

TIS Community Handbook

TIS Policies on Child Protection

TIS Position Statement on Child Protection

All students at Tsukuba International School have the right to be safe from abuse and neglect. This right exists in the home, in their daily lives, while at school and while on any school-related activity. All school staff have a contractual obligation and duty to defend and uphold this right.

The purpose of this policy is to outline a safeguarding framework to protect students from all forms of abuse and neglect, both in and outside of school. This policy endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Japan is a signatory, and is in accordance with Japanese Law.

Rationale of Child Protection

Child abuse and neglect are a worldwide concern. Abuse and neglect are a violation of a child's rights and are obstacles to healthy physical and mental development. Schools play an important institutional role in society as protectors of children. The characteristics of international schools, in particular, mean that students may be at greater risk and school staff must be extra vigilant for signs of abuse and neglect. These characteristics include language difficulties, lack of local knowledge, differences in parenting and attitudes to gender and sexuality, the small size of international school communities, transient students and staff and lack of extended family support.

Definitions Related to Child Protection

Abuse is defined as a stronger/more powerful individual engaging in a pattern of behaviour in order to make personal gain at the expense of a weaker/less powerful person. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual or a combination of these. Neglect is also a specific type of abuse.

- Physical abuse involves causing intentional physical harm to a child. (This could also indicate harm to self).
- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.
- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
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Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Child is used in this document to refer to anyone who is under the care of the school, or who used to be under the care of the school, until two years after that student's cohort has graduated. Synonyms of child, such as student, youth, or young people are deemed to have the same definition as child.

School-based Child Protection Team

The school maintains a school-based child protection team for issues relating to child protection.

- Shaney Crawford (Child Protection Officer)
- Akane Kono (Child Protection Team Member)
- Ian Woollard (Child Protection Support Officer)

Responsibilities Related to Child Protection

Child Protection Officer

Managing school systems

- Oversee the implementation of schoolwide safeguarding policies and procedures, including annual review of the Child Protection policy

Reporting

- Confidentially document suspicion and disclosures and retain records
- Report all cases of suspected abuse to the city child guidance center
- Support staff to whom a disclosure has been made

Support

- Support victims of child abuse and neglect, affected members of the victim's family and other members of the school community, which may include non-victimized students, parents, and staff
- Create an environment where students and staff can share concerns and young people are reassured of school's support

Networks

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Create and manage a local support network, including connections with local authorities, the local child guidance center, law enforcement, social workers, trauma trained psychologists or counselors, and healthcare providers

Professional development

- Keep up-to-date with developments in Child Protection through involvement in ongoing professional development and reading
- Create and/or actively participate in a local or regional child protection network for professional support and sharing of resources

Child Protection Support Officer

Managing school systems

- Lead the implementation of school-wide safeguarding policies and procedures, including annual review of the Child Protection policy

Reporting

- Support the CPO in documenting suspicion and disclosures and retaining records
- Support the CPO in reporting all cases of suspected abuse to the city child guidance center
- Support staff to whom a disclosure has been made

Staff training and awareness

- Raise awareness of child protection and inappropriate behaviors by training teaching and non-teaching staff and the wider community of parents and students
- Provide regular whole staff training in recognizing symptoms of abuse and how to handle a disclosure

Support

- Support victims of child abuse and neglect, affected members of the victim's family and other members of the school community, which may include non-victimized students, parents, and staff
- Create an environment where students and staff can share concerns and young people are reassured of school's support

Curriculum

- Lead the implementation of a schoolwide child protection curriculum

Networks

- Support the CPO in creating and managing a local support network, including connections with local authorities, the local child guidance center, law enforcement, social workers, trauma trained psychologists or counselors, and healthcare providers

Professional development

- Keep up-to-date with developments in Child Protection through involvement in ongoing professional development and reading
- Create and/or actively participate in a local or regional child protection network for professional support and sharing of resources

Child Protection and Professional Development

The school supports the professional development of all staff members regarding child protection in the following ways:

- An annual child protection briefing is attended by all staff at the beginning of the school year to review the child protection policy and revisit key skills including how to receive a disclosure, how to report, and how to identify warning signs
- Posters in both staff rooms provide guidance on identifying signs of abuse and neglect, handling a disclosure and the reporting protocol
- All new staff complete child protection training provided by Darkness to Light which includes a 2 hour online course “Stewards of Children” (completed in their first year at the school) and a number of additional modules (completed over their first three years at school) (available in English only)
- All auxiliary and non-English speaking staff complete a shorter course provided by ChildSafeguarding.com (available in a number of languages, including Japanese). This is valid for 2 years.
- Staff who have previously completed all the Darkness to Light modules complete the ChildSafeguarding.com course as a regular refresher every 2 years.

Resource Implications of Child Protection Policy

The school shall ensure that enough resources are allocated to ensure the successful implementation of this policy. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Staff training and professional development resources
- Materials for parent education
- Curriculum materials for students
- Release time and teaching cover for faculty and staff related to their role as part of the SBCPT or CMT

Framework of Child Protection

TIS shall implement the following steps to support the objectives of this policy.

- The school shall implement safe recruitment and screening practices as the first and most effective means of preventing child abuse on campus. Where an employee or volunteer at the school is employed in a role which may involve direct contact with, and/or the potential for unmonitored access to children, thorough reference and background checks will be required as outlined in the school Hiring Policy.
- All staff and volunteers who represent the school and employees who are contracted by external service providers (e.g. bus company employees) must adhere to a code of conduct.
- Student education: the curriculum and pastoral programme shall support students in developing healthy independence and teach them how to respond when facing behaviours which are (or which may potentially lead to) unhealthy relationships. The school shall create a culture in which students are encouraged to report suspected abuse and feel safe to do so.
- Staff training: The school is committed to ensuring that all faculty and staff receive on-going child protection training in order to better meet their obligation to protect students from abuse. Training opportunities may include in-house training, consultants on-site, workshops and professional development opportunities at other international schools in Japan, individuals sent abroad or internet based training modules.
- Mandated reporting: All members of the school community are required to report concerns regarding child protection. All staff at TIS are mandated to report signs of abuse as a contractual obligation.

Disclosures from Students Regarding Child Protection

In many cases, abuse or neglect is discovered via child self-reporting. Adults working with children must understand how to respond appropriately to disclosures from students.

When listening to a disclosure, adults should:

- Make sure the student is aware that you will need to tell someone else to get help
- Remain calm
- Reassure the student that you believe what they are saying
- Try not to register strong emotions such as disgust or alarm
- Make a record of what was said as soon as possible using simple objective language and including:
 - time, day of the week, date, and location of the disclosure/discovery;
 - identity of child and alleged perpetrator;
 - details of the demeanour and behaviour;
 - who it was reported to;

- the name of the person making the report.
- Contact the Child Protection Officer or another member of the SBCPT immediately

In addition, do not:

- Let a student swear you to secrecy before telling you something you may need to report (which the student will view as breaking trust).
- Lead the student in telling. Just listen, letting him/her explain in his/her own words.
- Pressure for a great amount of detail.
- Make judgmental or disparaging comments about the abuser. It is often someone the student loves or with whom he/she is close.
- Make promises to the student that things will get better.
- Confront the abuser directly yourself.

Disclosures Regarding Use of Physical Discipline

The school has a policy of resolutely not supporting or condoning the use of physical discipline, either at home or at school.

Reports of the use of physical discipline at home are often made directly to teachers by students, either in general conversation or in reference to specific incidents. Alternatively a report may come from another student or a concerned adult. In such cases, parents will be asked to attend a meeting at school to discuss the report and, if necessary, to consider alternative ways of responding to their child's behaviour. In the case where reports of the use of physical discipline at home continue with no change, parents may be asked to attend a parenting course (where available).

Physical discipline which results in visible marks and/or bruises is considered child abuse under Japanese law, and as such, all cases will be reported to Child Protection Services immediately by the Child Protection Officer.

All reports regarding use of physical discipline by a member of staff will be investigated by the Principal with support from the Senior Leadership Team. Where a staff member is found to have used physical discipline against a student this will be considered a breach of the staff code of conduct and appropriate action will be taken including suspension and possible termination of employment.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Abuse

All members of the TIS community must remain alert for the signs of abuse and neglect. All students, parents, teachers, and staff and alumni are required to report concerns, disclosures, incidents of abuse and suspected abuse without delay to the Child Protection Officer, or, where the Child Protection Officer is not available, to another member of the School-Based Child Protection Team (SBCPT).

Where an employee is implicated, the report should be made directly to the Principal.

A report does not assume 'guilt', rather the report should be made in good faith where there are reasonable grounds for concern such to the extent that the situation is worthy of further investigation.

The term reasonable grounds for concern includes, but is not limited to, evidence such as:

- Explicit reference to abuse verbally or in writing (e.g. the student reports that they or their friend is a victim of abuse)
- Implicit reference to abuse verbally or in writing (e.g. artwork, poetry)
- Signs of physical abuse (frequent/repeated unexplained marks, bruises, etc.)
- Erratic and/or unhealthy behavioural patterns (overly familiar or excessively nervous around adults, excessive risk taking, excessively introverted, tardy/attendance problems, excessive tiredness, self-harming, etc.)
- Age-inappropriate behaviours (e.g. sexually explicit behaviours)
- Concerning behaviour by adults including:
 - Ignoring, disregarding or exercising poor judgement with regards to policies and guidance on safe practices (Code of Conduct, Touch policy, Intimate Care policy)
 - Actions which may be seen as 'grooming' behaviour
 - Lack of understanding or poor judgement about personal and professional boundaries
 - Acting irresponsibly or questionably in a way which any reasonable person would find alarming given the nature of the work
 - Exploiting or abusing a position of power (e.g. in order to spend time with children alone)

(A more comprehensive list of signs of abuse is given in the appendix to this policy)

In consultation with the SBCPT and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the Child Protection Officer may choose to convene an ad-hoc Case Management Team (CMT) to carry out further investigation. The purpose of this investigation is to determine what next steps are required.

Concerns requiring immediate contact with Child Protection Services

In the following cases the Child Protection Officer will make an immediate report to Child Protection Services at the local city office where the student is resident, at Tsukuba City Hall, and/or at the main Tsuchiura child services office:

- Where abuse has been directly witnessed and reported by another adult or child
- Explicit reference to abuse by the student or another student, verbally or in writing (e.g. the student reports that they or their friend is a victim of abuse)
- Signs of physical or sexual abuse (frequent/repeated unexplained marks, bruises, soreness around genitals, etc.)

Staff Code of Conduct Related to Child Protection

No employee of Tsukuba International School may engage in any activity constituting abuse. All faculty, staff, employees and volunteers who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity are required to adhere to this code of conduct.

This Code of Conduct applies to all past schools, workplaces and settings. Any individual who has contravened this Code of Conduct whilst working in a previous setting will not be eligible to work at Tsukuba International School. If past transgressions come to light during the course of an individual's employment at Tsukuba International School, these will become the subject of investigation by the school and may result in dismissal.

Teaching faculty and staff should consider this code of conduct as an extension of the duties and obligations outlined in the Staff Handbook.

Child is used in this Code of Conduct to refer to anyone who is under the care of the school, or who used to be under the care of the school, until two years after that student's cohort has graduated. Synonyms of child, such as **student, youth, or young people** are deemed to have the same definition as child.

Faculty, staff, employees and volunteers must:

- At all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.
- Provide a safe environment for children and youth whilst at school.
- Be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth.
- Be responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions.
- Avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses.
- Report any behaviour by a student that could indicate infatuation toward a teacher or other member of staff
- Show prudent discretion before touching or making physical contact with another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received.
- Avoid any communication, conduct or physical contact with another person, especially children and youth, which could lead any reasonable person to question the motivation or intention of the act.
- Ensure that one-to-one meetings with students are held in a public area; where another staff member is present; or in a room where the interaction can be observed. Where this is not possible another staff member or supervisor should be notified about the meeting. Adults and students should be positioned in such a way that the adult does not block the exit to the room.
- Ensure that doors and windows are kept free of obstructions or coverings that would obscure the view into the room.
- Intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that children are being abused in any way.
- Report suspected abuse or neglect as described in the Child Protection Policy of the school.

- Refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs at all times, and from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with students.
- Never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people.
- Not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, students that might lead any reasonable person to question the relationship between the giver and receiver, or the intent behind the gift. Ensure that parents are notified when a gift is given or received (e.g. by writing a thank you note) and that all gift giving and receiving occurs in a transparent and open manner.
- Not loan or give money to students.
- Not store any photographs of children on private devices, such as on a private/non-school computer or personal cell phone, which could lead any reasonable person to question the use of such photos. If photographs are taken on a private device (e.g. a teacher's phone) for school use, in principle, they should be uploaded as soon as possible and then deleted from the device.
- Not share photographs of individual children or groups of children on any personal social media accounts or internet forum without first obtaining permission from both the school and the child's parents.
- Ensure that communication with students is governed by the key safety concept of transparency, that is to say that the content of the communication is not secret, with the assumption that it could be read by a parent or supervisor without raising a cause for concern.
- Ensure that any email exchanges with students and parents are made using a school email address.
- Ensure that the relevant IB coordinator is cc'd on any email exchanges with students. In the case of a coordinator emailing a student, the coordinator will cc the homeroom teacher, or the principal.
- Not add students or parents as a 'friend' or contact on Facebook or other social media accounts, unless:
 - The student sending such a request is over 20 years of age and no longer enrolled as a student at the school.
 - The parent sending such a request no longer has a child currently enrolled at the school.
 - The Principal, as the public head of the school, is considered as having a partial exception to this rule. In the role of promoting and supporting the school and the school community, the Principal may accept 'friend' or contact requests from parents of currently enrolled students.
- Ensure that any form of online communication including email, social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with students relates only to activities involving school business.
- Understand that the computer and email accounts that are issued to members of the school community are the property of the school, and can therefore be seized and searched at any time.

I, _____ (PRINT NAME), agree to conduct myself according to the above code of conduct at all times while I am under the employment of, or have any other contract or agreement with, Tsukuba International School.

I understand that should I contravene any part of this code of conduct, or should it come to light that I have contravened this code of conduct at a previous school, workplace or setting, I may be dismissed immediately from my position, and further action may be taken, as necessary.

Furthermore, I understand that Tsukuba International School is committed to the protection of all students, children and youth, whether at Tsukuba International School or elsewhere, and that any behaviour by myself in either my personal or professional life, past or present, which suggests I am not of suitable character to work with children and youth, may result in dismissal.

Staff Code of Conduct Related to Child Protection (in Japanese)

つくばインターナショナルスクールの教職員は、虐待をはじめ児童生徒の権利を侵害し得るいかなる行為にも関与してはならない。本誓約書における「教職員」とは、常勤、準常勤、非常勤、ボランティア、専門会社を通して業務を委託された者、当校から直接業務を委託された者を指す。

当校の児童生徒や教育活動に関わる教員、職員、ボランティア、全ての成人は、職務に直接的に関係する場面でも、職務上の指示や監督を受けない場面でも、当校の教職員の一人として本行動規範を遵守することが求められる。

教職員は、本行動規範が「教員ハンドブック」に規定された義務および責任を反映した規範であると理解しなければならない。

本行動規範において「児童生徒」とは、当校に在籍している者、またはかつて当校に在籍していた者で、その児童生徒の該当学年の卒業から2年後までを指す場合に用いられる。子ども、青少年、若者などの同義語は、児童生徒と同じ定義を持つものとみなす。

教員、職員およびボランティアは、以下の事項を遵守しなければならない。

- 我々の職務に伴う責任を常に意識しなければならない。
- 学校内外において児童および生徒に安全な環境を提供しなければならない。
- 特に、他に人がいない場所で、自分一人が児童生徒と接する際には、我々自身および他の人々の肉体面および精神面の弱さやもろさを意識しなければならない。
- そのような場面では、肉体面、感情面および性的側面における境界線を越えてはならないということに責任を持たなければならない。
- 我々が責任を負っている児童生徒との間では公然非公然に関わらずいかなる性的行為も避けなければならない。これには相手を自己のために利用したり、虐待したり、または困惑させたりするような肉体的接触はもちろん、性的に誘惑する言葉やしぐさなども含む。
- 他の人、特に児童生徒に触れたり、肉体的に接触する際には、行動する前に慎重に分別をわきまえ、肉体的接触が相手にどのように受け取られ感じられ、また理解されるかということ意識しなければならない。
- 理性ある第三者から見て、その行為の動機または意図に疑問を持たれかねないような、他の人、特に児童生徒とのコミュニケーション、行為または肉体的接触は全て避けなければならない。
- 児童生徒との一対一の面談は開かれた場所で行うことを保証すること。開かれた場所とは、他の教職員が立ち会ったりその場にいたりするか、またはその場のやり取りが見える場所のことである。この条件が満たせない場合には、他の教職員または監督者に当該の面談について事前に通知しなければならない。また、面談時の教職員と生徒の位置関係は、教職員がその部屋の出口をふさぐことのないように配置されなければならない。
- ドアや窓に覆いをしたり、付近に障害物となるような物を設置したりして、その部屋の中の見通しを妨げることが無いようにしなければならない。
- 児童生徒が虐待されているという証拠または疑うべき正当な根拠がある場合には、いかなる方法であ

- 当校の「児童生徒保護方針」に規定された虐待または育児放棄の疑いがある場合には、報告しなければならない。
- 薬物の違法な所持および使用を常に避けなければならない。また児童生徒と接している際には、タバコ製品、アルコール飲料または薬物の使用を控えなければならない。
- アルコール飲料、薬物、タバコ製品、不適切なビデオまたは読物を購入して児童生徒に与えてはならない。
- 贈り手と受け手の関係やその贈り物に隠された意図について、他者に疑問を生じさせ得るような贈り物を児童生徒から受け取ったり、また児童生徒に与えたりしてはならない。贈り物を与える場合、または受け取る場合には、それを保護者に通知（例えば礼状を書くなど）しなければならない。また、あらゆる贈り物は、透明性や公然性のある方法で授受されなければならない。
- 児童生徒に金銭を貸したり与えたりしてはならない。
- 児童生徒とのコミュニケーションには、透明性が安全を守る何より重要な概念であること、言い換えれば、児童生徒とのやり取りの内容が秘密ではなく、保護者または監督者が心配したり不安になったりしないことを保障しなければならない。
- 分別のある人が不審に思う可能性があるため、児童や生徒の写真を学校以外の私的なコンピュータや携帯電話などの個人の機器に保存してはならない。もし学校で使用するための写真が個人の機器で撮影された場合は(例えば教員の携帯電話など)、原則として早急に学校が規定する媒体にアップロードした上で、個人の機器から消去しなければならない。
- 学校および児童生徒の保護者からの許可を得ずに、個人のソーシャルメディアアカウントまたはインターネット上において、児童生徒の個人およびグループの写真を共有してはならない。
- 児童生徒および保護者とのEメールのやり取りは全て、学校用Eメールアドレスを使用してやり取りされなければならない。
- 児童生徒とのEメールのやり取りは、全て、カーボンコピー(cc)を用いて、関連するIBコーディネーターにも同時に送信しなければならない。IBコーディネーターが児童生徒とEメールのやり取りをする場合には、カーボンコピー(cc)を用いて、学校長にも同時に送信しなければならない。
- フェイスブックや他のソーシャルメディアにおいて、以下の場合を除き、児童生徒や保護者を「友人」または連絡先として追加してはならない。
 - リクエストしてきた生徒が20歳以上であり、もはや当校には在籍していない
 - リクエストしてきた保護者には、現在当校に在籍している子どもが一人もいない
 - 学校の公的な立場にある校長は、本規則には例外的であるとみなす。すなわち、学校および学校団体の促進や支援の役割において、校長は現在学校に在籍している児童生徒の保護者からの「友人」や連絡先のリクエストを容認することができる。
- Eメール、ソーシャルメディア(フェイスブック、ツイッターなど)、文字メッセージを含む全ての形式のオンラインによる児童生徒とのコミュニケーションは、学校業務に関連する活動に限定されなければならない。
- 当校の教職員に配布されたコンピューターやEメールのアカウントは学校に所有権があり、いつでも押収および検索が可能であることを理解しなければならない。

私、_____は、つくばインターナショナルスクールに雇用されている間、もしくはつくばインターナショナルスクールと契約および合意がある間、常に上記行動規範に従って

自らを律することに同意する。私は、本行動規範のいずれかの箇所に抵触した場合には、自らの職を直ちに解雇され得る、または必要に応じてそれ以上の処置が取られることを理解している。Where there is a discrepancy between the English and Japanese versions of this pledge, the English version is deemed to take precedence.

Allegations Against Faculty and Staff Regarding Child Protection

Allegations against current or former faculty and staff should be made directly to the Principal.

In the case that, following an external investigation or school-based inquiry as described below, a current employee of the school is found to have engaged in any behaviour which breaks the staff code of conduct outlined in this policy and/or is deemed to be unsuitable to work with children, he/she shall have his/her contract terminated immediately.

In the case that volunteers, service providers or other non-contracted parties are found to have engaged in any form of abuse against children, they shall no longer be permitted to provide services to the school or be permitted on school property.

Responding to Allegations Against Faculty and Staff Regarding Child Protection

An allegation against a current or former member of staff may come to light in a number of ways:

- a written statement from the victim or another member of the school community (including students, alumni, current and former staff, or parents), that describes or implies inappropriate behaviour by an adult – these can come to light in a number of ways, including in correspondence with the school or others, in responses to alumni questionnaires, and in general statements posted on social media;
- a verbal or non-verbal (such as through play) disclosure or partial disclosure from the victim or another member of the school community (including students, alumni, current and former staff, or parents);
- the monitoring of staff and student information services or social media use;
- from a member of the public, police, health, or another external agency informing the school; or
- a legal claim.

Summary of the School Response

The following steps outline the school response to an allegation of abuse against a member of staff:

1. SBCPT receives the allegation
2. Immediate actions are considered including:
 1. Contacting legal advisers and external agencies for advice and support

2. Further evaluation of the allegation (if necessary)
3. A report to Child Protection Services and/or police
4. Steps required to ensure that evidence is secured (e.g. securing digital evidence)
5. Immediate support needs for the victim and the victim's family
6. Assessing and managing continued risk to children (other students, siblings, etc.) and the potential that there will be other victims
7. Organization of a Case Management Team (CMT)
3. An incident file is created to record all information regarding the case including the initial report, conversations with external agencies and advisers, and the decision making process
4. The alleged perpetrator is notified and put on paid suspension whilst all investigations and inquiries are completed
 1. In the event that the alleged perpetrator attempts to resign he/she will not be permitted to do so
 2. In the event that the alleged perpetrator leaves the school, the school will continue to carry out a school-based inquiry and to work closely with external agencies
5. An interview with the alleged perpetrator may be carried out at this stage, following advice from external agencies and experts (It may not be possible to interview the alleged perpetrator if an external investigation is in process)
6. A Safety Plan is developed to identify and plan for the short-, medium- and long-term support needs of the victim and the victim's family
7. In the case that an external agency (e.g. Police, Child Protection Services) carries out an official investigation:
 1. Cooperate with the investigation by the external agency
 2. Continue to support the victim and the victim's family
8. In the case that the school refers to an external agency but that the agency does not investigate further:
 1. Follow advice from the agency
 2. Consider whether to carry out a school-based inquiry to evaluate the suitability of the member of staff to work with children
9. In the case that an external agency (e.g. Police, Child Protection Services) carries out an official investigation which results in no prosecution (where the case is not taken to court) or no conviction (where the case is taken to court and lost):
 1. Carry out a school-based inquiry to evaluate the suitability of the member of staff to work with children
10. Following the results of investigation by external agencies and/or evaluation by school-based inquiry, the employee to be reinstated and reintegrated, or to be permanently removed from work
11. Child protection systems review and debriefing

School-Based Inquiry In the following cases the school shall carry out a school-based inquiry to determine if a member of staff is suitable to work with children.

- External agencies do not choose to carry out an official investigation, but the school still has reasonable grounds for concern

- External agencies carry out an investigation which does not lead to a prosecution
- External agencies carry out an investigation which leads to prosecution which results in a verdict of not-guilty

The goal of the school-based inquiry is to consider a wide-range of factors and evidence to determine if a member of staff is suitable to work with children. It is not a criminal investigation and it is not the aim of the inquiry to find the member of staff guilty or not-guilty for a particular crime.

Specific expertise is needed to carry out an inquiry into child abuse and as such the school will appoint a qualified external expert to advise on and/or carry out the inquiry.

As part of the school-based inquiry the alleged perpetrator may be asked to complete a psychological examination or interview. The questions for the interview will be set by a qualified forensic psychologist to ensure the validity of the process. All interviews as part of the school-based inquiry will be recorded and the sole copy of the video/audio recording shall be kept by the school. A written copy of the interview will also be kept.

Privacy and Data Protection in Child Protection

In responding to child protection cases the school holds responsibility for protecting the privacy of:

- The victim of abuse and the victim's family members
- Anyone who has made a report
- The alleged perpetrator

In order to provide adequate support for individuals and families, information regarding individual cases may be shared with other school staff internally, as needed.

In addition, individual case information may be shared with the following external individuals or agencies:

- Child Services (Tsukuba City Hall, Tsuchiura Child Services Division)
- Law enforcement (Police)
- Medical professionals
- Legal professionals
- External consultants

Information will only be shared where absolutely necessary and anonymity will be protected to the extent possible.

Detailed information about individual cases will not be shared with the general school community.

Records of individual cases shall be kept until 3 years following graduation (where the victim is a current or previous student), or 7 years following the most recent case report, whichever is the longest period.

All records are kept in the student file, staff file, or online in a dedicated limited-access Drive.

Sources Consulted for the Child Protection Policy

- Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) Child Protection Handbook, 2014
- Nagoya International School (NIS) Child Safety Policy (Draft), 2015
- The American School in Japan (ASIJ) Student Protection Handbook, 2015

Additional Policies on Touch and Physical Contact

TIS Position Statement Touch and Physical Contact

Some use of touch and physical contact is a necessary part of working with children and young people. Touch and physical contact may be needed for a variety of reasons including caring for students, giving comfort, reassurance or encouragement, and protecting students who may be in danger.

School staff must be sensitive to how touch can be interpreted and maintain professional boundaries when it comes to touch or physical contact with students. Staff should never use touch or physical contact with students to meet their own emotional needs.

Touch or physical contact between individuals must be discretionary, careful, consensual, respectful, age appropriate, gender appropriate and considerate of others who may be in the area.

Aims and Rationale for Touch and Physical Contact

Aims

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children.
- To ensure all members of the school community have a common understanding of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate touch in the school setting
- To ensure all members of the school community understand when and how physical restraint may be used

Rationale

Whilst some touch and physical contact is necessary as part of working with children and young people, teachers and other school staff must be clear about what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate touch in the school setting. As such the following policy supports teachers in safe use of touch and physical contact.

Definition of Touch and Physical Contact

Personal touch: Touch or physical contact used by an individual which meets a personal need, such as a need for emotional comfort or connection. Members of school staff should never use touch or physical contact to meet their own personal needs.

Professional touch: Touch or physical contact used by a person in a professional role (such as a teacher or other member of school staff) in order to fulfil the needs of their role and meet their duty of care.

Intrusive touch: Touch or physical contact which enters a child or young person's physical space without their permission, constricts, smothers or dominates the child in some way, is against the child or young person's wishes, makes the child or young person feel uncomfortable or distressed, and/or touch and physical contact with the child or young person's private parts.

Non-intrusive touch: Touch or physical contact which minimizes intrusion into a child or young person's personal space (such as a 'high-five' or hand over the upper back) and which is given with the child or young person's permission.

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Touch and physical contact in the school setting

Types of appropriate touch and physical contact in the school setting

At times, staff will be required to give practical assistance to a child or young person who is hurt or needs particular assistance or encouragement.

Examples of **appropriate** physical contact are:

- administration of first aid
- supporting children and young people who have hurt themselves
- assisting with the toileting and personal care needs of a young child
- non-intrusive gestures to comfort a child or young person who is experiencing grief, loss or distress, such as a hand on the upper arm or upper back
- non-intrusive touch (eg congratulating a child or young person by shaking hands or a pat on the upper arm or back). Staff should remember the importance of accompanying such touch with positive and encouraging words.

Examples of **inappropriate** physical contact:

- Making physical contact with a child or young person (eg pushing, grabbing, poking, pulling, blocking) in order to ensure they comply with directions.
- Holding a preschool-age child against their will (eg on their laps, between their legs or on the floor) to ensure attention at group time.
- Use of any type of touch or physical contact with a child or young person to meet an adult's personal need for comfort or connection
- Use of intrusive touch or physical contact with a child or young person to show affection (eg picking a small child up, kissing a child on the cheek, hugging a student around the waist or from the front)
- Use of any kind of touch or physical contact to show favouritism for a particular student
- Arm wrestling and other physical contact sports between a student and a member of staff

Best practice for touch and physical contact

- Seek permission from the student to make physical contact, eg first aid, a minimal gesture of comfort, etc.
- In accordance with the Child Protection Policy, avoid being with a child or young person in a one-to-one, out of sight situation, and never touch a child or young person in such a situation.
- Do not presume that physical contact is acceptable to a particular child or young person. Even non-intrusive touch may be inappropriate if a child or young person indicates he/she does not wish to be touched.
- Be aware of the student's cultural and religious background and how this may affect their understanding and interpretation of touch and physical contact
- Respect and respond to signs that a child or young person is uncomfortable with touch.
- Use verbal and/or visual directions rather than touch (eg ask a child or young person to move in a particular way, rather than physically place the child or young person in the required position).
- Use the above approach for demonstrations in dance, sport, music and drama. Where touch is essential for safety reasons (eg with aquatic or gymnastic instruction), always tell the child or young person that you need to hold him/her in a particular way and seek his/her permission to do so.
- In some circumstances, staff may need to discourage younger children from inappropriate expectations of hugs or cuddles. This should be done gently and without embarrassment or offence to the child (e.g. Accept a hug briefly then pull gently away and offer a replacement gesture such as a 'high five').

Additional best practice with Preschool students

Staff working with preschool children are often involved in responding to toilet accidents, changing clothes and comforting children for a range of distresses which are normal in the preschool age group.

In providing such care, staff should be aware of the following good practice:

-

When children indicate they want comfort, ensure that it is provided in a public setting and that it is in keeping with the guidelines outlined here and in the Child Protection Policy

- Signs of discomfort in children such as stiffening, pulling away or walking away must be respected. In these situations the child must continue to be observed/ monitored until his/her distress is managed.
- Be aware that a young child may not be able to communicate verbally that they are uncomfortable with touch
- Children must not be left in states of high distress for long periods. In the situation where school staff are unable to settle the child, the child's parents should be contacted
- Staff should follow the guidelines outlined in the school Intimate Care Policy for responding to toilet accidents and other personal care needs

Managing Extreme Behaviour

Non-physical intervention

Non-physical intervention is the recognised means of managing extreme behaviour of children and young people at Tsukuba International School. Where a problem with a child or young person's behaviour becomes apparent, non-physical interventions include:

- directing other children and young people to move away from the situation (for example, leaving a child who may be a danger to other children in the classroom and asking the other children in the class to leave)
- talking with the individual child or young person (asking the child or young person to stop the behaviour, and telling the child or young person what will happen if he/she does not stop)
- directing the child or young person to a safe place
- directing other children and young people to a safe place
- sending for assistance from other staff, parents or in extreme cases, the police.

Physical restraint where student or adult safety is threatened

Use of verbal directions is always preferred to physical intervention.

In some extreme situations a teacher or other member of staff may be required to physically restrain a student in order to ensure the safety of the student concerned, other students and adults.

Physical restraint should be used only as a last resort when the following criteria have all been met:

- A student or adult's safety is clearly threatened
- All non-physical interventions have been tried or are not possible in the situation

- The student is attacking another student or adult
- The student is posing an immediate danger to themselves or others

Physical restraint should never be used as a response to:

- property destruction
- disruption to the education or care activity
- refusal to comply
- verbal threats
- leaving a classroom
- a need by the adult to maintain good order

Where physical restraint is required the restraint must be:

- reasonable in the particular circumstances and in proportion to the circumstances of the incident
- use the minimum force needed to achieve the desired result
- take into account the age, stature, disability, understanding and gender of the student

Advice for teachers/members of staff responding to extreme behaviour with physical restraint

- Use conversation/negotiation to minimise or de-escalate aggression (eg take-up time, provision of a calm spot).
- Continue talking with the child or young person throughout the incident. Make clear that physical restraint will stop when it ceases to be necessary to protect the child or young person or others.
- Grip clothing rather than the body, whenever possible.
- Document incidents promptly using the incident reporting form on the School Portal and notify a member of the senior leadership team immediately describing the situation
- Inform parents promptly (within 24 hours) and fully of any incident involving the physical restraint of their child and provide them with the opportunity to discuss the matter at the time they are informed.

Never use physical restraint that involves:

- force applied to the head, neck, chest or genital area
- restrictions to breathing
- punching
- kicking
- holding by the hair or ear
- confining a child or young person in a locked room or limited space
- placing Preschool students in 'time out' or 'time away'.

Support for Staff

All staff who are involved in incidents which required the use of physical restraint will be provided/offered confidential counselling support.

Child Protection, Touch and Physical Contact

Some use of touch and physical contact is a necessary part of working with children and young people.

However, in accordance with this policy, all staff should be vigilant for where touch/physical contact or physical restraint has been used inappropriately by a teacher or other member of staff. In accordance with the school Child Protection policy and Code of Conduct, all such concerns should be reported to the school Child Protection Officer.

In the following cases, the Child Protection Officer should be told immediately:

- A member of staff intentionally or accidentally hurts a student as a result of inappropriate physical contact or use of physical restraint
- A pattern appears in which a member of staff is routinely using physical restraint as part of his/her classroom management strategies
- A pattern appears in which a member of staff's use of touch/physical contact continues to be inappropriate, despite reminders

Touch and Physical Contact and the Curriculum

All staff must be role models for the children and young people in our community. This means acting in such a way that reinforces the key messages:

- All children and young people have rights, this includes the right to say who is allowed to touch his/her body and to say when a touch is unwanted.
- Any use of touch or physical contact with another person must be consensual.
- Touch and physical contact should be sensitive to the age, gender, cultural and religious background of the people involved.

The school programmes support this message through:

- PYP Personal Safety Curriculum
- MYP Health Curriculum

Sources Consulted for Touch And Physical Contact

The following sources were consulted for this policy.

Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people : guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings / Department for Education and Child Development, Catholic Education South Australia, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, (2017) Government of South Australia, Department for Education and Child Development (Creative Commons)

Additional Policies on Intimate Care

TIS Position Statement on Intimate Care

All students have the right to be safe, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to have their personal privacy respected. The student's welfare is of paramount importance, and his/her experience of intimate care should be a positive one. It is essential that every student is treated as an individual and empowered to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account. Where intimate care or support with toileting is given, it must always be given gently and sensitively, with utmost care: no student should be attended to in a way that causes emotional or physical distress or pain.

Aims and Rationale for Intimate Care

Rationale

At times, some students, especially those in the younger grades, may need to be given intimate care or support with toileting. This is a normal part of growing up for most children.

This policy is designed to promote good practice and identify key protocols related to intimate care and toileting in order to safeguard children and practitioners; they apply to everyone involved with the intimate care of children.

Staff should be aware that some adults may use intimate care as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some care tasks can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the school child protection policy should safeguard both children and practitioners.

Aims

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose role includes intimate care
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their individual concerns are taken into account.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to any care task which is of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, and which requires a practitioner to have direct or indirect contact with, or requires exposure of, the child's sexual parts.

Examples of intimate care tasks specifically include:

- dressing and undressing which involves removal of the child's underwear
- helping a child use a potty or toilet
- cleaning / wiping / washing intimate parts of the body.

Toilet Training

Due to the limitations of the school setting, TIS is unable to accept students who are not fully toilet trained, as outlined in the school admissions policy.

For a child to be fully toilet-trained they should:

- Recognise the feelings that signal that they need to use the toilet
- Independently go, or ask to go, to the toilet
- Confidently go to the toilet by himself/herself Use a regular size toilet without support, both at home and outside of his/her own house
- Pull his/her underwear and trousers down/up independently
- Wipe his/her bottom independently
- Flush the toilet independently
- Wash his/her hands independently

Where accidents do happen at school, teachers will work with parents/carers to try to understand the reasons why, and if possible, find workable solutions which allow the child to remain in school.

Reasons could include:

- The student has been fully toilet trained but regressed for a little while due to the excitement and stress of starting at school
- The student is fully toilet trained at home but has accidents at school, or vice versa (for example, due to an unusual environment, lack of familiarity, changes to routine, etc.)
- The student is nearly there but needs some reminders and encouragement
- The student is not toilet trained
- The student is fully toilet trained but has a disability or learning difficulty which makes getting to the toilet difficult, or which requires additional intimate care
- The student has developmental delays affecting toileting
-

The student has a special educational need or disability and might require help with some or all aspects of personal care.

In the event that difficulties with toilet training persist or the child is unable to manage going to the toilet by themselves, the school may make the decision that TIS is not a suitable place for the child at the current time and his/her place at the school will be withdrawn.

Framework for Intimate Care

- Adults who assist pupils with intimate care must be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and are therefore subject to background checks and adherence to the school code of conduct for employees, as written in the school Child Protection policy
- All staff who provide intimate care should be given full training and should feel comfortable with the task. Staff should be aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.
- When intimate care is being given, all children have the right to dignity and privacy. Children should be appropriately covered where possible, the door should be closed (or screens/curtains put in place), other children should not be present and the number of adults should be reduced.
- In line with the school Child Protection policy, it is strongly recommended that two staff members are present any time intimate care is given. This is to protect both student and staff member.
- On the very rare occasion it is not possible for two staff members to be present, the staff member providing intimate care should ensure that another staff member has been notified that they will be providing care in a 1:1 situation and that this is properly recorded.
- Staff must be aware of the personal history of the students in their care, especially where this includes any historical concerns (such as past abuse) which could affect the child's experience of intimate care
- An accurate record should be kept using the online reporting form of when a child requires assistance with intimate care; this can be brief but should, as a minimum, include full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present in every case.
- The child should be encouraged to express choice and to communicate with staff about their care, taking into account the child's level of maturity. It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication could include, but is not limited to, the use of words, signs, symbols, body movements, and eye pointing.
- Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the student personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate in a way that reflects their age and level of maturity, using the correct names for body parts.
- Parents/carers must be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself). Information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated whenever possible in person, by email or telephone.
- The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.

- No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

Health and Safety for Intimate Care

When administering intimate care, staff should ensure that:

- Fresh disposable aprons and gloves are used while changing a child and disposed of appropriately in the designated bin.
- Spare changing supplies including aprons, gloves, wipes, and masks are available in the designated changing area.
- Soiled/Wet clothes are securely wrapped in a plastic bag and sent home. It is the responsibility of the parent to rinse and clean soiled/wet clothes.
- Wipes/Toilet Tissues are disposed of appropriately by flushing down the toilet (flushable) or sealing in a plastic bag and disposing in the designated bin (non-flushable)
- Cleaning supplies are provided and the toilet/changing area is left clean
- Adults and children wash hands thoroughly with soap and hot water (where available)

Child Protection and Intimate Care

- Intimate care may involve touching the private parts of a child's body and therefore could leave children at risk of abuse. It is unrealistic to eliminate all risk but this vulnerability places an important responsibility on staff to act in accordance with the school Child Protection policy and Code of Conduct, and to be extra vigilant.
- Staff should be alert for members of staff who show patterns of behaviour which could be a cause for concern, including demonstrating an unusual interest in providing intimate care and appearing to look for excuses to change children in a 1:1 situation.
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when intimate care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Staff should try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide assurance.
- If a child repeatedly becomes distressed about being cared for in school, this should be discussed with parents/carers to find a solution.
- Where a child becomes distressed about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the Child Protection Officer for further investigation.

In the following cases, the Child Protection Officer should be told immediately:

- A member of staff accidentally hurts a child whilst giving intimate care
- The child seems bruised, sore or unusually tender in the genital area
- The child appears to become sexually aroused whilst receiving intimate care
- The child misunderstands or misinterprets something that has been said or done by the adult providing

care

- The child has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause (sudden crying or shouting).

A full-report will be made and kept on-record. This is for the protection of both the child and the member of staff.

Sources Consulted for Intimate Care

Intimate Care and Toileting policy guidance 2014-15 (2014) Early Years and ChildCare Service, Surrey County Council, England

Intimate Care of Children, Child Matters, www.childmatters.org.nz <http://www.childmatters.org.nz/252/child-protection-policy/section-3-safe-working-practices/intimate-care-of-children> (Accessed 2018-01-09)

Example Policies which were consulted:

Intimate Care Policy, Darwen Aldridge Community Academy (2016)