



## Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy at IBIS

**This policy applies to all children including those in the EYFS.**

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Date of next review: annually or as necessary

Staff responsible: management team and Board member responsible for safeguarding children

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## **1. Introduction**

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children including the early learning years.
- Children who are and feel safe make more successful learners.
- Representatives of the whole school community of pupils, parents, guardians, staff and governors 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.

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, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the British and local authorities.

## **2. Principles**

- 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 or sexual identity 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 pupils 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.

### **Aims**

- 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

## **3. Terminology**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children 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 so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children, An Interagency Guide to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children](#)) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering harm.

Reference to “Keeping Children safe in Education” updated in April 2014 also provides statutory guidance for schools. The German guidelines for NRW are to be considered.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example, step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

#### 4. Context

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

[Section 157](#) of the same Act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Although an international school in Germany, IBIS strives to follow the regulations with local adaptations.

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their 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 (see section 6 for further guidance on this).

As IBIS is inspected by the Independent Schools’ Inspectorate it is obliged to follow the British requirements where possible.

#### 5. Key personnel in the school

The **designated senior persons** for child protection in this school are:

Irene Bolik, Headteacher  
Contact details: 0228 32 31 66, 0228 85 73 72

The **deputy designated persons** for child protection in this school are:

Helen Anderson, Deputy Headteacher  
Contact details: 0176 85 36 33 21

Clare Paasch, Head of Foundation Stage  
Contact details: 0228 32 40 846

The **nominated child protection governor** for this school is:

Mümtaz Köksal  
Contact details: 0160 96 92 75 55

The Head teacher is:

Irene Bolik (see above)

The local Jugendamt contact person is:

Herr auf der Mauer (Head of Department)  
Tel: 0228 77 55 25  
Fax: 0228 77 55 16

Amt für Kinder, Jugend und Familie  
Fachdienst Kinderschutz  
Oppelnerstr.130  
53119 Bonn

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements and this person is named in this policy guidance. The school authorities have the Head teacher's contact details.

**The school has ensured that the DSP:**

- is appropriately trained
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of the local German procedures<sup>1</sup>
- 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
- refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedure
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- 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 plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that local procedures are followed. These are in the German guidelines.

- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- liaises with the nominated governor and head teacher (where the role is not carried out by the head teacher) as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- makes 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. The governing body ensures that the school has:

- a DSP for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken the approved training in inter-agency working in addition to basic child protection training
- child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with 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 headteacher
- safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance (see: [https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Keeping Children safe in Education](https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Keeping_Children_safe_in_Education_) "). This document is in full in the office.
- a training strategy that ensures all staff including the headteacher receive child protection training with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSP should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals.
- provision to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection
- The governing body nominates a member to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the headteacher. An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses or areas of concern will be rectified without delay.

#### **The Headteacher:**

- 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 pupils 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 whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that child's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum

## **7. 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 children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and/or abuse

## **8. 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. In addition, staff should understand that under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#) it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18 where that person is in a position of trust even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence even if that child is over the age of consent.

The school's Code of Ethical Practice sets out our expectations of staff (see Appendix 1).

## **9. Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and/or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk 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
- living in a known domestic abuse situation
- affected by known parental substance misuse

- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- not native English speakers

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

## **10. 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
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person, acceptable to both parties, will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- 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
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies

## **11. 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. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the SMT and governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **12. 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. The school's whistle blowing code (Appendix 2) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the headteacher. Complaints about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors:

Contact: [board@ibis-school.com](mailto:board@ibis-school.com)

### **13. 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.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in the complaints procedure.

The document "Keeping Children safe in Education" provides the most recent guidance on this issue.

- If an allegation is made against a teacher, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated. The school must not undertake its own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the local authority or, in the most serious cases, the police so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, discussions with the Schulamt can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.
- All allegations are to be reported straight away to the Head or Deputy Head or, if the allegation is against the Head, to the Chair of Governors.
- The management team or governors meet to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. Discussions should be recorded in writing and arrangements for communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed. Whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place must be carefully considered.
- From 1st October 2012 there are restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers and so the school must make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence.
- The school is committed to promptly report to the school authorities or, if appropriate, the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the



DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.

- Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using volunteers; resignation of a course of initial teacher training or volunteering. It is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence. 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation. Proprietors of independent schools have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already but they do not have to find it from other sources. Schools will be asked, as part of routine inspection, to confirm that they have disclosed to inspectors all instances of action in relation to safeguarding concerns.
- IBIS must consider making a referral to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned).

Integrated Handbook – Regulatory Requirements - Effective January 2015 ©  
Independent Schools Inspectorate

#### **14. 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 and governors will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the headteacher (unless the headteacher is the DSP) and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSP will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

#### **15. Safer recruitment**

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education together with the school's individual procedures. The Head is required to have certification in this area. Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- make a declaration of association
- 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 checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (from 2010 onwards)
- be interviewed

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own

safeguarding and child protection training needs. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy (see Appendix 3). Training includes the staff code of conduct, behaviour policy, the identity of the designated persons and a copy of part 1 of KCSIE. Training takes place before teaching starts.

## **16. Management of safeguarding**

The Head, Deputy Head or other member of the DP team is responsible for child protection matters. The senior responsibility is to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the school, to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies and to monitor the effectiveness of policies and procedures in practice at all times.

The designated safeguarding lead should be provided with sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil his or her child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively. All professionals working with children should review their own practice and discuss any concerns they may have about welfare and safeguarding matters at the two yearly meetings with the Head or at any time.

It is the staff's professional duty to report welfare and safeguarding concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or, in the absence of action, directly to local children's services.

There is a designated Board member to take a lead in relation to responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding duties remain the responsibility of the proprietor group as a whole including for the annual review of safeguarding. The designated persons are displayed in the entrance hall.

## **17. 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 including safer recruitment procedures. When our children attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

## **18. 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. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect children we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them

## **19. e-Safety**

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe in school. Cyber-bullying by children via texts and emails will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and children are not allowed to access these sites whilst in school. Some children will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home and we have produced a short factsheet to help parents and children understand the possible risks.

## **20. 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 alone at home or leaving knives or matches 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, 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 - this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness. Physical abuse also includes female genital mutilation.

### **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 from 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 although it may occur alone.

## **Sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation**

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 and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or participating in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, 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 carers; 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.  
[\(Definitions taken from "Working Together to Safeguard Children"\)](#)

## **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. All incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the Deputy Head will consider implementing child protection procedures.

## **Children who run away or go missing**

It is the school's duty to check up on absent children and inform the local school authority (Schulamt) of any unexplained absences.

If a child runs away from school or goes missing, the Head or Deputy Head must be informed immediately. Immediate contact with the police is required if the child cannot be found or caught. Also immediate contact with the parents is required. All facts are to be documented.

## **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 sexual abuse 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'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. 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, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for P.E. 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 others' safety
- harm himself/herself
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour - from quiet to aggressive or from happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual 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, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 110
- 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 children's social care
- 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 5) 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 discloses 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, particularly if the abuse is sexual; 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', 'It isn't your fault', 'You're 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 admonishing 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 children's social care.(Kinderschutz)

### **Referral to children's social care**

The DSP will make a referral to children's social care (Kinderschutz) 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.

### **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

### **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, headteacher or chair of governors (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 stored and handled in line with [Data Protection Act 1998](#) principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the subject's data rights
- 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.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the headteacher.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies where that information may help to protect a child. The German authorities will stipulate the rules of who needs to know and how to pass on information.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

### **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care (Kinderschutz):

- the situation is an emergency and the Headteacher, the Deputy Head and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety
- related safeguarding portfolio policies
- physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- personal and intimate care
- complaints procedure
- anti-bullying
- appropriate physical contact
- whistle blowing
- SEN
- behaviour
- missing children
- safer recruitment
- managing allegations



- grievance and disciplinary

### **Arrangements for reviewing policies and procedures**

There is an annual review of the policy or when new regulations are published, including an update and review of procedures and their implementation. The Board of governors should also ensure that the school contributes to effective communication and good cooperation with local agencies. The Board minutes must reflect available evidence underpinning the review (e.g. any written report or information presented to governors to support the review, training records, referral information in respect of requests for help and support for individual children, issues and themes which may have emerged in the school and how these have been handled, contribution the school is making to multi-agency working in individual cases or local discussions on safeguarding matters). Minutes should therefore be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate both breadth and depth of the review.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the school should determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This policy is linked to the following policies:

Anti-bullying  
Behaviour  
Missing Child  
Safer Recruitment Policy  
Health and Safety  
Physical Restraint  
e-Safety Policy  
Photo Permission Policy

This document appears on:

The school website  
The school intranet

**Key service contacts:**

Initial Response Team:		
Jugendamt	Oppelnerstr. 130	Tel.: 0228 77 55 25
Kinderschutz		Tel.: 0228 77 55 25

**Key professional contacts:**

Head of Kinderschutz: Herr Auf der Mauer  
Central: 0228 77 55 26

School psychologist and family advice centre  
Kurfürstenallee 2-3  
53177 Bonn-Bad Godesberg  
Tel.: 0228 77 45 62  
Email: [psychologische.beratungsstelle@bonn.de](mailto:psychologische.beratungsstelle@bonn.de)

**Emergency out of hours contact**

In an emergency, outside of school hours and all day on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays, for child protection concerns:

Tel.: 0228 85 73 72 Irene Bolik, Headteacher

## 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. The highest priority at all times is safeguarding children.

All school staff should:

- inform themselves about safeguarding children and keep up to date with all new changes in the policy. All staff should attend courses for certification in this area
- adhere to the principles and procedures contained in the policies in our safeguarding portfolio and in teaching and learning policies
- understand that school staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a child, even over the age of 16, may be an offence
- be alert to and report appropriately any behaviour that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm
- inform themselves about the use of electronic devices and access to the internet. Courses on e-safety are available to all staff.
- 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
- treat each child as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual needs
- 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 accompanied by another staff member if a child's clothing is to be removed for changing
- 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
- value themselves and seek appropriate support for any issue that may have an adverse effect on their professional practice
- not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with pupils
- refrain from uploading to the internet any comments about the school
- inform the DP when teaching on a one to one basis (sports, music)

This form is in conjunction with Data Protection:

Staff name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 2**

### **Whistle blowing code for issues relating to children and young people**

#### **Purpose of the code**

The school adheres to the local authority whistleblowing policy and procedures that enable staff to raise concerns relating to:

- crime
- a miscarriage of justice
- illegality
- health and safety
- environmental or property damage
- unauthorised use of public funds
- concealing or attempting to cover up any of the above

This code provides additional information to help staff to understand the role of whistle blowing in the context of poor practice and unacceptable conduct and attitudes towards children.

#### **When to use the code**

The whistle blowing procedures and this code may be used by anyone employed by the school in a paid or voluntary capacity who believes they have reason to suspect that the conduct of an employee towards a child is inappropriate.

Inappropriate conduct includes but is not confined to:

- bullying or humiliation
- contravening health and safety guidelines
- serious breaches of the school's code of ethical practice
- professional practice that falls short of normally accepted standards
- compromising pupils' welfare but in a way that does not meet the threshold for child protection intervention

#### **Reasons for blowing the whistle**

Staff will naturally be reticent to report a concern about the conduct of a colleague. However, each individual must take responsibility for ensuring that children are fairly treated. If poor practice is allowed to continue unchecked, it could escalate with serious consequences.

Your action not only protects children but also deters any suggestion that you have colluded with poor practice that you knew was occurring but chose to ignore.

Whistle blowing can also support the member of staff who is the subject of the concern. Their conduct may result from inexperience or lack of training that can be addressed by the school or they may be under stress and be relieved when their conduct is questioned.

Staff who deliberately fail children and show no remorse or desire to improve are unlikely to welcome being exposed but their conduct has to be confronted for the sake of the child and the reputation of the whole school.

## **Barriers to whistle blowing**

You may worry that you have insufficient evidence to raise a concern, that you will set off an unstoppable chain of events, that there will be adverse repercussions for your career, that you may suffer harassment or victimisation or that your suspicion or concern might be totally misplaced.

These concerns are entirely understandable but you can be reassured that whistle blowing procedures address these issues.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees from reprisals for public interest whistle blowing. Your union, a solicitor or the local authority legal services can provide you with information about your legal position.

## **Confidentiality and anonymity**

All concerns are treated in confidence and, as far as possible, your identity will not be revealed if that is your wish. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if, as a result of an investigation, you are required to provide a witness statement or attend a court hearing.

You can, if you prefer, raise your concern anonymously. The school would need to decide whether the levity and credibility of the concern warrants investigation if the source of the concern and the key evidence is not readily available.

The school will fully support you and do all it can to protect you from any harassment or adverse repercussions that may arise from whistle blowing. Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

## **Reporting procedure**

It may help if you write down for your own benefit what you have observed or heard that is causing alarm. One useful way to decide whether your concern should be reported is to consider whether you would want the conduct of this member of staff to continue unchecked if your own child or another young family member was involved.

- You may raise your concern verbally or in writing. You should report your concern directly to the headteacher.
- If the headteacher is the subject of your concern, speak to the chair of governors.
- A friend, colleague or union representative may accompany you to the meeting if you wish.
- Ensure the head or chair informs you of their proposed action and sets a date for a second meeting.
- Timescales will depend on the complexity of the initial inquiry but the case should not be allowed to stall and you should receive initial feedback within 10 working days. The timescale for subsequent feedback should then be agreed.
- Ask for clarification about confidentiality and ensure you have your wishes regarding the protection of your identity recorded.
- Process and outcome

The headteacher or chair will make enquiries to establish the facts of the matter and whether poor practice or inappropriate conduct has occurred. Members of the school community including governors may be asked to provide information or advice.

- External advice, for example, from legal or human resources or children's services may be sought.
- A written record of the conduct, established facts and outcome of the inquiry will be kept.
- The whistle blower will be kept informed of the progress of the inquiry.
- The outcome of the inquiry will be one of the following:
  1. No poor practice or wrongdoing is established and the case is closed.
  2. The concern has some substance and the subject of the concern will receive advice and support from the headteacher to improve practice.
  3. Poor practice or wrongdoing is established and disciplinary proceedings are initiated.
  4. The concern is more serious and an investigation is initiated. This investigation may involve the local authority's legal team, children's social care or the police.

If, at any stage in the process, there is reason to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm, children's social care will be immediately involved.

### Appendix 3

#### 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.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return this form to the designated senior person:

## **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 on the day.

Child's full name:

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?

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



Class:

Class teacher:

Your name and designation:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you spoken to the child?  Yes  No

What did they say? Use the child's own words:

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

Who?

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

Further details:

## Appendix 5

Record of concern: School: \_\_\_\_\_

### Child's details

Full name:

Address:

Telephone:

Date of birth:

Gender:  Male  Female

Is the child looked after by the local authority or are there any other legal family arrangements? (for example, a residence order)

When was the child first admitted to this school?

Ethnicity and culture:

Religion:

Does the child have any disability or special educational need?  Yes  No  
Please specify:

Preferred language of child:

Is any type of language support required to converse with the child?  Yes  No  
Please specify:

Does the child know this form has been completed?  Yes  No  
If not, why not?

If yes, what did the child say?

Details of those with parental responsibility:

Name(s):

Address:

Telephone:

Relationship to child:

Ethnicity, culture and religion of those with parental responsibility, if known:

Preferred language of those with parental responsibility:

Is any type of language support required?

Do those with parental responsibility have any disability or special need?

How does this disability or special need affect the child?

Details of any siblings:

Does the child regularly spend time with other carers, for example, after-school or holiday carers or at a short break service?

Has a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) been completed for this child?

Yes  No

Please give date and reason for the CAF:

Why are you concerned about this child?

Please provide a description of any incidents/conversations and the dates they occurred. You must make clear what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay. You must not ask the child leading questions or try to investigate the concern yourself.

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.)

If an allegation has been made, give any details you have about the alleged abuser:

Date and time of this record:

Your details:

Full name:

Position:

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)

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 their deputy or the head teacher.

**NB:** If you do not have certain information such as the child or family's ethnicity, do not delay handing in the form.