



## **Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy at IBIS**

**This policy applies to all children and staff who work with them at our School of Friends.**

Published first: February 2015

**Date of review: July 2018 (PW)**

**February 2019 (PW)**

**September 2019 (PW)**

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

**To provide clear guidance to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues, thus ensuring child protection concerns and referrals will be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.**

**To be read by: all staff working with children at IBIS**

**Reviewer: Headteacher (September 2019)**

## 1. Introduction

. 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.

### Aims

The main aims of our child protection policy are:

- Supporting pupils who may have been or are at risk of being abused or neglected in any way.
- Increasing staff awareness of responding sensitively to Child Protection concerns.

Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective and positive working relationships with parents and colleagues

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.

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.

As IBIS is inspected by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate/ COBIS it is obliged to follow the British requirements where possible as well as incorporate local regulations.

Guidance is largely taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/830121/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_060919.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830121/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_060919.pdf)

## 5. Key personnel in the school

The **designated senior person** for child protection in this school is:

Philip Wharton, Headteacher/ insoweit erfahrene Fachkraft  
Contact details: 0228 32 31 66

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

Tara O'Shea, Deputy Headteacher  
Contact details: 0228 32 31 66

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

Dr. Allison Hildreth  
Contact details: 0228 32 31 66

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 Headteacher's contact details.

**The school will ensure that the Designated Senior Person:**

- is appropriately trained
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of the local German procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child ensuring that such records are stored

- securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance but kept separately from the child's general file
- 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
  - 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 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) "Keeping Children safe in Education 2019 ").
- 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( if not the Headteacher) 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 (see Whistleblowing Policy)
- 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 each other with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving children in decision-making which affects them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among all stakeholders
- 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 (normally the Headteacher or Deputy) 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 SLT 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 policy 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 related to safeguarding of children 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” (2019) 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 have been 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.

#### **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 (September 2019) together with the school's individual procedures. The Head is required to ask staff for necessary certification in this area.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role
- 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 II). Training includes the staff code of ethical behaviour, and the identity of the designated persons. Training takes place before teaching starts.

All employees of the school, and other professionals who work regularly alongside children, have police clearance (i.e. a DBS check, Erweitertes Führungszeugnis, or international equivalent). All professionals who work in school, staff or volunteer, are compiled in the Single Centre Register maintained by the Headteacher. Any other professional workers entering school without police clearance are expected to comply with the above advice and work alongside teachers and never in isolation with children.

Volunteers at the school who work directly with children will also be asked for an Erweitertes Führungszeugnis.

## **16. Management of safeguarding**

The elected governor for Child Protection, the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are 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 (Headteacher) 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 following the procedures as set out in this document.

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 will be 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
- remind large gatherings of parents that they are responsible for the images they take and they are not to upload these images to any social media.

All staff should aware that 'upskirting' is now a criminal offence. A definition of upskirting is, "taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm" (DfE, 2019a)

## **19. e-Safety**

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers at some time. We acknowledge that many children have unlimited access to 3G and 4G networks. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some 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. 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 behavioural and safeguarding 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. The school makes every effort to educate students about the associated risks of this behaviour.

### **Opportunities to teach safeguarding**

We consider opportunities for teaching safeguarding as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This will be covered through Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (formerly known as Sex and Relationships Education) . The government in the UK has made regulations which will make Relationships Education (for all Primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all Secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state funded schools) mandatory from 2020 (*The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019*). IBIS will also follow the framework for RE and RSE, moving forward.

## **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.

[\(Definitions taken from "Working Together to Safeguard Children"\)](#)

### **Serious crime**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. (DfE, 2019a)

### **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. 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.

## **Peer-on-Peer Abuse**

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships. All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying) These types of abuse rarely take place in isolation.

Any response to peer-on-peer abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of peer-on-peer abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences.

### **What to look out for**

All staff should be alert to the well-being of pupils and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by peer-on-peer abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

Signs that a child may be suffering from peer-on-peer abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include:

- (a) failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected;
- (b) physical injuries;
- (c) experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing;
- (d) becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks; suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much;
- (e) broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse;
- (f) changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age;
- (g) abusive behaviour towards others.

Abuse affects children very differently. The above list is by no means exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse. The behaviour that children present with will depend on their particular circumstances. Rather than checking behaviour against a list, staff should be alert to behaviour that might cause concerns, to think about what the behaviour might signify, to encourage children to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour, and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents/carers so that the cause(s) of their behaviour can be investigated. Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being harmed or abused by their peers) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.

### **What to do if there is a concern**

If it is a minor concern, such as if a child is often tired in lessons, the teacher should speak to the parents and monitor improvements and changes of the situation and inform the Headteacher. If it is a more serious concern or issue the teacher must speak to the Headteacher before taking any action. The Headteacher will speak to the teacher and work through a concern checklist form with them. Parents need to be informed and the relevant staff will attend the meeting together with the class teacher if there is a serious concern.

## 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 Headteacher by the end of the day
- if the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher are 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 without delay.
- do not start your own investigation alone
- 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 III) to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, you should follow the advice in Appendix IV "How to deal with disclosure".

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.

Staff are informed that every adult working within school must respect the need for confidentiality within the school. By law teachers should refrain from discussing personal matter or behaviour of a student or other staff member openly without their consent. Staff members are advised to comply with these regulations at all times – including break times and outside school. Possible concerns should be discussed in a professional setting with the Headteacher who will liaise with the **nominated child protection governor**.

Staff never guarantee confidentiality to a child if the child discloses something. Staff are also advised not to ask or lead any questions but listen to the child and inform them that someone else is coming to talk to them, too. This is to be done with care and sensitivity. This information is reported to the Head of Section and the person responsible for Child Protection Concerns.

Generally, there is an obligation on schools to speak to the parents about the situation. The only exception to this is when there is immediate danger from the parents and it could worsen the child's situation. In that case the Jugendamt needs to be informed immediately.

**However, as per German law, we are not allowed to pass on information without the permission of the child, unless the concern is acute. It is therefore advised to obtain explicit permission from the child to pass on the concern.**

By German law all schools have the duty to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children in their care. Schools are sentinels of the welfare of children and therefore are obliged to breach confidentiality if a child is in danger.

### **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 etc.
- At an appropriate time, and only if you judge the child to be in immediate danger, 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.
- Reassure the child that all abuse is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Avoid making promises that cannot be kept ('Everything will be alright now', 'I'll stay with you'). Most importantly, teachers should **never make a promise of confidentiality.**
- 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 III.

## **Safe School - Safe Staff**

The school offers the following advice to staff and other responsible adults (including volunteers):

- Avoid physical contact with pupils where possible, in line with the policy on Handling Difficult behaviour.
- When working in a one to one situation with a pupil, be in view of another responsible adult or in a room with a door directly open to view.
- Only communicate with pupils via sanctioned means, and avoid all contact with pupils outside the school context (see the Staff Code of Conduct)
- Report to a senior member of staff if a pupil attempts to make personal contact outside of school sanctioned means
- Report to a senior member of staff if a pupil show any sign of becoming overly fixated with the responsible adult or another colleague
- Not to make gifts to pupils or their families, which could be interpreted as a gesture to bribe or groom.
- Exercise care when selecting pupils for or excluding pupils from activities, to avoid any perception of favouritism or injustice.
- Any discussions about sexual matters, whatever the nature, will only be discussed in a normal teaching situation and never on a one-to-one basis.

## **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 General Data Protection principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- processed for defined 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 must be stored securely.

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. All persons have the right to view information stored which pertains to them.

### **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) if:

- 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

### **Contacting social services (Jugendamt) or other outside agencies.**

Social services should be contacted in the following circumstances:

- If the efforts of the school to resolve an issue have not led to an improvement;
- If the parents refuse to cooperate with the school;
- If the school feels that it has reached the limits of its capacity to help;
- If the child is considered in immediate or acute danger (see below).

Within the school, only the Head in consultation with the nominated child protection governor is permitted to take a decision as to whether social services should be contacted. The Chair of the Board is to be informed if social services have been contacted.

If a member of staff requests that a case is referred to social services, but the Headteacher takes the decision that this is not the correct course of action, then the nominated child protection governor is to be informed by the Head without delay of the details of the case, and the justification for not referring. The nominated child protection governor, as the individual with ultimate legal responsibility for the school's actions, will then liaise with the Headteacher on the best way forward.

In either of these circumstances, any emails sent by the nominated child protection governor or the Headteacher to inform him of a decision to contact or not to contact social services should also be copied to the Chair of the Board.

The decision to inform social services should be made in agreement with the pupil's parents. Social services can, however, be contacted without the parents' agreement if the child is considered to be in immediate or acute danger.

It should be remembered that it is possible to consult social services (*Jugendamt*) and other agencies at any point for advice. This can be done anonymously. Social services can also give information about other authorities which are in a position to help. These include:

- Educational psychology services (Schulpsychologischer Dienst)
- Health services (*Gesundheitsamt*)
- Child protection centres
- Regional offices of the child protection agency (*Kinderschutzbund*)
- Information centres for child abuse
- Family counselling agencies

First contact with the social services will typically be by telephone, whether or not the school discloses the identity of the child concerned at this point. The social services will then advise on next steps, and whether a written disclosure is required.

### **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.

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.

### **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:

Email: p. [wharton@ibis-school.com](mailto:wharton@ibis-school.com)  
Telephone: 0221 259 161 56  
Philip Wharton, Headteacher / insoweit erfahrene Fachkraft

## Appendix I

### **Code of ethical practice for school staff- please sign and return to the Headteacher by the specified date.**

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 policy. All staff are responsible for researching their own training in this area. Training is funded by the school where budgeting allows.
- adhere to the principles and procedures contained in the Child Protection Policy 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 communication, electronic or otherwise, with pupils
- refrain from uploading to the internet any comments about the school as well as refrain from engaging in SMS/ Whatsapp chats about the school.
- inform the Headteacher when teaching on a one to one basis (sports, music)

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

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

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

## **Appendix II**

### **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 Headteacher by the specified date.

### **Appendix III**

#### **Record of concern:**

##### Child's details

Full name:

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?

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.

## Appendix IV

### How to deal with disclosure

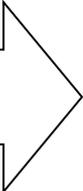
#### **Positive words**

It was probably very difficult for the child to disclose this matter. Thank him / her for trusting you. Please assure the child you will try your best to resolve the issue and that they have done the right thing talking to you.

#### **Data Protection**

Unless the child is in severe/ acute danger, by German law, you cannot pass on information to the Designated Senior Person. Try to get verbal consent from the pupil that enables you to talk to someone who can support you. You are entitled to an anonymous consultation from social services (Jugendamt)

No verbal consent



Is there **acute danger** to the child?

**Yes:** make a password protected log of all events. Inform the Headteacher immediately. You must take immediate action!

**Not sure:** anonymous consultation with the Headteacher (present the situation only without using any names)

**No:** you should deal with the issue yourself.

Document everything in as much detail as possible (concrete observations; interpretations, assessment and opinion of observer, planning and agreement of further steps) Share the password-protected document with the Headteacher.

Verbal consent given



#### **Consultation**

The Head will arrange a follow-up meeting and agree on further steps. You have now passed the issue on and will not have to take any further action unless agreed with the Headteacher.

#### **Next steps:**

The Headteacher will collate information and, if necessary, undertake one or more of the following:

- Meeting with the person raising the concern
- Meeting with the pupil
- Meeting with the parents.

If the help the school offers is not enough to ensure the child's welfare or if the parents or student do not accept the help or are not able to do so, IBIS can contact social services. The Headteacher will discuss this with the nominated Child Protection governor.

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