



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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CONTENTS

1. Purpose
2. Definitions
3. Guiding Framework
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Related Policies and Protective Measures
6. References

PURPOSE

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (hereafter, the Policy) was created to prevent and address harm against students at the International School of Macao (TIS). It aims to provide TIS staff, students, and the families of TIS students with guidance and clarity on how to address suspected incidents of harm and abuse. The Policy consists of this document and 2 related Codes of Conduct, one for adults, and the other for students.

If there are questions or concerns regarding the Policy or its implementation, please contact a member of the Safeguarding team.



DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms will be understood as:

“*Child*” - a child is defined as every human being under the age of 18 years.

“*Child Protection*” - the actions taken by TIS and outside organizations to ensure that students are free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

“*Safeguarding*” - the procedures, policies, and practices that TIS employs to facilitate students to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

“*TIS Student*” - any child enrolled at TIS as a student regardless of age.

“*TIS Staff*” - any individual contractually employed by The International School of Macao including but not limited to teachers, vice-principals, principals, and other administrative personnel; office workers; and, cleaning and maintenance workers.

“*Safeguarding Team*” - those individuals who have an additional responsibility in responding to any concerns or cases of harm, abuse, and neglect. These are the Head of School, School Principals, Chief Operations Officer, Safeguarding Leads

“*Harm*” - an act, action or series of acts or actions, by one person or group of persons against a student in one or more of the following forms: abuse, neglect, violence, or exploitation. There is overlap between some of the forms of harm, but the following definitions help to provide clarity for the purpose of this policy.

“*Abuse*” - the intentional use of physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual force against a child that is likely to negatively impact a child’s health, survival, development or dignity, including but not limited to: hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning,



poisoning, and/or suffocating (World Health Organization, 2006). Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, or is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is developmentally unprepared for. Emotional and/or psychological abuse include but are not limited to restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, blaming, threatening, frightening, discriminating against, ridiculing, and/or other forms of rejection or hostile treatment.

“*Neglect*” - isolated incidents or a pattern of actions in which an adult fails to provide for the development and well-being of a child, where they are in a position to do so, in one or more of the following areas: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions. Neglect is not necessarily an issue of wealth or poverty, rather of choice (World Health Organization, 2006).

“*Violence*” - the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child by another person or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological damage, or maldevelopment (World Health Organization, 2002). In agreement with the UN Study on violence against children (Pinheiro, 2006) TIS acknowledges that no violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable.

“*Exploitation*” - use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, development and/or education. Exploitation includes but is not limited to: child labour and child prostitution (UNHCR, 2001).

“*Bullying*” - The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online (National Children’s Bureau, 2024).



GUIDING FRAMEWORK

The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) is the most widely ratified piece of international human rights legislation, to which both Canada, and China on behalf of Macao, are parties. The CRC guarantees all children the right to protection without discrimination. This means that all TIS staff are mandated to keep children safe from harm. The CRC also entitled children with the right to participate in matters that affect them (see Article 12). Thus children, including TIS students, should not be viewed solely as passive victims of harm, but rather, as active participants in their own protection.

Guiding Statement:

Safeguarding at TIS is where everyone takes responsibility to ensure that all children are safe and free from harm.

5 Pillars of Safeguarding:

Proactive - All TIS staff will be proactive in acting on concerns to achieve early identification and intervention to keep students safe.

Partnership - Teachers, parents, students and outside organizations will work in collaboration to ensure that best outcomes for students are achieved.

Preparation - TIS will ensure that students and staff are provided with relevant and regular safeguarding training and guidance.

Perspective - TIS will employ an open perspective and act proportionately in relation to levels of risk and harm in line with Macao SAR local laws and DSEDJ guidance.

Procurement - TIS will ensure all employees are screened before undertaking direct contact with students to ensure suitability.



ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff, students, and family members of TIS students, have a role in implementing the Safeguarding Policy. The following roles, responsibilities and procedures have been developed to guide each person toward the collective aim of child safeguarding at TIS.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding Leads

The administration/leadership team at TIS will identify a minimum of two staff member(s) who lead the documentation and reporting process for suspected cases of harm; one from elementary and one from secondary. Alternatively one and or both Safeguarding Leads can be staff members with cross-divisional responsibilities.

TIS Staff - All employees are expected to read, understand, and uphold the *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and sign the *Adult Code of Conduct*. TIS staff are responsible for confidentially reporting suspected cases of harm against TIS students as detailed in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard Operating Procedures. All TIS staff are expected to complete the necessary online annual training prior to the commencement of the academic contract. Training should be renewed every second year.

TIS Senior Administrators (Head of School, Principals, and Chief Operations Officer) - In addition to their role as TIS Staff, are responsible for the overall guidance and leadership of addressing safeguarding and suspected safeguarding issues and, when necessary, implementing appropriate intervention measures. They are also responsible for ensuring that training and other necessary support and resources are provided to all staff including to the Safeguarding Leads.

TIS administrators are responsible for aligning hiring practices and procedures to the 5 Pillars of Safeguarding. This would include seeking information during interviews by investigating whether there have been any concerns regarding safeguarding children with the prospective staff.



Additionally, during the hiring process, potential new staff should be made aware of the *TIS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and the requirement that all staff members are required to sign an *Adult Code of Conduct*.

Parents/guardians of TIS Students - All TIS parents and/or guardians will have access to the *Safeguarding and Child Protection* policy and are expected to uphold the Policy and, when relevant, sign the *Adult Code of Conduct*.

TIS Students - After receiving instruction, all students are expected to understand and uphold the 5 Pillars of Safeguarding and Secondary school students sign the *Student Code of Conduct*.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

TIS has a variety of policies and protective measures currently in place that also contribute to preventing and/or addressing harm against students, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard Operating Procedures
- TIS Adult Code of Conduct
- TIS Staff Code of Conduct
- TIS Student Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Standard Operating Procedures Document
- TIS Social Media Guidelines and Photo Permission Form
- Technology Responsible Use Agreement
- Fire Drill Procedures
- Lockdown Protocol
- Health and Safety Fact Sheets, Guidelines and Protocols for injuries, illnesses, air quality, inclement weather, and other specific issues
- Parent and teacher ID cards
- On-site security guards
- CCTV cameras, other equipment and infrastructure



- Bullying Awareness and Prevention sessions
- Local community resources and contacts

While these related policies and protective measures do not all necessarily have child protection as their central focus, they do play a role in preventing and/or addressing harm against TIS students.

Policy Review

It is recommended that the Safeguarding Policy be reviewed by the Safeguarding Team every two years to ensure its relevance and alignment with current best practices.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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