, religion, gender identity, gender expression, sexual identity, national origin, citizenship status, socioeconomic status, age, language, or ability and constitutes a form of harm and abuse.