

Child Protection Policy



This policy includes definitions and the guidelines related to procedures involved in cases of child protection. It also outlines procedures for dealing with such cases should they occur.

Updated September 2024

Purpose

Hartland International School (HIS) is a safe and secure place where children have a fundamental right to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. Therefore, we aim to provide secure, caring environments, highly skilled and aware staff, and a curriculum which promotes self-esteem, nurtures well-being and empowers children to protect themselves.

All staff and volunteers who work alongside children are thoroughly checked to ensure they present no threat to young people. Where allegations are made against adults or other young people, these will always be treated seriously and investigated by the appropriate authority. Where necessary, such investigations may be handed over to agencies outside the school to take action.

The Vice Principal and Head of Primary is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff and working with other agencies where appropriate. The Head of Primary and all other staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively that is kept up to date by refresher training at regular intervals. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.

All members of the Senior Leadership Team at Assistant Head level and above have relevant Level 3 training on Safeguarding. All Governors at the school will have relevant and up-to-date Safeguarding training.

HIS also recognises that they help children keep safe through the teaching of self-protection skills and encouragement of responsible attitudes to adult life through a life skill or a similar personal, social and health education/citizenship programme.

There are three main elements to our safeguarding and child protection policy;

- a) Prevention through the creation of a happy and positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to students
- b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are fully trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns
- c) Support to students who may have been abused

Who was consulted?

In drafting this policy, the Leadership Team have consulted with a wide range of best practices and documents globally as well as drawing on key references found in:

- The DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe' in Education, September 2024 updated <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- The 'Working Together under the Children Act 2019 updated'
- The Federal Law No 3 of 2016 that came into effect on June 15, 2016
- The UAE Child Protection policy - UAE Cabinet directive no. (3/39) of 2022
- COBIS guidance and ITFCP guidance
- Finally, local advisory services such as nurses and doctors who work in partnership with the school have been part of the discussion group

Roles and responsibilities

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers working at HIS and visitors

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the Child Protection policy and procedures are implemented and monitored in school and is ultimately responsible for all child protection matters, working with all staff and overseeing the work of the DSL
- The Principal will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all applicants for positions in the school in line with best practice for recruitment as advised by The Council of International Schools Global Child Protection Task Force. This will include checking identity, qualifications, professional and character references, health and physical capacity, previous employment history to ensure gaps are accounted for, and criminal records as well as evidence of birth name
- All staff have a responsibility to protect children from abuse. Staff are responsible for following the procedures and guidelines of the Child Protection policy, and for reporting any allegations made or concerns they may have for child safety, to their direct line manager or another senior member of staff. All school personnel are ethically obligated to report any reasonably suspected incident of child abuse to the school management team. (Reports made by telephone or in person shall be followed by a written report within 24 hours). An action plan will be established to ensure immediate safety/protection of the child in need
- Staff should respond to the child by treating him/her with the utmost sensitivity, listening and recording as accurately as possible what the child says with dates and times, not probing or asking leading questions and not promising to keep secrets. The information should be passed directly to the Principal or in their absence to a member of the SLT
- School staff will include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life

Parents need to be aware that should any member of staff suspect that a child might have been deliberately harmed or neglected by their parent, the school has a duty to take further professional advice. If thought appropriate due to seriousness of the allegation, the Principal may decide that that authorities are informed. In these extreme cases, the authorities have the right to speak with the child without parental consent when it is in the best interests of the child. They may do so on school premises. However, they cannot take a child off the school premises without the permission of the Principal.

Staff must be aware that if a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Principal. If the Principal is not at school or unavailable, the matter should be reported to a member of the SLT. Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a student may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Principal.

If the complaint is regarding the Principal, the most senior member of the SLT should be informed who will in turn inform the Chair of Governors / Owner or Governor for Safeguarding.

If a member of staff is involved in an allegation or incidence, they may be suspended whilst an investigation is conducted. Allegations must be reported by the Principal to the Chair of Governors / Owner or Governor for Safeguarding. A full and fair investigation will be conducted.

The Principal reserves the right to terminate the employment of any employee found to have acted in contradiction to this policy, child protection guidelines and HIS Policies in relation to this. Any termination will be handled in accordance with Child Protection guidelines and the Employment Law.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Principal will report matters as they arise to the Chair of Governors (or if out of country and immediate to another Governor) and Owner where necessary.

Date for review of policy

September 2025

Signed.....Date.....

School Principal

Relationship to other guidelines and statements

- Health and Safety Policy
- Recruitment Practices
- Curriculum policies and guidelines
- Criminal Clearance Practices
- Regulatory/Government Guidelines
- All COVID related policies

Appendix 1
Child Protection at Hartland

What should you do if you are worried about a child's welfare?
Or
What should you do if a child tells you something that concerns you?
(Makes a disclosure of abuse)

DO NOT KEEP YOUR CONCERNS TO YOURSELF

Abuse can be:

- Neglect (for example: dirty, no lunch, inappropriately dressed for weather)
- Physical (for example: bruising, burns, sores, bites)
- Emotional (for example: withdrawn or disturbing behaviour)
- Sexual (for example: inappropriate sexualised behaviour or comments)
- There are many other physical and behaviour indicators of abuse

Any concerns should be reported to **Shahida Ibrahim** who is the Designated Named Person for child protection or **Aminah Evans (Foundation Stage), Eddie Brown (Primary), Natalie Herbert (Secondary)** in her absence.

What should you do?

Remain calm, do not panic or express shock

- Listen carefully – do not prompt responses
- Reassure the child – tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are pleased they are confiding in an adult. Praise them for having the courage to talk about it with someone
- Do not project or assume anything, let the child tell their story; leave your own assumptions out
- Use age specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand
- Let the child know they are believed
- Let the child know that you will do your best to protect and support them
- Do not promise secrecy to the child. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to tell certain other parties, but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them however that this will not be general knowledge within the school community
- Check that you have a full understanding of what the child has told you before the end of the discussion
- Make the child comfortable. Ensure that the child is not left in a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story
- Report to the appropriate Designated Person at the earliest possible opportunity. You will be asked to record what the child has said or what you have observed, include dates and times. It is important that this is recorded in as much detail as possible, using accurate language, so that the child does not have to repeat the details of abuse unnecessarily
- Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, children or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of school protocol if you do this

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND DUTY AS A MEMBER OF STAFF AT TO PASS ON ANY CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD