

Makassed ABS Cambridge International School

Child Protection Policy



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Introduction:

We at ABSS have a responsibility to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the children in our care. All staff, should have the knowledge and the know how to detect the signs of possible neglect or abuse and the procedures that follow.

In this policy, we will set the guidelines and the procedures that follow suspecting possible neglect or abuse.

General Principles

The general principles, which are the roots of our work are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The principles that support our policy are:

- All children are equal, we treat them all the same regardless of gender, race, nationality, social status or having a disability.
- The child's best interest is our main concern, when making a decision their welfare is the aim.
- We respect the rights and needs of parents and families as long as they don't affect the child's wellbeing.
- We acknowledge the child's right to express his views and opinion
- Children with disabilities have the right to special care and support.

Overview

At ABSS we make sure children are safe all around the school setting. Putting in mind the immaturity of the students, so we have put forth programs and procedures to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Children are aware of the programs and procedures.

Framework

Students are admitted to the school's playgrounds starting from 7 o'clock until the bell rings at 7:25 and then after line up they go to their classes, during this time they are supervised and accompanied by administrative assistants and teachers the whole time. After the bell rings all gates are closed except the gate leading to the administration office for organizational purposes.

Trusted security personal are placed at each gate to ensure the safety of the students and to give visitors clearance.

Students are not allowed to leave school premises without a permission and a valid reason. Younger students must be accompanied by their parents or guardians, older students may leave alone if parents agree.

Parents are encouraged to pick up students in a safe matter. No cars are allowed in the school premises only school buses are allowed to enter to collect the students. Cycle one students are placed in a gated playground and parents are informed to pick them up from there to ensure their safety.

Our school is mindful of the particular needs of some children that is why the school is equipped to help them move safely all over the school with minimum discomfort.

All staff teaching and non-teaching get their positions based on a recruitment policy and sign a code of conduct. **Appendix 1 and 2**

They all receive training in Child Protection and they are able to detect signs and symptoms of neglect and abuse and all the procedures that follow.

The school seeks parents' consent before using any child photo for educational/PR purposes.

The school is obliged to give out information about the child to any person with parental responsibility in case of separation or divorce.

***Actions:**

Our main responsibilities in the area of Child Protection are prevention, recognition, response, referral and confidentiality/record keeping.

-Prevention: The school provides a safe and supportive environment for children and young people who have been abused or might be in the future.

-Recognition:

Definition of Child Abuse:

“Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.”

The main types of abuse and their physical and behavioral indicators are listed in

Appendix 4.

The staff teaching and non-teaching possess the know how to recognize signs of abuse or neglect and the steps that follow.

-Response: Trained personal are the only party allowed to talk to abused or suspected to be abused children.

-Confidentially and Archiving: In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, information sharing regarding abuse, neglect, or any other crucial information

Appendix 1

Recruitment Policy as set by our association

Appendix 2

***Code of Conduct:**

A code of conduct is set to be the guide for a wise conduct by the staff toward the students.

-Private Meetings with students:

As much as possible private individual meetings with students should be held in a room with a visual access or an open door.

The staff should always inform other adults about a meeting taking place by using certain indicators but not a sign banning entry.

If possible another student or an adult should attend the meeting.

-Physical Contact:

Staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their students, but staff should not feel inhibited from providing reassurance especially to younger children that might include physical comforting.

It is also preferred that administering first aid to a student by any trained staff member should be supervised by another staff member but that doesn't mean that no first aid should be provided if no other staff member is observing.

Staff members who supervise students in activities outside the school should be more careful and vigilant because the students will be in circumstances different from the normal school environment.

Physical punishment is illegal by all means.

-Teaching Materials:

Teachers should avoid teaching materials that might be misinterpreted or unsuitable and have a sensitive nature. If in doubt, the teacher should consult the principal.

-Relationship and Attitudes:

All staff must make sure that any relation with any student is appropriate to age, maturity, and sex of the student. They also must pay attention to everything said and done especially when dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

Appendix 4

Types and Signs of Abuse

-Physical abuse is intentional bodily injury. Some examples include slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving, or inappropriately using drugs or physical restraints

Signs of physical abuse

- bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, and rope marks
- broken bones
- open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- broken eyeglasses/frames, or any physical signs of being punished or restrained
- laboratory findings of either an overdose or under dose medications
- individual's report being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated
- vulnerable adult's sudden change in behavior
- the caregiver's refusal to allow visitors to see a vulnerable adult alone

-Mental mistreatment or emotional abuse is deliberately causing mental or emotional pain. Examples include intimidation, coercion, ridiculing, and harassment ... and yelling or swearing which results in mental distress.

Signs of mental mistreatment/emotional abuse

- being emotionally upset or agitated
- being extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or non-responsive
- unusual behavior usually attributed to dementia (e.g., sucking, biting, rocking)
- nervousness around certain people
- an individual's report of being verbally or mentally mistreated

-Neglect occurs when a person, either through his/her action or inaction, deprives a vulnerable child of the care necessary to maintain the vulnerable child's physical or mental health. Examples include not providing basic items such as food, water, clothing, a safe place to live, medicine, or health care.

Signs of neglect

- dehydration, malnutrition, untreated bed sores and poor personal hygiene
- unattended or untreated health problems
- hazardous or unsafe living condition (e.g., improper wiring, no heat or running water)

- unsanitary and unclean living conditions (e.g., dirt, fleas, lice on person, soiled bedding, fecal/urine smell, inadequate clothing)
- an individual's report of being mistreated

-Abandonment occurs when a vulnerable child is left without the ability to obtain necessary food, clothing, shelter or health care. Examples include deserting a vulnerable child in a public place or leaving a vulnerable child at home without the means of getting basic life necessities.

Signs of abandonment

- deserting a vulnerable child in a public place
- deserting a vulnerable child in his/her own home or living space
- individual's report of being abandoned

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

➔ A child protection policy provides guidelines for organizations and their staff to create safe environments for children. It is a tool that protects both children and staff by clearly defining what action is required in order to keep children safe, and ensuring a consistency of behavior so that all staff follow the same process.

➔ A child protection policy also demonstrates an organization's commitment to children and ensures public confidence in its safe practices.

Guidelines

- Promote the child's best interest,
- Ensure the safety of the child:
 - physical and emotional well-being
- Provide emotional support for the child
- Ensuring appropriate confidentiality: In situations where a child's health or safety is at risk, limits to confidentiality exist in order to protect the child
- Involve the child/caregiver in decision-making:
 - While service providers may not always be able to follow the child's wishes (based on best interest considerations), they should always empower and support children and deal with them in a transparent manner with maximum

respect. In cases where a child's wishes cannot be prioritized, the reasons should be explained to the child and caregivers

- Treat every child fairly and equally by promoting non-discrimination and inclusiveness:
 - All children should be offered the same high-quality care and treatment, regardless of their race, religion, gender, family situation or the status of their caregivers, cultural background, financial situation, or unique abilities or disabilities, thereby giving them opportunities to reach their maximum potential. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason
- Strengthen children's resiliencies:
 - It is the responsibility of service providers to identify and build upon the child and family's natural strengths as part of the recovery and healing process. Factors which promote children's resilience should be identified and built upon during service provision

1) Selection of Staff :

- Checking criminal record of all candidates
- Make sure that staff members are not affiliated to extremist party , whether political , religious or of any other type
- Including candidate qualifications in the job description and specifying interview criteria
- Make sure that members in charge of the hiring process is knowledgeable or has received training to be able to conduct a proper assessment of the efficiency of staff members

2) Education and training

- Education about principles of child protection policy
- Providing training

3) Administrative structure

- Opening safe and confidential communication channels
- Providing an environment of support and encouragement
- Appointing one person to follow up with the implementation of child protection policy

4) Behavioral protocol

- Developing suitable code of conduct on the appropriate staff behavior towards students
- Respecting child's sensitivity, property, rights.
- Making sure children are not exposed to any form of abuse (physical, moral, sexual, mental, economic)

5) Communication with children

- Providing communication guidelines
- Obtaining the informed consent of the child/ parents / legal guardian for the use of images of their child for advertising, ...
- Abstaining from mentioning any personal information about child's identity

6) Reporting and response code

- Drawing a clear process for staff members to report and store information about students

7) Consequences of Misbehavior

The Child Protection Team (CPT)

The CPT will consist of:

- Counselor
- Nurse
- Teacher representative from each level within the school (i.e. elementary, early childhood)
- Administrator – Head of Cycle
- External resource (i.e. community Child Protection Worker)

The role of a school-based Child Protection Team (CPT) is to ensure that there is a comprehensive Child Protection Program (CPP) in place at the school and to annually monitor the effectiveness of the program. Specific tasks include:

- Ensure a comprehensive Child Protection Program is in place for school
- Work within the school's existing structures to ensure development and adoption of a Child

- Protection curriculum that will meet the needs of the school
- Ensure that child protection curriculum is taught and assessed annually
- Support teachers and counsellors in implementing Child Protection Curriculum
- Ensure/guide Professional Development for training for all staff including teachers and volunteers regarding the Child Protection Program
- Ensure/guide parent evening education programs to support understanding of the objectives and goals of the CPP policy and curriculum
- Ensure systems are in place and monitored to educate and involve all school volunteers in the child protection program
- Serve as a resource group in working with cases requiring child protection - assist reporting and follow-up disclosures to the multidisciplinary team or where appropriate

Education and Training for the Three Major Populations in Schools

- For teachers: Awareness, types, signs/symptoms, prevention, policies and laws, reporting process, children's curricula, local authority and resources
- For students: Age appropriate personal safety/abuse prevention training for all grade levels based on core elements and evidence-based practices
- For parents: School safety goals and objectives, how to talk with their children, local authority and resources available, parent films, take-home letters and home exercises
- Collaboration/partnership with school and community resource

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