

February 2023

## PHILOSOPHICAL STATEMENT

We believe that students at ISB, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, grow in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding (*adapted from UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*). Whilst it is not possible to fully protect all students, ISB has policies and procedures in place to respond to concerns of 'physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s)' or any other person who comes into contact with the child. (*Article 19, UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*)

In line with the school's Mission and Philosophy, ISB is committed to ensuring that all children in our care are afforded a safe and secure environment that nurtures academic, social and emotional growth. To this end, ISB views this commitment as a 'partnership' (ISB Mission and Philosophy), involving all members of ISB community.

As a school located in Switzerland, we comply with Swiss Federal and Cantonal laws pertaining to child protection.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ISB is guided by a duty and responsibility to 'protect and safeguard the interests of all children. Any action around child protection is founded on agreed and documented procedures, collaboration with all relevant institutions/legal authorities and informed and confident staff, prepared to respond to child protection situations.

This policy document provides the foundation for all work associated with child protection at ISB. The Accompanying procedures documentation provides general guidelines for all members of ISB community to ensure our students' safety and wellbeing is a priority at all times.

ISB seeks to be a safe environment for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, ISB will:

- Ensure consistency and equal access to education for all students regardless of age, gender identity, ability, religion, nationality, etc. and compliance with national laws and statutory guidance related to child safety.
- Provide clear expectations about child safety and the school's response to concerns or allegations of harm, ensuring the policy is available to all students, parents and applicant families.
- Provide education for students about their rights, how to keep themselves safe, and what to do if they are in danger or feel that they may be in danger.
- Provide guidelines and/or training for all adult ISB community members in identifying and acting on child protection related issues.
- Protect ISB community including employees, students or other persons who come forward and report on any suspicious allegation.
- Establish clear recruitment and hiring expectations to enable diligent screening and selection of staff, faculty, volunteers, and other ISB identified trusted adults.
- Outline continued professional development for staff, student prevention education and parent/caregiver support around child protection prevention of harm and response to harm if it occurs.

<sup>1</sup> It is understood that practice will inform future developments and amendments of this policy document. Last reviewed: February 2023

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ISB is committed to ensuring that students at ISB will be able to talk freely to adult members of our community if they have concerns related to themselves or others. Everyone who comes into contact with students and their families has a role to play in protecting students.

Members of the ISB community, including students, employees and parents, can approach any school employee to discuss child safety concerns. All school employees are mandated reporters and will share child safety concerns reported to them per guidelines below. ISB has appointed Divisional Child Protection Officers (CCPOs) in each division (as listed on our documentation) who are trained to be the first point of contact and, alongside the wider pastoral care team, provide advice and support to students, parents, school employees regarding the safety and wellbeing of Students at the School.

Adults in the ISB community (includes ISB staff and families / volunteers / parent(s) / guardian(s)), having the opportunity to observe and interact with students, within or beyond the school grounds, have a professional and/or ethical obligation to:

- Respond to students who are in need of support and protection;
- Report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever there is reasonable cause to believe, even if certainty has not been established or proven, that a child has suffered, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect.

Any disclosure, including potential reports against a member of the ISB community, will be taken seriously and will follow clear internal procedures. At all times, the safety of the student will be kept at the highest priority whilst maintaining the reputation and integrity of the individual concerned.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

At all stages in the process, all parties will treat all information confidentially.

## DOCUMENTATION

It is the duty and responsibility of all staff to document any incidents related to Child Protection on the CPOMS portal. CCPOs and divisional Principals are alerted when a new entry is made. All incidents must be documented. The Principal and CCPOs must ensure the information is accessible when required and protected from unauthorised access.

## APPLICABLE LAW

For any disputes arising from the application of this policy, ISB will be governed by Swiss law.

## REVIEW

ISB Child Protection Policy and Procedures will be reviewed and/or amended according to the policy review process ensuring this occurs and is documented at a minimum and every three years or when necessary if prior to that.

## CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

This policy is supported by the Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines document available on the portal.

### **Stage 1:** Obligation to disclose

If a staff member suspects or receives information pertaining to an incident of child abuse or neglect, or a pattern of behaviour that indicates that a child may be subject to abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report the incident, via CPOMS, inform the CCPO and to the division Principal.

Based on the merits of the individual case, parent(s) and/or legal guardian involvement will be considered in the next stage. The individual who initially disclosed the case will be informed that the case has been followed up.

## Stage 2:

Assessment: The ISB team involved in the further evaluation of the case will include: Divisional Campus Child Safety Officer and Divisional Principal and may include one or more of the following ISB staff members: Counsellor; ISB Legal Officer; Teachers; or Nurses. The Director will be informed of any child protection concerns being investigated.

The outcome of this stage is:

- No further action required - Review identifies no ongoing issues and considers the incident/issue to be dealt with;
- Follow up with family, parent(s) and/or relevant school support services - when issue can be resolved “internally”. This may include family commitment to external services and the schools responsibility is then to follow up that agreements are followed. This will result in either no further action being needed, or the next step;
- Follow-up with parents - and requirement for parents to connect with Support Services - The first and preferred action is always to ask parents to self report first. It is important that the follow up is done and that the school has confirmation that the self report has been made;
- Should the incident or issue warrant direct reporting or the parent(s)/guardian(s) not follow up on agreed steps or refuse(s) to cooperate, an official report will be submitted to local authorities. If a decision to report to local authorities (e.g. Kindes- und Erwachsenenschutzbehörden, KESB) is reached, ISB follows the KESB guidelines or any other child endangerment authority, according to the student’s place of residency.

All incidents and stages are documented via CPOMS, including follow up conversations and actions.